

# Making the Common Uncommon

We have been looking around at objects in and around our homes and school and we have been describing them scientifically and poetically. Now it's time to dig a bit deeper and pay close attention to what is beautiful or interesting about the mundane. Have you ever taken the time to think about how certain objects in your life serve you so well and so deserve some attention? A poem is a great way to appreciate some noble, barely noticed object in your life. Below are some poems that go along with this theme.

## The Red Wheelbarrow

by William Carlos Williams

so much depends  
upon  
a red wheel  
barrow  
glazed with rain  
water

beside the white  
chickens

## DOORS

By Carl Sandburg

An open door says, "Come in."  
A Shut door says, "Who are you?"  
Shadows and ghosts go through shut doors.  
If a door is shut and you want it shut,  
    why open it?  
If a door is open and you want it open,  
    why shut it?  
Doors forget but only doors know what it is  
    doors forget.

## I'VE HAD THIS SHIRT

I've had this shirt  
that's covered in dirt  
for years and years and years.

It used to be red  
but I wore it in bed  
and it went gray  
cause I wore it all day  
for years and years and years

The arms fell off  
in the Monday wash  
and you can see my vest  
through the holes in the chest  
for years and years and years

As my shirt falls apart  
I'll keep the bits  
in a biscuit tin  
on the mantelpiece  
for years and years and years.

BY MICHAEL ROSEN

## The Toaster

A silver-scaled Dragon with jaws flaming red  
Sits at my elbow and toasts my bread.  
I hand him fat slices, and then, one by one,  
He hands them back when he sees they are done.

*William Jay Smith*

## HATS

Hats, where do you belong?

What is under you?

On the rim of a skyscraper's forehead

I looked down and saw: hats: fifty thousand hats;

Swarming with a noise of bees and sheep, cattle and water-falls,

Stopping with a silence of sea grass, a silence of prairie corn

Hats: tell me your high hopes.

by Carl Sandburg

## Skyscrapers

Do skyscrapers ever grow tired

Of holding themselves up high?

Do they ever shiver on frosty nights

With their tops against the sky?

Do they feel lonely sometimes

Because they have grown so tall?

Do they ever wish they could lie right down?

And never get up at all?

by Rachel Field

## ONCE PINK

by Ms. Stark

I'm sorry sponge

for having squoze you;

squeezed your frumpy,

jagged coat.

How hard

you've worked washing, scrubbing,

scraping murky scum.

How crisp and clean and pink

you once looked,

but now,

your aging smells

and edges gray and dull

advise

it's time to toss you soon.

Oh well, poor sponge.

## The Garden Hose

In the gray evening

I see a long green serpent

With its tail in the dahlias.

It lies in loops across the grass

And drinks softly at the faucet.

I can hear it swallow

by, *Beatrice Janosco*

## Fog

by Carl Sandburg

The fog comes

on little cat feet

It sits looking

over harbor and city

on silent haunches

and then moves on.