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Kids' corner

Mämericks and Limericks

A Mämerick is a short German poem with a fairytale background. It has always five lines which follow the pattern AABBA. For those of you who are not "mathematically" minded, this means that Lines 1, 2, 5 and Lines 3, 4 rhyme.

Some think that Limericks are derived from Mämericks, but we are not certain about this. Perhaps it is the other way around? A Limerick is a poem with the same rhyming pattern as a Mämerick. Limericks are often very non-sensical and cheeky - they are meant to make people laugh. Some say they are named after the town of Limerick in Ireland.

A Mämerick from Berne

Eine Hexe aus Bern (*a witch from Berne*)
 Frass Kinder gar gern (*ate children without a concern*)
 Zuerst ass sie Anne (*first she ate Anne*)
 Später Susanne (*and then Suzanne*)
 Dann schaute sie fern (*before giving TV a turn*).

A Limerick about a bear

A cheerful old bear at the Zoo
 Could always find something to do.
 When it bored him, you know,
 To walk to and fro,
 He reversed it and walked fro and to.

A Mämerick about a prince:

Ein Prinz vor langer Zeit (*a long time ago a prince*)
 Wüschte sich eine Maid (*wanted a beautiful nymph*)
 Er küsste eine Biene (*a bee he kissed*)
 Da stand vor ihm Sabine (*Sabine was his gift*)
 Nun lebten sie zu zweit (*and together they've lived ever since*).

A Limerick about not thinking

There was a young fellow who thought
 Very little but thought it a lot.
 Then at long last he knew
 What he wanted to do,
 But before he could start, he forgot.

Want to write your own Mämericks and Limericks but are lost for words? There are great websites that let you find words that rhyme with others (that's how we did the above translations). Try this for a start: <http://www.b-rhymes.com/rhyme>.

Find the bear cave



GROMOLO...WHAT???

Some of you may have heard someone speak in Bernese Swiss German dialect. It's one of the quirkiest and most slowly spoken dialects in Switzerland. Everyone loves to hear it!

A "Gromolo" takes this even one step further: Bernese dialect gibberish. A Gromolo is a story or play where words are invented on the spot and used as they were a normal part of the language. Although nobody knows the words, everyone understands them all the same. The secret of secret languages or just silly talk?

Can you read this Bernese Gromolo (aloud)?

"Gäuit, wemer da grad eso schön binanger sitze, hani däicht, chönntech vilicht es bärndütsches Gschichtli erzelle. Es isch zwar es bsungers uganteliges Gschichtli, wo aber no gar nid eso lang im Mittlere Schättegibeleggtäli passiert isch.

Der Schöppelimunggi u der Houderebäsele si einischt schpät am Abe, wo scho der Schibützdurs Gochlimoos pfoderet het, über s Batzmättere Heigisch im Erpfetli zueglüffe u hei nang na gschtigelet u gschigöggelet, das me z Gotts Bäri hätt chönne meine, si sige nanger schein.... "

For the full Gromolo written by the Swiss author Franz Hohler, go to www.mittelschulvorbereitung.ch and search for "Es bärndütsches Gschichtli".

Contributed by Adrian Blaser