POETRY. Robert Louis Stevenson. MotherGooseCaboose.com Grades 3 and up. THE COW. Directions. Print out. Read the poem. Do the activities. Note: For younger children, just read the poem, talk about it, illustrate it or part of it, and act it out.

THE COW

1st stanza:
The friendly cow all red and white,
I love with all my heart;
She gives me cream with all her might,
To eat with apple tart.

2nd stanza:
She wanders lowing here and there,
And yet she cannot stray;
All in the pleasant open air,
The pleasant light of day.

3rd stanza:
And blown by all the winds that pass,
And wet with all the showers;
She walks among the meadow grass,
And eats the meadow flowers.

- Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1895).
Scottish essayist, novelist, poet.
A Child’s Garden Of Verses.
Directions. Print out. Read the poem. Answer the questions using the “Blank Lined Poetry Answer Form” on p. 6. Print out as many pages as you need to answer the questions. Make sure you number your answers. Check what you have written with the answers on page 5. Do the activities and review the rhyming words in the poem.

Questions About The Poem, “THE COW”:

1. How does the person in the poem feel about the cow? (Read line 2 in the 1st stanza.)

2. What color is the cow in the poem? (Read line 1 in the 1st stanza.)

3. What does the cow give the person in the poem to have with apple tart? (Read line 3 in the 1st stanza.)

4. Where does the cow live? (Read line 3 in the 3rd stanza.)

5. What does the cow eat? (Read line 4 in the 3rd stanza.)

6. What happens to the cow when it lives outdoors? (Read lines 1 and 2 in the 3rd stanza.)

See the definitions to answer these questions if you do not know the answers.

7. When the cow wanders, what does it do? (Read line 1 in the 2nd stanza.) What is a “low?” (See definitions, p. 5.)

8. What is a cow, a bovine, & a ruminant? (See definitions, pp. 4 & 5.)

9. What is a couplet, a stanza, and a quatrain? (See definitions, pp. 4 & 5.)

Activities: 1. Illustrate the poem. 2. Write a story about a cow.

Rhyming Words: 6 rhyming open couplets. See poem.
1st stanza: (Lines 1 & 3) white, might; (Lines 2 & 4) heart, tart;
2nd stanza: (Lines 1 & 3) there, air; (Lines 2 & 4) stray, day;
3rd stanza: (Lines 1 & 3) pass, grass; (Lines 2 & 4) showers, flowers.
Directions. Print out. Read the poem. Review the rhyme pattern, syllables, and meter in the poem.

Rhyme Pattern: 3 quatrian stanzas having 2 rhyming open couplets in each stanza. 1
2nd stanza: abab; 2
3rd stanza: cdcd; 3
4th stanza: efef rhyme pattern. Lines 1 & 3 rhyme and lines 2 & 4 rhyme in each stanza. 

Examples: 1
2nd stanza – white (a), heart (b), might (a), tart (b); 2
3rd stanza – there (c), stray (d), air (c), day (d). See poem.

Syllables: Each stanza has a line containing an 8/6/8/6 syllable pattern. line 1 has 8 syllables, line 2 has 6 (or 7), line 3 has 8, and line 4 has 6 (or 7). Read the poem to get the rhythm. Note: Lines 2 & 4 in the 3rd stanza each have a two-syllable word in them, “showers” – line 2; “flowers” – line 4. Examples: 1
2nd stanza – 8/6/8/6; 2
3rd stanza – 8/6/8/6; 3
4th stanza – 8/7/8/7. See definitions for “syllables” (p.5), “Meter” (p.3), & “meter” (p.5).

Meter: Accented words or parts of words are underlined; Unaccented words or parts of words are not underlined. See the 1
2nd stanza of the poem below for the cadence. The slashes below the 1
2nd stanza represent the accented words or parts of words; the dots represent the unaccented words or parts of words. (Iambic.) See definitions for “iambic” & “iamb,” p. 4; “Syllables,” p. 3 & “syllables,” p. 5; and “meter,” p.5. See poem.

THE COW

1
2nd stanza:

The friendly cow all red and white,

I love with all my heart;

She gives me cream with all her might,

To eat with apple tart.

