

# The Invitational Week 44: Rhyme and Rhyme Again

Write a funny 'monorhyme,' a poem whose lines all rhyme on the same sound. Plus winning 'Am I the Asshole' questions.

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AND

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Not so much, according to a news story turned into rhyme in this week's Invitational. (Art available at [PosterFoundry.com](http://PosterFoundry.com).)

**Okay, this week's contest:**

**Woohoo!/ It's New/ For You/ To Do!**

**CLEAR GOGGLES**

“ ‘Beer goggles’ study finds alcohol does not make people seem better looking”  
—[The Guardian](#)

**From lunk**

**To hunk**

**When drunk?**

**It’s bunk!**

— *Marshall Begel*

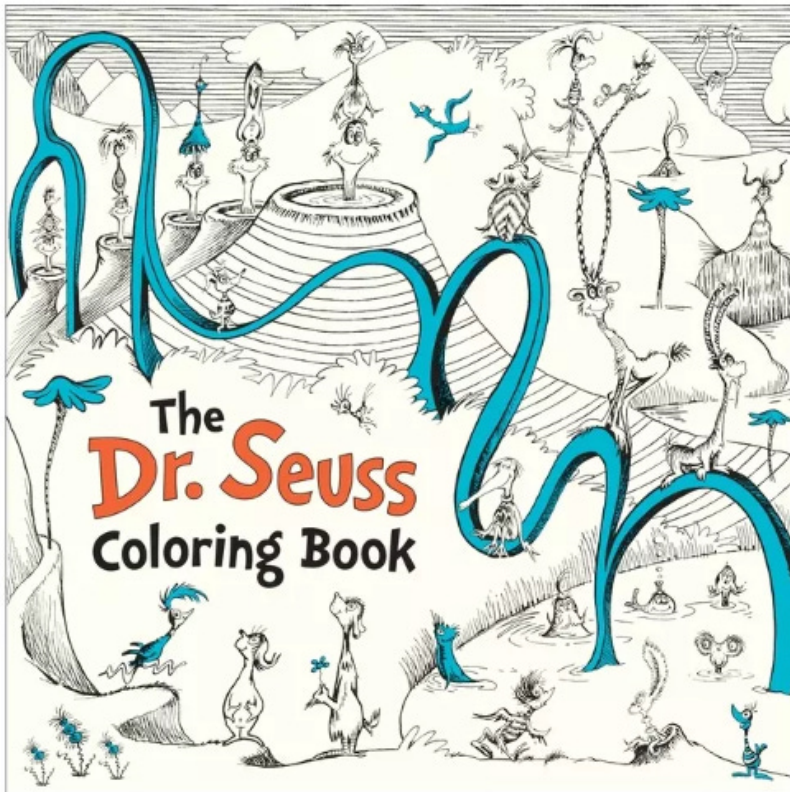
The Invitational has run literally hundreds of poetry contests over [the past 1,561 weeks](#) of its dauntless existence. But *never* had it presented the simple (though not necessarily easy) one we offer today.

**For Invitational Week 44: Write us a funny monorhyme, a poem of any length whose lines all rhyme on the same sound**, as in the pithy example above that appeared last month as one of the news-based “Poems of the Week” in [the journal Light](#). (By “rhyme” we mean “perfect rhyme,” — i.e., “little” doesn’t rhyme with “skittles” or “kettle.”) Also, like the example above: **The poem must relate to some published writing — a news article, a book, a play, an ad, even another poem.** Include the headline or title of that writing, as above, along with a link if you’re quoting an online article or ad; you may use that (or a paraphrase) as the title of your monorhyme, or you can supply a separate title, as Marshall Begel does above.

[Click here for this week’s entry form.](#) Or go to [bit.ly/inv-form-44](http://bit.ly/inv-form-44). No special formatting this week; just send them as they ought to appear. (But do look one more time at the directions above.) As usual, you can submit up to 25 entries for this week’s contest, preferably all on the same form.

**Deadline is Saturday, Nov. 11, at 4 p.m. ET.** Results will run here in The Gene Pool on Thursday, Nov. 16.

The winner gets, somewhat apropos of this week’s contest, “**The Dr. Seuss Coloring Book**,” a quality-paper volume brimming with black-and-white Yertles and Two Fish and Hortons and Truffula Trees and many more (including the occasional 1930s Asian stereotype). Donated by Pie Snelson.



We won't tell if you make the Red Fish a Blue Fish. This week's prize.

**Runners-up** get autographed fake money featuring the Czar or Empress, in one of [ten nifty designs](#). Honorable mentions get bupkis, except for a personal email from the E, plus the [Fir Stink for First Ink](#) for First Offenders.

## Butts of the Joke: The 'AITA' questions of Week 42

[In Week 42](#) we asked you to write us a question inspired by the [“Am I the Asshole?”](#) forum on Reddit. By our accounting, in thirty of the answers, the writer is the asshole. In three, the other person is the asshole. And in two, both are assholes. See if you agree.

