

NOTES

In her heartfelt narrative poem, *Kisses*, Elise Sharron introduces us to an elderly woman reflecting on her life. This selection should be performed by a female and be entered in Poetry Interpretation. This selection could also be considered for performance in Dramatic Interpretation. It's always difficult for younger performers to portray age, and this poem is particularly challenging vocally. The narrator is almost 100-years-old; therefore, the performer could choose to deliver the entire poem using an age-appropriate voice. This would, of course, make the overall pacing of the poem slower in delivery. The performer might, however, choose to change and adapt vocally throughout the poem, thus showcasing more vocal variety throughout the performance. If this style is chosen, simply play the teaser, or first stanza, as an old woman in the present. The rest of the poem, beginning with 'First Kiss,' would allow the performer to play the various moments of the narrator's life and vocally progress from a young girl to her present age. The first stanza before the section titled, "First Kiss," would make an excellent teaser, if so desired. The drama mask icons are simply visible to show the performer where to turn the pages in her manuscript.

Today I am ninety- eight years young.
Oh my goodness, that makes me sound old.
Not old yet, just getting there.
As I stand here before my six great-granddaughters,
Who are waiting patiently for me to tell one of my stories,
I can't help but think of the memories those years have left me:
The laughter, the tears, the love, the hugs,
And, oh yes, the kisses.



First Kiss

Boys were officially dumb.
I mean, I already knew they were mean.
No girl really liked a boy, but then I learned that firsthand.
In my second grade class, we had assigned seats.
I sat in front of this boy named James.

James was so dumb, but not because he wasn't smart.
He was dumb, because he was a boy.
So one day, like every other day,
As soon as the teacher turned to write on the board,
James pulled my hair.
I say "Ouch" really loud.
Though, to tell the truth, it didn't really hurt.
He did it every day, and it bothered me.
One day, after I laughed at him for getting in trouble,
He gave me a look, so I stuck out my tongue.
At recess, I was sitting in the grass.
James ran over to me.
I thought he was going to pull my hair and run.
Instead, he threw a flower in my lap.
I smelled it, and then he kissed my cheek and ran away.
Maybe James wasn't dumb...
Or maybe he was not as dumb as the other boys.



Coed Kiss

I was a freshman, and I was so afraid of 'college life.'
I was willing to do anything to fit in.
I must have been the only freshman
That didn't fully understand the term: coed.
Coed meant girls and boys went to the same school.
The boys and girls were separated by just a few buildings.
At my first dorm party, we played games.
The games consisted of *Spin-the-Bottle*
And an early variation of *Truth or Dare*.
I had played *Truth or Dare* many times before,
But I had never played *Spin-the-Bottle*.
During our first two rounds of *Truth or Dare*, I chose *Truth*.
It's true. I didn't wear make-up until I was seventeen.
It's true. I went to the prom with my cousin.
I even had to pay him to go with me.
Finally, I chose *Dare*.
I was dared to kiss Maurice Watson.
He took me around the corner of the stairwell,
Then Maurice attacked my face.
His lips were like a plunger trying to unclog a stopped up drain.
When his lips finally left mine, I was covered in drool.
I think I also had a mild concussion.