Poetry

for the Grammar School

Memoria Press

Teacher Key

by Laura Bateman

The Pleiades

by Amy Lowell

By Day you cannot see the sky
For it is up so very high.
You look and look, but it's so blue
That you can never see right through.

But when night comes it is quite plain,
And all the stars are there again.
They seem just like old friends to me,
I've known them all my life you see.

There is the dipper first, and there
Is Cassiopeia in her chair,
Orion's Belt, the Milky Way,
And lots I know but cannot say.

One group looks like a swarm of bees,
Papa says they're the Pleiades;
But I think they must be the toy
Of some nice little angel boy.

Perhaps his jackstones which today
He has forgot to put away,
And left them lying on the sky
Where he will find them by and by.

I wish he'd come and play with me.
We'd have such fun, for it would be
A most unusual thing for boys
To feel that they had stars for toys!

Copybook

Copy the poem in the space below. Use the box on the previous page to illustrate the poem.

Vocabulary

Cassiopeia, Orion's Belt	constellations
Milky Way	the galaxy containing our solar system
Pleiades	a group of stars that are part of the constellation Taurus
jackstones	metal pieces used in playing the game of jacks

Analyze

1. What is the rhyming structure in this poem? each stanza has the AABB pattern
2. Who is the speaker/voice of the poem? the speaker is a boy (line 23)
3. Count how many syllables are in each line. Write the number at the end of each line.

1 By Day you cannot see the sky	8	13 One group looks like a swarm of bees,	8
2 For it is up so very high.	8	14 Papa says they're the Pleiades;	8
3 You look and look, but it's so blue	8	15 But I think they must be the toy	8
4 That you can never see right through.	8	16 Of some nice little angel boy.	8
5 But when night comes it is quite plain,	8	17 Perhaps his jackstones which today	8
6 And all the stars are there again.	8	18 He has forgot to put away,	8
7 They seem just like old friends to me,	8	19 And left them lying on the sky	8
8 I've known them all my life you see.	8	20 Where he will find them by and by.	8
9 There is the dipper first, and there	8	21 I wish he'd come and play with me.	8
10 Is Cassiopeia in her chair,	9	22 We'd have such fun, for it would be	8
11 Orion's Belt, the Milky Way,	8	23 A most unusual thing for boys	9
12 And lots I know but cannot say.	8	24 To feel that they had stars for toys!	8

Discussion

1. How are stars like old friends?
   They are always around; he is very familiar with them after having known them all his life.

2. What is “the dipper”?
   probably two constellations: the big dipper and the little dipper

3. Discuss each constellation mentioned.
   The constellation Cassiopeia represents a queen from Greek mythology that boasted about her beauty. Orion is one of the most recognizeable constellations in the sky, he was a hunter in Greek mythology. The Pleiades are the seven daughters to Atlas in Greek mythology. The constellation was often used in ancient times as a navigational tool for sailors.

4. What is the imagery used to describe the Pleiades?
   swarm of bees; little angel boy’s jackstones

5. What story does the author create to explain the stars?
   A boy looks at the stars and recognizes them. He names them and imagines playing with them.