

How to Find Nestlings

by Irene Latham



What's hiding inside this nest? The fun of found poetry!

This beautiful poetry collection introduces readers to the art of found poetry as the poet writes a 37-line poem, "Nest," then finds 160 smaller poems (called "nestlings") within it.

YOU, too, can find nestlings inside the nest!

Use this handout in conjunction with the Introduction and the back matter section "Tips from a Nest-builder: How to Find Nestlings" found inside **THIS POEM IS A NEST** by Irene Latham, art by Johanna Wright, published by Wordsong/Boyd's Mills & Kane.

The "Nest" poem contains four sections (spring, summer, autumn, winter). Each section has three 3-line stanzas. Each line has 10 syllables. Here's the "spring" section:

Nest

I. Spring

This poem has twigs in it, and little bits of feather-fluff.

It's got wings and birdsong stitched together with ribbons of hope.

Safe in its crook, it's a cradle that sways across day and dark.

Whatever the weather, leafy choir rustles a lullaby.

By miracle or fate, the fragile eggs stay snug in their cup—
blue gemstones precious as any long-buried pirate's plunder.

Soon there are *peep-peep-peeps* and beaks that hinge open-shut-open.

The happy nest overflows with flap-flapping and endless feast.

Nestlings become fledglings. They share first falls and fluttery flights.

irenelatham.com

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How to find nestlings using the “eyeball” method described in the back of the book:

I. Spring

This poem has twigs in it, and little bits of feather-fluff.

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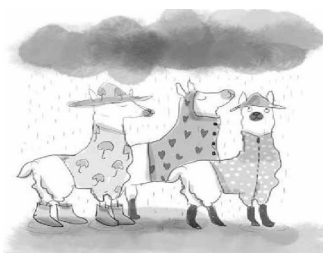
Spring

got wings?

soon, open
nest—

first flights!

Note: This poem appears on p. 28 of the book. Feel free to use punctuation to enhance/change the meaning of your words! The only hard and fast rule: *the words in your nestling must be presented in the exact order as they appear in the Nest.*



How to find unique and surprising pressedtogether words to enhance your nestling:

I. Spring

This poem has **twigs** in it, and little bits of feather-fluff.

It's got wings and bird**song** stitched together with ribbons of **hope**.

Safe in its crook, it's a cradle that sways across day and dark.

Whatever the weather, leafy choir rustles a lullaby.

By miracle or fate, the fragile eggs stay snug in their cup—

blue gemstones precious as any long-buried pirate's plunder.

Soon there are *peep-peep-peeps* and beaks that hinge open-shut-open.

The happy nest overflows with flap-flapping and end**less** feast.

Nestlings become fledglings. They share first **falls** and fluttery flights.

twigsong

hopeless

bluefall

I found three possibilities! Next it's time to choose one and find a poem using that word. (You can repeat this process for each pressedtogether word you find. Just be sure to adhere to the *"words in your nestling must be presented in the exact order as they appear"* rule.)



Here's an example using the word "hopeless."

I. Spring

This poem has twigs in it, and little bits of feather-fluff.

It's got wings and birdsong stitched together with ribbons of hope.

Safe in its crook, it's a cradle that sways across day and dark.

Whatever the weather, leafy choir rustles a lullaby.

By miracle or fate, the fragile eggs stay snug in their cup—
blue gemstones precious as any long-buried pirate's plunder.

Soon there are *peep-peep-peeps* and beaks that hinge open-shut-open.

The happy nest overflows with flap-flapping and endless feast.

Nestlings become fledglings. They share first falls and fluttery flights.

[untitled]

This poem's

a little bit

hopeless.

Note: I had to borrow an "s" and an "a" – but I could do that, because those letters were available to me in the correct order in the text of "Nest." (This poem does NOT appear in THIS POEM IS A NEST.)



How to Title Your Found Poem

Now that you have the text of your poem, think about what the poem means. How can the title help position the reader? For this poem, I started by brainstorming times when a person might feel “a little bit hopeless.” When do I start feeling hopeless? Usually after I’ve tried something again and again, and failed again and again! Here are three titles that might work:

After Trying to Play Bach on Cello

After the Eagles Have Lost Yet Another Game

After I’ve Tried and Tried

I like how specific the first two titles are... but this is for a worksheet about finding nestlings! How can I make it more poetic and precise? Hmmm...

After the Twenty-Third Time I Tried Finding a Poem

This poem's

a little bit

hopeless.

Note: I didn't have a particular number in mind, so I tried a few numbers before I settled on “twenty-third.” Why did I choose that number? Because I like the way “twenty-third” looks and sounds with its “t”s and the short “ir” sound in “third.”

