

Riding the Rickshaw to School

You can go to school in a great big bus
Pedal a bike, hitch a ride, or walk without fuss.

But I go to school in a real fun way
Ride there in a rickshaw and back each day.

My rickshaw comes daily—summer, winter or rain
I can hear it hooting noisily from the end of the lane.

It comes loaded with kids, all full of beans
Some big, some small, some like me... in between.

A rickshaw looks small, just right for three
But when its time for school, it's packed five times three.

My mother's always worried that someone will fall out of it
But that's not so easy, 'cos were in such a close fit.

We yell and jostle and push and fight
Chattering all together and jammed in tight.

It's a special band of friends—our "auto gang"
We even have fixed places for our bags to hang.

The rickshaw drivers are a breed apart
Each one quite a character, but with a golden heart.

There's Umakantbhai of the bright green pants
Vishnudada who sings and Ramuchacha with his pranks.

The ride back and forth gives us time for fun
Also a chance to read up on yesterday's lesson.

You can swap stories and jokes and friendly whacks
Open up tiffin boxes and share tasty snacks.

Rickshaws are so much a part of our life
Holidays feel strange without our daily ride.

Mamata
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