

## Field House Museum's September School Days Program

### Literary Works of Eugene Field



Grade Levels: K-5<sup>th</sup>

Estimated Time: One Class Period

Topic: Poetry

#### Show-Me Standards

##### **Communication Arts**

1. speaking and writing standard English (including grammar, usage, punctuation, spelling, capitalization)
2. reading and evaluating fiction, poetry, and drama
5. comprehending and evaluating the content and artistic aspects of oral and visual presentations (such as storytelling, debates, lectures, multi-media productions)
6. participating in formal and informal presentations and discussions of issues and ideas

#### Objective:

1. Improve students' ability to read works of fiction and have a better appreciation for them.
2. Help students explore creativity by giving them an opportunity to change a work to something unique.
3. Further develop reading and grammar skills



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Introduction

The Field House Museum is a historic house and museum in St. Louis, Missouri that was the home of Roswell and Eugene Field. Roswell was the key attorney in the historic Dred Scott Case. Eugene was Roswell's oldest living son that went on to be a noted children's poet and journalist. The Field House honors the memory of both men through collections and exhibits.

This packet reflects educational information and activities from the institution's Museum School Days program. The focus of the September program is to educate children on fictional literature through the examples of Eugene Field's poetic works.

Poetry itself predates reading and writing, in nonliterate societies, poetry was a method for recording oral history and storytelling. Poetry is an effective way to help children learn how to read and can be an introduction for them to become more interested in literature. Children often becomes interested in certain literary devices often found within poetry such as rhythm or rhyming. These two devices leave lasting impressions and can help us remember facts better. One of the most common examples of this is "In 1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue." Poetry acts as an effective way for children to learn about these literary devices and how to use them.

Eugene started writing poetry when he was a child and would write short poems about his neighbor's dog. When he started writing as a child, he did not know the popularity and influence that his poems would have. This "Children's Poet's" work has reached many school children in schools today and has several works published about him. This activity focuses on one of his more popular poems "The Sugar-Plum Tree," which was originally written as a lullaby for his children. Eugene wrote many lullabies for his children and a vast number of them can be found in different books containing his work or even specialty books that are composed of just his lullabies.

When Eugene became a poet there were few other forms of entertainment other than literature. There were no movies, YouTube, or television in 1879, so writing and being a comedic person within his writing was one of the best ways to be an entertainer.

The Field House Museum displays and honors the works of Eugene Field. The Museum houses some of his earliest and latest works, as well as many other items such as part of the remains of Eugene's toy collection.

### **Optional Activity Instructions:**

Read Eugene Field's "The Sugar Plum Tree" and write down what you think of the poem. What did you like about it? What did you not enjoy? What else do you think could be in Shut-Eye-Town? After you write down your initial thoughts about the poem, discuss with a small group and present what you have written down, then discuss what they have written, and how it compares. Then fill in the blanks with the appropriate types of words and make your version of "The Sugar-Plum Tree" on the next page.

## The Sugar-Plum Tree by Eugene Field

Have you ever heard of the Sugar-Plum Tree?  
'Tis a marvel of great renown!  
It blooms on the shore of the Lollypop sea  
In the garden of Shut-Eye Town;  
The fruit that it bears is so wondrously sweet  
(As those who have tasted it say)  
That good little children have only to eat  
Of that fruit to be happy next day.

When you've got to the tree, you would have a hard time  
To capture the fruit which I sing;  
The tree is so tall that no person could climb  
To the boughs where the sugar-plums swing!  
But up in that tree sits a chocolate cat,  
And a gingerbread dog prowls below -  
And this is the way you contrive to get at  
Those sugar-plums tempting you so:

You say but the word to that gingerbread dog  
And he barks with such terrible zest  
That the chocolate cat is at once all agog,  
As her swelling proportions attest.  
And the chocolate cat goes cavorting around  
From this leafy limb unto that,  
And the sugar-plums tumble, of course, to the ground -  
Hurrah for that chocolate cat!

