

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND

Proverb Collection

Instructions to Collectors

The Department of English is building up a collection of proverbs. At the moment our particular interest is in what have been called 'proverbs of wisdom', that is, traditional expressions of folk wisdom: for example - 'A penny saved is a penny gained'; 'Look before you leap'; 'Time and tide wait for no man'; 'Once bitten, twice shy'; and so on.

We are interested in all such proverbs, whether peculiar to Newfoundland or not. Students may find it helpful, in recalling proverbs they have heard, to consider such major categories or headings as: love and marriage; industry, thrift and work; the weather, wisdom and folly. Most of these are illustrated on the other side of this page, together with rhymed proverbs and proverbs of peculiar Newfoundland usage.

Students are asked to write down as many of these proverbs as they can think of. It is important that certain additional information be given, for example, the name of the student, his place of birth and, particularly, the community or communities in which the proverb has been heard (if all your proverbs come from the same place, there is no need to repeat the information in each case). It would also be very helpful if the student would, where possible, indicate, in each case, whether the proverb is rare or common, whether used by older people or by the younger generation, whether it is used in polite company or is considered vulgar, and above all the context in which it is used: that is, what you understand its meaning to be. If in doubt, give a sentence illustrating how you would use the proverb, or how you have heard it used.

Students are asked to compile their lists on sheets of about this size according to the plan illustrated on the other side of this sheet.

Your completed lists should be handed to your English instructor.

Name:

Date:

Place of Birth:

Home address:

Course No: English

(Suggested arrangement in column form)

<u>Proverb</u>	<u>Meaning or Example</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Notes</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
<u>Examples</u>			
Two is company; three's a crowd.	Lovers like to be alone.	Brigus	Common.
Snow in May is good for sore eyes.	A popular medical belief.	St. John's	Common.
Spare the rod and spoil the child.	Firm discipline of the young is good for the character.	Fortune	Common among adults.
You can't tell the mind of a squid.	A squid moves easily in all directions; hence the proverb is applied to anything unpredictable.	Bonavista	Occasional.
The grass is greenest on the other side of the fence.	Something out of reach is more attractive than something close at hand.	Ramea	Common.
There's many a slip, Twixt cup and lip.	It is hard to be sure of anything.	St. John's	Occasional.
When the snipe bawls, The lobster crawls.	It is believed that the lobster season coincides with the nesting of the snipe.	Torbay	Rare.
Don't count your chickens before they're hatched.	Don't try to anticipate things.	Topsail	Common.
A fool and his money are soon parted.	The wise man should save.	St. John's	Occasional.
Out of sight, out of mind.	We easily forget the absent.	Cow Head	Common.