*Third runner-up:* On a date with my new girlfriend, I started necking with her in the car, rather vigorously, I must say. Later, my mother scolded me, “I saw what you two were doing and it was embarrassing and totally inappropriate.” I

lost it, screaming, “Then next time, I won’t ask you to chaperone!” AITA? (*Rob Cohen, Potomac, Md.*)

*Second runner-up:* Early in our relationship, my girlfriend (25f) and I (27m) gave each other a “hall pass” to sleep with the celebrity of our choice. I learned that my chosen celebrity’s name is quite common in our area. I contacted about a dozen of them online and had one-night stands with a few. When my girlfriend found out she left me. AITA? (*Lee Graham, Reston, Va.*)

*First runner-up:* I (1f) chewed on a shoe so I got put outside and I dug up the yard so I got put in the garage and I tore apart my bed so I got put back inside and I destroyed a fall decoration so I got put back outside and I damaged a lawn chair (just a little) so I got put back in the garage and I ate a rubber mat so I got put back inside and I threw up the rubber mat in the hallway and I got called a bad dog. AITA? (*Jesse Frankovich, Laingsburg, Mich.*)

*And the winner of the 1950s child-rearing pamphlet [Making the Grade as Dad:](#) My husband (37m) just discovered I’ve been paying a pool boy (22m) for services all summer, and wants to fire him because we don’t have a pool. AITA? (*Sam Mertens, Silver Spring, Md.*)*

## **Bringing Up the Rear: Honorable mentions**

I guess I have a talent for rearranging the letters of people’s names into funny anagrams, and like to share them with the subjects. But at the 20th-anniversary tribute dinner for my boss, I joked that “Dick P. Putterheus” anagrams to “The Stupid Fucker” and there was this awkward silence. AITA? (*Jon Gearhart, Des Moines*)

My friends fill my Facebook feed with their annoying Wordle grids every day. I've begged them to stop, but they persist in flaunting their little lines of colored squares. So now, every day I post charts of my bowel movements. AITA? (*Judy Freed, Deerfield Beach, Fla.*)

AITA if I ran out of apples for trick-or-treaters and made a few caramel-covered onions? (*Jesse Frankovich*)

I often hold a football for my friend Charles to practice field goal kicking, and, well, for reasons of my own, I move it away at the last second every single time, causing Charles to fall on his butt. But listen to this: He still has me hold the ball, and he *still* tries to kick it — every time. And though it has been 37 years since the last straight-on kicker, Charles *still* tries it that way, instead of soccer-style. I ask you: *Who's* the A? — L. Van Pelt (*Judy Freed*)

If it be true I murdered mine own nephew's father and then married his mother so I couldst be king and then paid two of his friends to poisoneth him and then his mother kicketh the bucket instead, doth I be the arsehole? (*Jesse Frankovich*)

In my fantasy league I need a QB for the upcoming bye week, so I offered my buddy a trade: Bijan Robinson (RB/ATL) for Kirk Cousins (QB/MIN). He said fine but only if he could date my sister and I said which one, Cara or Marie. He said Cara, and I said in that case he needs to throw in Sam LaPorta (TE/DET) because Cara is way hotter than Marie. He offered Justin Tucker (K/BAL) but only if I can guarantee he gets to second base with Cara. I responded that in that case, I am definitely holding out for LaPorta, which he says is unreasonable. AITA? (*Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.*)

So I (77M) was standing in the middle of Fifth Avenue and this total woke nutjob was all like “hey, you suck” so I shot him and after that my approval ratings went through the roof. AITA? (*Jesse Frankovich*)

When I see cars with those “Student Driver” signs, I always make sure to pass them on the right, or cut them off on a quick lane change, so they get real-world driving experience in a relatively safe way while learning. But instead, I always get a dirty look from the instructor. AITA? (*Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.*)

My carjacker swore at me as he drove away for not getting out of the car fast enough. AITA? (*Sam Mertens*)

I loved my role in “Our American Cousin” and was looking forward to getting a big laugh after my “sockdologizing” line, just like at every performance at Ford’s. Then right at my shining moment, somebody shot the President, and in all the fuss I never even got a snicker. When I complained about this afterward, people didn’t seem sympathetic in the least. AITA? — Harry Hawk (*Judy Freed*)

I was supposed to find cheap spices, but ended up establishing a supply chain for tomatoes, potatoes, pumpkins, corn, and yep, gold. But now they’re calling me a monster! How was I to know syphilis, smallpox, and colonialism would be such a problem for the locals? Who’s the asshole here? — C.C., Genoa (*Kevin Dopart, Washington*)

If Johnny started it but Johnny told Mom that I started it and then I told Mom that Johnny started it and that Johnny eats boogers, AITA? (*Jesse Frankovich*)

I’m in charge of our company’s voicemail, and I have seen to it that it still orders customers to listen carefully because our menu options have changed, even though the last change was in 1997. This angers some longtime customers who think it wastes their time and is a bald-faced lie, but as far as I am concerned, if just one confused senior citizen each year pays *extra attention* so that they don’t inadvertently choose an option not tailored to their needs ...” (*Jeff Rackow, Bethesda, Md.*)

