

# theslowdown\_20200106\_20200106\_128

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

atticus, jabberwocky, roppongi, meow, word, jabber, vorpal sword, joy, poem, wabe, slow, vorpal blade, exaggerating, banana, expression, son, twas, frappe, lewis carroll's, gimple

00:06

I'm Tracy K. Smith, and this is the slow down.

00:22

Sometimes it's just not about sense, right? When my daughter was a baby, she would say lots of things that made sense. Her first word at I'm not exaggerating, four, five months old, was high. I said it to her every morning when I open my eyes and saw her there beside us in the bed. And then one day, she was the first to wake and say it to me. She said Dabi for diaper. One day, she said to me, Dabi now, which convinced me it was time for her to be potty trained. lobby was her way of saying water. And then there were words whose meaning we came to understand. Meow meant banana. Because her babysitter used to say Yummy, yummy, yummy. When she fed her banana. That word morphed in her ear into meow meow meow. I never did figure out what an appy doobie was. When I asked Naomi, she just laugh and say the word again as if it meant Of course itself. But she said it was such joy. It became an expression in our household for a while. Abby Dubey still pops up from time to time out of parental nostalgia. For the bliss it seemed to signal way back when my son Atticus coined the phrase, Roppongi pangi when he was three. This was another instance of an indefinable expression, taking root in our vocabulary. Roppongi just felt good to say, so we said it. Atticus was around g pangi. Sterling was around g pangi, rongji pangi could be applied to anything or simply spoken as an expression of joy. Just this year, I succeeded in getting Atticus to define the term. What is a rongji? pony? I asked him one weekend afternoon when we were all together at the table, or maybe riding somewhere in the car around g. pangi is a cute little boy, he said, and I thought, aha, so I've been using it correctly after all. Today's poem is Lewis Carroll's Jabberwocky from Alice in Wonderland. Do you remember hearing it or maybe even memorizing it as a child? It's lived in my memory since I was in the fifth grade, meaning whatever it means, and sparking a happy, senseless joy.

03:08

Jabberwocky by Lewis Carroll

03:13

Tw'as brillig and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
and the mome raths outgrabe.  
Beware the Jabberwock my son,  
the jaws that bite, the claws that catch  
Beware the Jubberpoo and the Shrawgob,  
the freemius bandersnatch  
he took his vorpal sword in hand,  
long time the manxome foe he sought  
so rested he by the Tumtum tree  
and stood a while in thought.  
And, as the Jabberwock he stood,  
the Jabberwock with eyes of flame  
came whistling through the gloom  
and burbled as it came.  
One to one and through and through  
the vorpal blade went snicker-snack!  
he left it dead, and with its head  
he went galumphing back.  
and has now slain the Jabberwock  
come to my arms and take my bow.  
Oh fraptee just stay Kullu Calais,  
he chortled in his joy.  
Tw'as brillig and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe  
All mimsy were the borogoves  
and the mome raths outgrabe.  
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04:47

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