

Kids *love* this poem. I think it has something to do with apologizing for something you're secretly very glad you did- a theme kids can certainly relate to. It's short, sweet, not overwhelming, and the discovery that the apology isn't quite genuine is really fun.

### **This is Just To Say**

I have eaten  
the plums  
that were in  
the icebox

and which  
you were probably  
saving  
for breakfast

Forgive me  
they were delicious  
so sweet  
and so cold

-William Carlos Williams

### **Apology**

The baseball  
has broken  
your dining room window

and I know  
you're having company  
for dinner.

Forgive me  
It was a fine hit  
and I got  
a home run.

-Steve Phoenix, Grade 4.

### **Recommendations for teaching "This is Just to Say":**

1. Have kids read it silently to themselves (Larger copy stapled to back- fold in half so only one poem is showing at a time). Have them underline tricky words. Go over them together.
2. Have the kids read it out loud to you. (Make sure they read the title- it's the beginning of the poem). Cover up the last three lines. How is the author feeling? What is he trying to say?
3. Read the last three lines together. Hmm. Are they surprising? How does the author feel about having eaten the plums? Did he enjoy them?
4. Is the author really sorry? Do you think he'd do it again if he had the chance?
5. Can the child relate? Has he/she ever had to apologize for something he/she wasn't really sorry for? You (the tutor) might share a story of a time this happened to you.
6. Read the above imitation by a fourth grader- "Apology".
7. Ask if your child would like to write an imitation poem about the experience he shared in #5. Offer to write one about your experience too. Read them to each other.
8. These can be absolutely ridiculous. See if you can make your tutee laugh with yours. My irreverent friends offer this example:

Great Aunt Alma  
Has sat on  
my whoopee cushion

And I know  
The whole church  
Heard it

Forgive me  
It was so loud  
And echoed for minutes.

**HAVE FUN!**

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