Iambic.

. / . / . / / (line 1; 4 iambs.)

. / . / / (line 2; 3 iambs.)

. / . / . / (line 3; 4 iambs.)

. / . / / (line 4; 3 iambs.)
Directions. Print out. Read the poem. Study the definitions.

Definitions From The Poem, “THE COW”:

bovine – n. 1. An animal belonging to the same genus as cattle (See definition below). 2. Of, pertaining to, or resembling an ox, cow, or other ruminant (see definitions below) animal of the genus Bos. See “cow.” adj. Relating or belonging to the genus of ruminant animals that includes cattle, oxen, and buffalo. Genus: Bos.

cattle – n.pl. Large domesticated mammals kept for the production of milk, meat, and hides, and also as draft animals. Cows and oxen are common types. Genus: Bos. See “cow.”

couplet – n. Two lines of verse that form a unit alone or as part of a poem, especially two that rhyme and have the same meter. They may be open or closed. See poem. Example of two open couplets from the poem, “The Cow.” (Lines 1 & 3 rhyme and lines 2 & 4 rhyme.)

1st stanza: rhyme pattern syllables
The friendly cow all red and white, a 8
I love with all my heart; b 6
She gives me cream with all her might, a 8
To eat with apple tart. b 6

cow – n. An adult female grass-eating quadruped, raised as a farm animal for the milk it produces for breeding. Genus: Bos. (Line 1, 1st stanza.) in this poem, a cow is a mature female of cattle of the genus Bos. A cow can also be the mature female of other animals, such as whales, elephants, or moose; broadly, any domesticated bovine. See “bovine” and “cattle.”

iamb – n. A metrical foot in poetry, consisting of one short or unstressed syllable or group followed by one long stressed syllable, for example, the word “today” has one iamb ( . / ). Also called iambus and iambic. See “Meter,” p. 3 & “meter,” p. 5; “Syllables,” p. 3 & “syllables,” p. 5.

iambic – n. Relating or consisting of iambs. See iamb.

low – n. The characteristic mooing sound made by a cow or similar animal. A low is a sound a cow makes; a moo. (Line 1, 2nd stanza.)
Directions. Print out. Read the poem. Continue studying the definitions. Check your answers.

Definitions From The Poem, “THE COW” cont’d:


quadrain – n. Any stanza unit of 4 lines, whether rhymed or unrhymed. The quadrain is the most common stanza form in English poetry. See example under “couplet.” See poem.

ruminant – n. Any of various cud-chewing hoofed, even-toed, usually horned mammals of the suborder Ruminantia, such as cattle, camels, sheep, goats, deer, and giraffes, characteristically having a stomach divided into four compartments, and chewing a cud consisting of regurgitated, partially digested food.

stanza – n. A number of lines of verse forming a separate unit within a poem. See example under “couplet.” See poem.

syllable – n. syllables – n.pl. 1. A unit of spoken language that consists of one or more vowel sounds alone, a syllabic consonant alone, or any of these with one or more consonant sounds. 2. One or more letters in a word that roughly correspond to a syllable of spoken language. See p.3. Syllables are accented or unaccented in words or parts of words. See “Meter,” p. 3 & “meter,” p. 5; and “Syllables,” p. 3. See poem.

Answers To Questions About The Poem, “THE COW”:
1. He/she loves it with all its heart. (Line 2, 1st stanza.)
2. Red & white. (Line 1, 1st stanza.)
3. Cream. (Line 3, 1st stanza.)
4. The meadow. (Line 3, 3rd stanza.)
5. Meadow flowers. (Line 4, 3rd stanza.)
6. It gets blown by the wind and gets wet when it rains. (Lines 1 & 2, 3rd stanza.
7-9. See definitions for “cow,” “bovine,” “ruminant,” “couplet,” “stanza,” &“quadrain” (pp. 4 & 5.)
POETRY. Robert Louis Stevenson. MotherGooseCaboose.com
Gades 3 and up. MY COW cont’d. p.6.
Blank Lined Poetry Answer Form. Directions. Print out.

NAME

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________