

## Ode to Lunch

- One day, I sat in math class, the hour approaching noon.  
1 My stomach was a-grumbling—lunch couldn't come too soon!  
I **shifted** in my seat as the second hand ticked time  
And wondered if the bell was ever going to chime.  
The teacher sent me to the board to add a simple fraction.  
I **struggled** to my feet, as I called my brain to action.  
I shouldn't have skipped breakfast—then I wouldn't be  
so haggard,  
But my knees they shook and **wobbled**, as to the board I  
**staggered**.  
The numbers did their very best to add up in neat rows.  
My hunger **interrupted** them—well, that's the way it goes!  
I knew it was **disturbing** all, and that everyone could tell,  
When finally noon arrived, and saved me by the bell.  
I filed into the hallway to join the lunch-bound crowd.  
Then peeked inside my backpack—that's when I screamed  
out loud.  
2 *Oh no!* I yelled. *It can't be!* And yet, I had a hunch  
That I'd really gone and done it: I had forgotten my lunch.  
*I need food oh so badly*, I thought with some hysteria  
And stumbled through the door of our good old cafeteria.  
3 Now, "good" is not exactly what I'd call it in a word.  
In fact, I'd heard some rumors that were really quite absurd.  
One **specialty**, the story goes, is nicknamed "Mystery Meat."

If you can guess the contents, that's really quite a feat.  
The vegetables, it's rumored, are served by **squashing** them  
on a dish.  
Perhaps they'll taste delicious. Well, you can always wish.  
And finally—mashed potatoes. Now these won't go to waste.  
But, I've heard they're gross and watery, and smell worse  
than they taste.  
My mind filled with these items, I **collapsed** into my chair.  
But, though I felt quite famished, I could only sit and stare.  
Then, I began to see (though my mind was going **numb**).  
This wasn't quite the story. How could I be so dumb!  
Some kids were eating yogurts, and fruit, and healthy fare  
That they had bought right here—that our school chefs  
did prepare.  
This stuff, it looked so tasty that I went to get in line  
And piled my tray with things that I knew would taste  
just fine.  
Before I reached the table and sat upon my chair,  
I heard a sound that made me think, *Well, that just isn't fair!*  
And sure enough, the lunch bell that I'd welcomed so before  
Gave out a noisy ring that sent kids heading for the door.  
I shoveled down my yogurt as I shuffled toward the hall,  
Put my apple in a napkin, and wrapped it in a ball.  
The crackers, cheese, and carrots in a pocket I did place,  
And then my food and I down the corridor did race.  
I walked into my classroom singing silent thoughts of praise  
For healthy, tasty food that never ceases to amaze.