

Grade 2 • Lesson 16: Winter Jewels

POETRY, METAPHOR & SPEECH MARKS



Living Poem by Mary Frances Butts

*A million little diamonds / Twinkled on the trees,
And all the little maidens said; / "A jewel, if you please!"
But while they held their hands outstretched / To catch the diamonds gay,
A million little sunbeams came / And snatched them all away.*

A CAREFUL COPYWORK (STANZA 1 WITH QUOTATION MARKS)

Transcribe Stanza 1. Notice the semicolon and quotation marks:

1. A million little diamonds twinkled on the trees,

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.....

2. And all the little maidens said; "A jewel, if you please!"

.....

.....

B CAREFUL COPYWORK (STANZA 2)

Transcribe Stanza 2 with exact capitalization and end period:

3. But while they held their hands outstretched to catch the diamonds gay,

.....

.....

4. A million little sunbeams came and snatched them all away.

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C POETIC UNDERSTANDING

1. What were the "million little diamonds" that twinkled on the trees?

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2. Why did the "sunbeams" snatch the diamonds away?

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Poetic Metaphor & Scientific Truth:

This charming poem by Mary Frances Butts illustrates a scientific phenomenon through living metaphor. The "diamonds" are morning frost or sparkling icicles clinging to bare branches. When the warm sun emerges, the ice melts, poetically described as sunbeams "snatching them away."

Introduction of Quotation Marks:

Point out the speech marks in line 4: "A jewel, if you please!". Explain that quotation marks enclose the exact words spoken aloud by the maidens. Note the polite formula "if you please" and the exclamation mark inside the closing quote.

Section C • Comprehension Key:

1. The "diamonds" were sparkling drops of frost, dew, or icicles on the branches.
2. The sunbeams warmed the winter air, causing the frost to melt and disappear.
3. **Rhyme pairs:** trees / please and gay / away (AABB / ABCB ballad stanza).

Charlotte Mason Memory Protocol:

Have the child read the poem three times aloud with clear, joyous diction. Then cover the page and ask the child to recite both stanzas from memory before writing.

Competency	Mastery (Exemplary)	Developing	Needs Guidance
Memory Accuracy	Recites both stanzas flawlessly with natural poetic cadence.	Recites with 1 minor word hesitation.	Requires frequent prompting.
Quotation Mechanics	Places opening and closing quotation marks accurately around spoken words.	Omits closing quotation mark.	Fails to understand quotation marks.
Metaphor Comprehension	Clearly explains that diamonds mean frost/ice and sunbeams melt it.	Knows it is ice but struggles to explain the sun's melting action.	Thinks real diamonds were on the tree.
Penmanship & Neatness	Letters sit evenly on baseline; clear punctuation marks.	Legible with minor spacing slips.	Uneven letters, messy punctuation.