My lady friend got mad at me for wearing shorts to her mom’s funeral. I explained to her that my Dolce & Gabbana shorts cost me \$325 — more than most of the attendees’ entire outfits! I told her it would have been far more disrespectful if I had worn pants from, like, Old Navy. I mean, am I the asshole here? (*Leif Picoult, Rockville, Md.*)

We think traffic laws, bank deposit insurance, and Supreme Court ethics laws are all unconstitutional because they didn’t exist in 1789. AWTa? — J.R., C.T., S.A., B.K., A. C-B., N.G. (Names withheld by request) (*Marc from the Military, Travis Air Force Base, Calif.*)



For no reason whatsoever, Donald Trump called me an asshole, etc. Am I the asshole? (*Bill Jacobs, Fairfax, Va.*)

I grew up playing sports with my wife's younger brother, Liam. He was a little guy but fit and athletic. We saw each other naked in locker rooms innumerable times.

Now in his twenties, Liam transitioned and last year completed the surgeries and changed their name to Linda. Linda visited us recently and looks great — much hotter than their sister, my wife, I might add. While Linda was showering, I opened the door for a peek. After all, I'd seen Liam naked lots of times, so what the hell?

Linda screamed, then my wife ran in and screamed at me, too. Both packed and left, calling me an A-hole. C'mon, seriously, AITA? (*Jon Ketzner, Cumberland, Md.*)

I answered her, "Yes, you do, but you'd look fat in anything." She got steamed. Does honesty make me the asshole? (*Jesse Frankovich*)

I live in California but have figured out how to get the Eastern feed of "Jeopardy!" three hours earlier. Then when our family watches the local broadcast that evening, I do well, but never overdo it or rub it in — like, I don't bet a lot on Daily Doubles. I think it encourages my wife and kids to up their game. AITA? (*Roy Ashley, Washington, D.C.*)

I do not like my neighbor, Sam.  
His perfect life is just a sham.  
So if I shagged his girlfriend Pam,  
Would you say I the asshole am? (*Jesse Frankovich*)

My neighbor is nice and, to be honest, quite hot, but she has one habit that annoys me: When she showers, she often fails to wash her back. I can't help but notice through my binoculars that she'll soap every other part of her body, but she usually neglects to use a long-handle loofah or something to get those hard-to-reach places. I mentioned it to her in passing one day when I was walking the dog, and she got all mad and ran inside. AITA? (*Leif Picoult*)



After a week of constipation, I finally had a gigantic BM that stretched across the toilet bowl. I left it unflushed so my wife would see the good news. Instead, she wasn't even happy for me. AITA? (*Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.*)

I use my gas-powered leaf blower every morning before leaving for work so my family can wake up to a pristine lawn. While I'm at it, I also clear my neighbors' lawns so they can wake up to pristine grass, too. However, some of my neighbors have asked me not to! I'm, like, who would complain about a free lawn service — don't they know how much those landscaping companies charge for that? Am I the asshole? (*Leif Picoult*)

Based on a true story: For Mother's Day I bought my wife a new laundry basket, since the old one had cracked under the strain of heavy loads she was carrying up and down the stairs. The new one even has a curved side so it doesn't cut into her hip. My wife smiled when I gave it to her, but my daughters were furious. I was only thinking of her and her comfort. AITA? (*Jeff Contompasis*)

I know anything goes these days, but I was raised with traditional values. When I got married, I could tell on our wedding night that my bride wasn't a virgin. I mentioned this to my in-laws, thinking they might apologize for raising a wayward daughter and maybe make a small cash gift to compensate, but they haven't spoken to me since. Am I, you know, the bad person? (*Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore*)

My sibling is a total suck-up to our parents. They lavish praise on him, constantly telling him he's a good boy. One day I got so fed up that I knocked over a vase on the table near where he was sitting so he'd be blamed. Am I the asshole? — Mittens (P.S. I don't actually care what you think.) (*Michael Stein, Arlington, Va.*)

If I used ChatGPT to write this entry because this contest is really hard, and this entry gets ink, AITA or IAITA? (*Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.*)

I'm a cable installer. My office gives you a window of time to expect me, but I won't show up anyway — unless you take a minute to pee, and then I'll leave a note on your door and run. AITA? (*Jon Gearhart*)

I sell insurance. Am I the Asshole? (*Neal Starkman, Seattle*)

*And Last:* My favorite humor/wordplay contest is the best thing on Substack! So I gave everyone I knew my Substack paid-subscription password. But the editors didn't appreciate my spreading the word. AITA? (*Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.*)

*And Even Laster:* I'm humbly sitting out this week's contest, painfully aware that anything I'd produce would just seem lame next to the witty humor and sparkling anecdotes of other Losers, all of whom can draw upon boundless life experiences as genuine assholes to — what? (*Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.*)

*The headline "Butts of the Joke" was submitted by both Kevin Dopart and William Kennard; and both William and Beverley Sharp sent in wrote the honorable-mentions subhead.*

**Still running** — deadline 4 p.m. ET Saturday, Nov. 4: **Our Week 43 contest for "Life Lessons"** to be learned from various places and situations. [Click here](#) for details.