

# Feeling the Rhythm

How are stressed and unstressed syllables used in writing limericks?

**1** Read this limerick and notice the stressed and the unstressed syllables:

There once was a girl named Maureen

Who wished she were skinny and lean

But she loved pizza pie,

Pastrami on rye

And ate till her plate was clean.

**2** Read the limericks on page 35 to yourself and then out loud. Mark the stressed and unstressed syllables. Remember, the long lines should have three stressed syllables; the short lines should have two.

There once was a boy named Drew

On candy he'd chomp and he'd chew  
To brush he forgot

His teeth started to rot  
And now he just has a few.

A lady who loved the trombone  
Was lucky she lived all alone.

When she started to play,  
Her friends stayed away  
And left her to sputter and moan.

There once was a poodle name Rose  
Who liked to dance on her toes.  
She twirled and she spun,  
Had barrels of fun,  
Until she fell on her nose.

# Drafting Your Limerick

Now it's your turn to write a limerick.

**1** If you need help getting started, you might try one of these opening lines:  
*There once was a boy/girl named \_\_\_\_\_, Or There once was a boy/girl from \_\_\_\_\_.*

**2** Once you have your first line, brainstorm a few rhyming words for the next line.

**3** Next, look over your list of words that rhyme and see how you can make some of them part of your poem. Remember, a limerick is really a very short story, so anything you include must make sense and help tell that story. In other words, don't use a line simply because it rhymes with another line.

## Brainstormed Rhyming Words

*There once was a boy/girl named \_\_\_\_\_*

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## Limerick (continued)

## Brainstormed Rhyming Words

*There once was a boy/girl from \_\_\_\_\_*

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**4** Now invent your own first line and write a limerick to go with it!

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