

A Snowflake Fell: Poems About Winter

Hatsuki Hori, Illustrator

Laura Whipple, Compiler

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This simple yet profound collection of children's poetry celebrates the seasonal joys of wintertime. With an ear for the classical nuances of poetic form, the editor has diligently researched the best of the best and successfully pulled them together into an exquisite, themed anthology, beautifully illustrated by the award-winning illustrator of several books in the Japanese market.

In this selection of twenty-four poems, Whipple draws from the talented works of several renowned poets, such as Gary Soto, Marilyn Singer, Jack Prelutsky, James Whitcomb Riley, and Michael Spooner. Each poet brings a unique perspective to the attention of the reader and explores a wide range of wintry experiences, from the universal to the most personal. In David McCord's rhyme, "Joe," the reader witnesses firsthand the touch-and-go plight of hungry birds patiently awaiting their turn as one gray squirrel eats his fill of birdseed.

In "Old Man Winter," a more contemplative example in a freestyle form, poet Nancy Wood personifies nature as an elderly man who rests upon the snowy mountaintops, stretching his icy fingers down into the valleys, "stealing the leaves from the trees." Opting for first-person humor, Jack Prelutsky's "My Mother's Got Me Bundled Up" examines the season through the eyes of a child wrapped in enormous layers of warmth: scarves, socks, and sweaters.

Whipple is the author of the poetry collection *If the Shoe Fits: Voices From Cinderella*, and she has previously edited *Celebrating America: A Collection of Poems and Images of the American Spirit* and Eric Carle's *Dragons Dragons*. She contributes to this new collection herself, taking an alliterative approach as she breathes life into the words she chooses to describe a skater's metal blades slicing through the frozen ice: "Swish, slash, / my skates / crash on ice."

Created for ages four through eight, *A Snowflake Fell* depicts animals, objects, and activities familiar to even the youngest-frosty panes, snowmen, and various species of wildlife-through a magical blend of text and illustration. The illustrator, making her debut in the English-speaking market, works in pastel and watercolor to create soft, expressive illustrations, her signature style.

Whether the intent is one of playfulness or serious reflection, each poem flows effortlessly across the page, drawing readers into a wintry world with lines of humor, contrasts of warmth and blinding cold, and plenty of heartwarming imagery.

CHARISSE FLOYD (November / December 2003)

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