

## Tips for overcoming nervousness

- Be prepared: practise, practise, practise.
- Shift the focus to the enjoyment you are providing to the audience. Close your eyes and imagine them laughing and cheering, and you feeling good.
- Don't focus on what could go wrong. Instead focus on the positive. Visualize your success.
- Walk around, jump up and down, shake out your muscles, or do whatever feels right to ease your anxious feelings before the performance.
- Connect with your audience - smile, make eye contact, and think of them as friends.
- Act naturally and be yourself.
- Keep in mind that stage fright is usually worse before the performance and often goes away once you get started.
- Look straight ahead instead of down at the floor.
- Don't slouch.
- Slowing down will also make you less likely to stumble over your words.

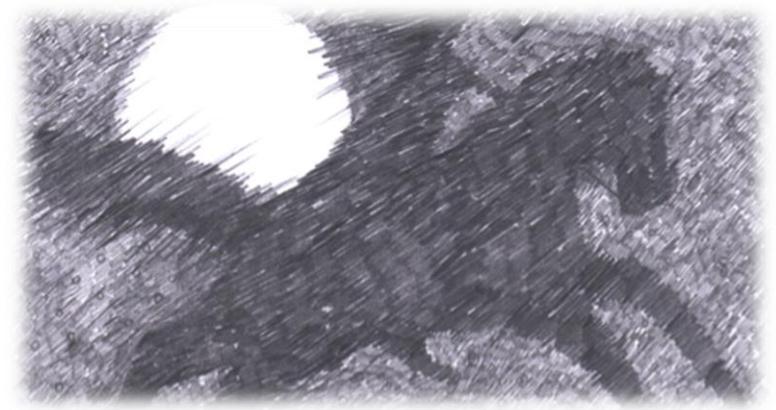
## Performance Advice

- **Actions** – include some gesture, but don't overdo it or you might take away from the poem!
- **Volume** – sometimes you need a big voice and sometimes you need a gentler voice. Just make sure that your voice is clear.
- **Accents** – use these only where they work well and you are confident to execute them. Lots of practise is required for perfecting accents, but they can be enormous fun!
- **Pace** – aim for a 'Goldilocks' pace (not too fast but not too slow!). Varying pace, where appropriate can make a poem more interesting.
- **Starting & ending** – remember to wait until your audience is ready before you start... and not to race away the last line or two to get to the end!
- **Practice** – lots of practice and rehearsal gives you confidence to perform. Try to do some rehearsals in the space that you intend to give your public performance.

## Windy Nights

Whenever the moon and stars are set,  
Whenever the wind is high,  
All night long in the dark and wet,  
A man goes riding by.  
Late in the night when the fires are out,  
Why does he gallop and gallop about?

Whenever the trees are crying aloud,  
And ships are tossed at sea,  
By, on the highway, low and loud,  
By at the gallop goes he.  
By at the gallop he goes, and then  
By he comes back at the gallop again.



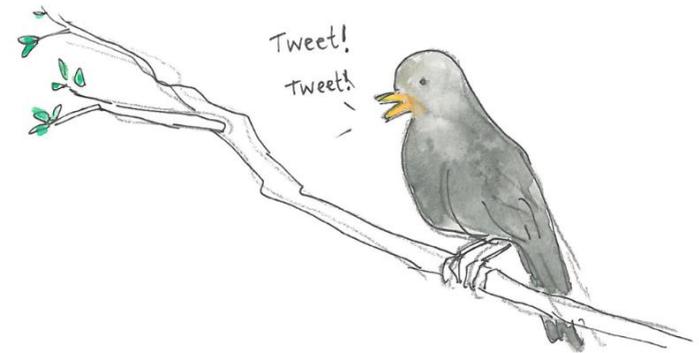
By Robert Louis Stevenson

## Bed in Summer

In winter I get up at night  
And dress by yellow candle-light.  
In summer, quite the other way,  
I have to go to bed by day.

I have to go to bed and see  
The birds still hopping on the tree,  
Or hear the grown-up people's feet  
Still going past me in the street.

And does it not seem hard to you,  
When all the sky is clear and blue,  
And I should like so much to play,  
To have to go to bed by day?



By Robert Louis Stevenson

