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# Poems for Your Naming Ceremony

*A curated selection of readings for naming ceremonies*

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*These readings have been chosen to celebrate  
new arrivals and new beginnings.  
Whether for a newborn, a young child or an adult welcoming,  
we hope you find words here that feel truly like you.*

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## **A Mother's Wish**

*Anonymous*

*Suitable for naming ceremonies — celebrating a new arrival*

**I hope my child looks back on today  
And sees a mother who had time to play.  
There will be years for cleaning and cooking,  
But children grow up when you're not looking.  
Tomorrow I'll do all the chores you can mention  
But today, my baby needs time and attention.  
So settle down cobwebs; dust go to sleep,  
I'm cuddling my baby, and babies don't keep.**

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## The Beginning

*Rabindranath Tagore*

*Suitable for naming ceremonies — welcoming a new life*

**“Where have I come from, where did you pick me up?”  
the baby asked its mother.**

**She answered, half crying, half laughing,  
and clasping the baby to her breast,**

**“You were hidden in my heart as its desire, my darling.  
You were in the dolls of my childhood’s games;  
and when with clay I made the image of my god every morning,  
I made and unmade you then.**

**You were enshrined with our household deity,  
in his worship I worshipped you.**

**In all my hopes and my loves, in my life,  
in the life of my mother you have lived.  
In the lap of the deathless Spirit who rules our home  
you have been nursed for ages.**

**When in girlhood my heart was opening its petals,  
you hovered as a fragrance about it.  
Your tender softness bloomed in my youthful limbs,  
like a glow in the sky before the sunrise.**

**Heaven’s first darling, twin-born with the morning light,  
you have floated down the stream of the world’s life,  
and at last you have stranded on my heart.**

**As I gaze on your face, mystery overwhelms me;  
you who belong to all have become mine.**

**For fear of losing you I hold you tight to my breast.**

**What magic has snared the world’s treasure in these slender arms of mine?”**

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# I Loved You From the Start

*Unknown*

*Suitable for naming ceremonies – a parent's love*

**I loved you from the very start,  
You stole my breath, embraced my heart.  
Our life together has just begun,  
You're part of me my little one.  
As mother with child, each day I grew,  
My mind was filled with thoughts of you.  
I'd daydream of the things we'd share,  
Like late-night bottles and teddy bears.  
Like first steps and skinned knees,  
Like bedtime stories and ABC's.  
I thought of things you'd want to know,  
Like how birds fly and flowers grow.  
I thought of lessons I'd need to share,  
Like standing tall and playing fair.  
When I first saw your precious face,  
I prayed your life be touched with grace.  
I thanked the angels from above,  
And promised you unending love.  
Each night I lay you down to sleep,  
I gently kiss your head and cheek.  
I count your little fingers and toes;  
I memorize your eyes and nose.  
I linger at your nursery door,  
Awed each day I love you more.  
Through misty eyes, I dim the light,  
I whisper, "I love you" every night.  
I loved you from the very start,  
You stole my breath, embraced my heart.  
As mother and child our journeys begin,  
My heart's yours forever my little friend.**

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## The Example of Parenthood

*Unknown*

*Suitable for naming ceremonies – a promise to lead by example*

**There are little eyes upon you and they're watching night and day;  
There are little ears that quickly take in everything you say;  
There are little hands all eager to do everything you do,  
And a little child who's dreaming of the day they'll be like you.  
You're their idol, you're the wisest of the wise;  
In their little mind about you no suspicions ever rise.  
There's a wide-eyed little one who believes you're always right,  
And their ears are always open as they watch you day and night.  
You are setting an example every day in all you do,  
For the little one who's waiting to grow up to be like you.**

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## **Wishing You Many Smiles and Happy Times**

*Anonymous*

*Suitable for naming ceremonies — wishes for a child's future*

**May life's adventures be exciting and sweet  
Filled with love from the friends that you'll meet.  
You'll soon grow up for time does fly  
So cherish each moment as it goes by.  
From crawling and walking  
To toddling and talking  
There's no knowing what you'll do next.**

**There's a threshold to cross and a wide open door  
And a wonderful world for you to explore.  
Sleep with the moonbeams and play in the sun,  
Let your life be a long one and filled with fun.  
May today and tomorrow and all days hereafter  
Be days that are happy and filled with your laughter.**

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## On Children

*Kahlil Gibran*

*Suitable for naming ceremonies — welcoming a child into the world*

**Your children are not your children.  
They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.  
They come through you but not from you,  
And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.**

**You may give them your love but not your thoughts,  
For they have their own thoughts.  
You may house their bodies but not their souls,  
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow,  
which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.**

**You may strive to be like them,  
but seek not to make them like you.  
For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.**

**You are the bows from which your children  
as living arrows are sent forth.  
The Archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite,  
and He bends you with His might  
that His arrows may go swift and far.**

**Let your bending in the Archer's hand be for gladness;  
For even as He loves the arrow that flies,  
so He loves also the bow that is stable.**

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## **On Self Knowledge**

*Kahlil Gibran*

*Suitable for adult naming ceremonies – reflective and poetic*

**Your hearts know in silence the secrets of the days and the nights.  
But your ears thirst for the sound of your heart's knowledge.  
You would know in words that which you have always known in thought.  
You would touch with your fingers the naked body of your dreams.**

**And it is well you should.  
The hidden well-spring of your soul must needs rise  
and run murmuring to the sea;  
and the treasure of your infinite depths would be revealed to your eyes.**

**But let there be no scales to weigh your unknown treasure;  
and seek not the depths of your knowledge with staff or sounding line.  
For self is a sea boundless and measureless.**

**Say not, "I have found the truth," but rather, "I have found a truth."  
Say not, "I have found the path of the soul."  
Say rather, "I have met the soul walking upon my path."  
For the soul walks upon all paths.**

**The soul walks not upon a line, neither does it grow like a reed.  
The soul unfolds itself, like a lotus of countless petals.**

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## **Song of the Open Road**

*Walt Whitman*

*Suitable for adult naming ceremonies — joyful and forward-looking*

**Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road,  
Healthy, free, the world before me,  
The long brown path before me leading wherever I choose.**

**Henceforth I ask not good-fortune, I myself am good-fortune,  
Henceforth I whimper no more, postpone no more, need nothing,  
Done with indoor complaints, libraries, querulous criticisms,  
Strong and content I travel the open road.**

**The earth, that is sufficient,  
I do not want the constellations any nearer,  
I know they are very well where they are,  
I know they suffice for those who belong to them.**

**Still here I carry my old delicious burdens,  
I carry them, men and women, I carry them with me wherever I go,  
I swear it is impossible for me to get rid of them,  
I am filled with them, and I will fill them in return.**

**From this hour I ordain myself loosed of limits and imaginary lines,  
Going where I list, my own master total and absolute,  
Listening to others, considering well what they say,  
Pausing, searching, receiving, contemplating,  
Gently, but with undeniable will, divesting myself  
of the holds that would hold me.**

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*Inspired Ceremonies — Creating moments that last a lifetime*