

## Sing a Song of Sixpence - Nursery Rhyme

### Sing a Song of Sixpence

Sing a song of sixpence,  
A pocket full of rye.  
Four and twenty blackbirds  
Baked in a pie.

When the pie was opened,  
The birds began to sing.  
Wasn't that a dainty dish  
To set before the king?

The king was in his counting house,  
Counting out his money.  
The queen was in the parlour,  
Eating bread and honey.

The maid was in the garden,  
Hanging out the clothes,  
When down came a blackbird  
And pecked off her nose.



**sixpence:** an old British coin, worth six pennies

**rye:** a type of grain used to make bread

**dainty:** fancy, small, and pretty

**parlour:** a sitting room in a house

**maid:** a young woman who does household jobs

## Questions for “Sing a Song of Sixpence”

1. Who are the three characters in this nursery rhyme?
2. What activity is each character doing?
3. What happens when the pie is opened?
4. Where is the maid when the blackbird flies down?
5. How would you describe the pie served to the king? Why might someone choose this kind of pie for a ruler?
6. What do you think the maid’s reaction might be when the blackbird pecks her nose?
7. If you were a king or queen, what do you think would be the best part of the job?
8. What feeling does this nursery rhyme give you—humor, surprise, or confusion? Why?



### Answers:

1. The three characters are the king, the queen, and the maid.
2. The king was counting money, the queen was eating bread and honey, and the maid was hanging out clothes.
3. When the pie is opened, the blackbirds baked inside begin to sing.
4. The maid is in the garden hanging out the clothes.
5. The pie is very unusual because it contains live blackbirds that fly out and sing when it is opened. Someone might choose this kind of pie to please or impress the king because he is royal.
6. The maid would probably feel shocked, hurt, or surprised when the blackbird pecks her nose.
7. Answers may vary. One good part might be having people serve you or living in a palace.
8. Answers may vary. The rhyme may feel humorous or surprising because the pie has live birds in it and one bird pecks the maid.