

Over the River and Through the Wood

From a poem by Lydia Maria Wood, published in 1844

This is the quintessential Thanksgiving song every child learns at some point. Though it's changed a bit over the years, it has stayed remarkably close to the original. The biggest change is that the original had "Grandfather's house" in the second line, while most of us learned "Grandmother's house". Since the author wrote this song about her childhood memories of going to her grandfather's house, I kept to the original. There are many wonderful words we don't use anymore, and it paints an idyllic picture of long-ago Thanksgiving in New England. Learning these old songs gives children a sense of history, and offers opportunities to talk about our own family traditions. I hope you enjoy this trip back in time during this time of giving thanks.

Over the River and Through the Wood

Over the river and through the woods,
To grandfather's* house we go;
The horse knows the way to carry the sleigh,
Thru the white and drifted snow, oh!

Over the river and thru the woods
Oh, how the wind does blow!
It stings the toes and bites the nose,
As over the ground we go.

Over the river and thru the wood,
To have a first-rate play;
Oh, hear the bell ring, "Ting-a-ling-ling!"
Hurrah for Thanksgiving Day!

Over the river and thru the woods,
Trot fast my dapple gray!
Spring over the ground like a hunting hound,
For this is Thanksgiving Day!

Over the river and through the woods,
And straight through the barnyard gate.
We seem to go extremely slow,
It is so hard to wait!

Over the river and through the woods,
Now Grandmother's cap I spy!
Hurrah for fun! Is the pudding done?
Hurrah for the pumpkin pie!