There are marshmallows, gumdrops, and peppermint canes,  
With stripings of scarlet or gold,  
And you carry away of the treasure that rains,  
As much as your apron can hold!  
So come, little child, cuddle closer to me  
In your dainty white nightcap and gown,  
And I'll rock you away to that Sugar-Plum Tree  
In the garden of Shut-Eye Town.

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Have you ever heard of the Sugar-Plum Tree?



'Tis a \_\_\_\_\_ of great renown!  
Noun

It blooms on the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lollypop sea  
Noun

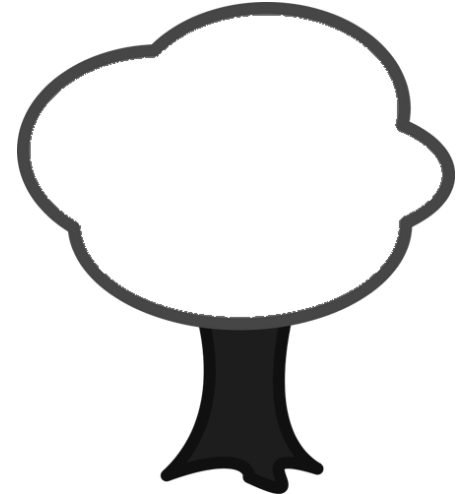
In the garden of Shut-Eye Town;

The fruit that it bears is so wondrously \_\_\_\_\_  
Adjective

(As those who have tasted it say)

That good \_\_\_\_\_ children have only to eat  
Adjective

Of that fruit to be happy next day.



When you've got to the tree, you would have a \_\_\_\_\_ time  
Adjective

To \_\_\_\_\_ the fruit which I sing;  
Verb



The tree is so tall that no \_\_\_\_\_ could climb  
Noun

To the boughs where the sugar-plums swing!

But up in that tree sits a \_\_\_\_\_ cat,  
Food 1

And a \_\_\_\_\_ dog prowls below -  
Food 2



And this is the way you contrive to get at

Those sugar-plums tempting you so:

You say but the word to that \_\_\_\_\_ dog  
Same Food 2

And he \_\_\_\_\_ with such terrible zest  
Verb

That the \_\_\_\_\_ cat is at once all agog,  
Same Food 1

As her swelling proportions attest.

And the \_\_\_\_\_ cat goes cavorting around  
Same Food 1

From this leafy \_\_\_\_\_ unto that,  
Noun

And the sugar-plums \_\_\_\_\_, of course, to the ground -  
Verb

Hurrah for that \_\_\_\_\_ cat!  
Same Adjective 1

There are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_,  
Food (plural) Food (plural) Food (plural)

With \_\_\_\_\_ of scarlet or gold,  
Noun

And you carry away of the \_\_\_\_\_ that rains,  
Noun

As much as your apron can hold!

So come, little child, cuddle closer to me

In your \_\_\_\_\_ white nightcap and gown,  
Adjective

And I'll rock you away to that \_\_\_\_\_  
Adjective Noun

In the garden of Shut-Eye Town.



## **Making Your Own Sugar Plums Activity**

### **Ingredients:**

- 10 oz Fruit Bliss French Plums (2 5oz packs) About 2 1/2 cup
- 1/2 cup pecans (toasted, optional)
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon, plus more for dusting
- 1 tsp finely cut dried orange peel
- 3/4 tsp ground clove
- 1/2 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1/4 tsp table salt
- 1/4-1/2 cup granulated sugar or raw sugar

### **Recipe:**

1. In a food processor, combine all of the ingredients except the sugar. Pulse until everything is combined, but not completely pureed.
2. Spread a piece of parchment paper over a plate or baking sheet and spoon 13 1" spoonfuls onto the parchment. Like you would with cookies. Place in the fridge for 30 minutes.
3. Place the sugar onto a shallow dish so that you can roll the balls into the sugar to coat them. Roll a ball with the palms of your hands and then roll it in the sugar with your fingertips. Repeat with all the spoonfuls. You want these to stay cold, so try not to over roll them. They should conform to a ball easily. Serve immediately.

"Easy Homemade Sugar Plums Recipe" By Trish Bozeman on Rubarbarians.com