**Nonsense and Portmanteau Words**

Purpose: To pique students’ curiosity about language and word usage and to introduce the concepts of Nonsense words/verse and Portmanteau words.

***Nonsense words*** are words without a clear meaning or lack any sort of meaning at all. They just sound pleasing to the ear.

“I see,” said the *speduncted* man to his *slithe* and *rescrundant* daughter.

Used in verse, nonsense words and phrases can make grammatical sense but are semantically (meaning with regard to language) ridiculous.

“I see,” said the blind man to his deaf and mute daughter

as he picked up his hammer and saw.

***Portmanteau words*** are new words that are created by combining two standard English words together.

Spoon + Fork = Spork Skirt + Short = Skort

You can also use adverbs and adjectives to create Portmanteau words: “flutterfly” – a butterfly fluttering away

**Task: Circle all the nonsense words and portmanteau words in the poem “Jabberwocky.”**

Choose three of the circled words and attempt to define them/break down their meaning.

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**Phonology** – the study of sound

In poetry and prose, phonology takes the form of sound devices such as: assonance, alliteration, consonance, onomatopoeia, and rhyme.

Find three examples of sound devices in the poem “Jabberwocky”.

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**Jabberwocky**

**Lewis Carroll**

’Twas brillig, and the slithy toves

Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:

All mimsy were the borogoves,

And the mome raths outgrabe.

“Beware the Jabberwock, my son!

The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!

Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun

The frumious Bandersnatch!”

He took his vorpal sword in hand;

Long time the manxome foe he sought —

So rested he by the Tumtum tree

And stood awhile in thought.

And, as in uffish thought he stood,

The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,

Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,

And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through

The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!

He left it dead, and with its head

He went galumphing back.

“And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?

Come to my arms, my beamish boy!

O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!”

He chortled in his joy.

’Twas brillig, and the slithy toves

Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:

All mimsy were the borogoves,

And the mome raths outgrabe.

Source: Jabberwocky and Other Nonsense: Collected Poems, 2012, by Penguin Random House. This poem is in the public domain