

Freshman's Interlude with Coelenterata

Behind us sprawl the lowly Protozoa,
But, lo! Before prance princely Metazoa!
So, get thee behind me, trichocysts
 It's onward to nematocysts!
 And statocysts.

All hail to Hydrozoa!
To hell with Sporozoa!
(Until the next exam)
 Excelsior!
 And *Obelia*

Whether to be monoecious or to be dioecious
 Is a suitable sort of question
 For a jellyfish.

There's fashion in being frenetic
 Over the metagenetic
 Or a polymorph.

To comprehend the gonangia of *Gonionemus*
The hydrathecae of hydranths,
Or the manubria of medusae,
Now these are tangibles to seek!

And, proteus, old top, you know one cannot stop
To ponder amoeboid motions
When the mysteries of hydroid emotions
 Are beckoning.

By all reckoning,
We should reach the flatworms next week.

This verse was written more than 50 years ago, because I became impatient upon realizing how many new and difficult terms my beginning zoology students were required to learn, just so we could struggle through this one small section of the course. I decided I would create a verse that included every formidable term in the section, so they could memorize the verse, and never find themselves unable to remember some particular term.