

# poetry exhibits

poets.org

THE ACADEMY OF AMERICAN POETS

[poetry awards](#)

[poetry month](#)

[poetry exhibits](#)

[about the academy](#)

Search



[Find a Poem](#) > Judith Viorst

[Support this site](#) | [Send this link to a friend](#)

[Add to a Notebook](#)

## Since Hannah Moved Away [Judith Viorst](#)

---

-  [Larger Type](#)
-  [Find a Poet](#)
-  [Find a Poem](#)
-  [Listening Booth](#)
-  [Discussion Forums](#)
-  [Events Calendars](#)
-  [My Notebooks](#)
-  [Literary Links](#)
-  [Search](#)
-  [Help](#)

The tires on my bike are flat.  
 The sky is grouchy gray.  
 At least it sure feels like that  
 Since Hanna moved away.

Chocolate ice cream tastes like prunes.  
 December's come to stay.  
 They've taken back the Mays and Junes  
 Since Hanna moved away.

Flowers smell like halibut.  
 Velvet feels like hay.  
 Every handsome dog's a mutt  
 Since Hanna moved away.

Nothing's fun to laugh about.  
 Nothing's fun to play.  
 They call me, but I won't come out  
 Since Hanna moved away.

From *If I Were in Charge of the World and Other Worries* . . . , published by Macmillan, 1981. Used with permission.

Copyright © 1997-2002 by The Academy of American Poets  
[About](#) | [Support This Site](#) | [Contact](#)

## Teaching *Since Hanna Moved Away*

This is a really great poem to use as a model for writing original poetry. It's straightforward and the vocab isn't too complicated.

It's fun to discuss this as a poem made up of lies that really tell the truth. In everyday language, we call this exaggeration. Do we use exaggeration in daily conversation? Can you think of examples? How about, "I'm so hungry I could eat a horse", or "It's so hot you could fry an egg on the sidewalk". How are these "lies" that somehow tell a truth? Can you and your tutee come up with more? The fancy poetry word for exaggeration, by the way, is "hyperbole". High-per-bowl-lee.

Read the poem through once, to get the main idea of it, then go back and read it again, looking for "lies". Can your tutee find any? Does chocolate ice cream taste like prunes? Is it really December all the time?

Ask: If not, then why does the poet choose to say these things?  
(Maybe it's because sometimes, by exaggerating real life, poets can give us a good idea of how they really *feel* about something.)

How does the girl in this poem feel? How do you know? It's interesting to notice that there isn't a single "feeling" word in the poem, like "sad" or "upset" or "angry". We get all of our information about how she's feeling by how she describes the world around her. What do you think she'd say about the sky if she were happy? About the taste of chocolate ice cream?

Try writing some original poetry. Tell your tutee that the goal is to write a poem about a very strong feeling without using any "feeling" words, like "sad, happy, scared". Pick a feeling, then imagine how the world would seem to you if you felt that way, and try and describe it. Experiment with hyperbole. If it helps, try and remember the happiest day of your life, or the saddest, or the time you were maddest at your older brother. Describe how the world around you looked. Maybe being angry can make the whole sky turn red, with black lightning. Maybe being sad about your favorite pet dying can make only stupid soap operas show up on the TV. It can rhyme or not, it certainly doesn't have to. When you're done, switch poems, and see if you can figure out what emotion the other person was trying to communicate.