

**ENGLISH****THE ULTIMATE JOY RIDE THROUGH OUR LANGUAGE**

Long ago T. S. Watt published a poem titled "English"  
in the *Manchester Guardian*:

I take it you already know  
Of *tough* and *bough* and *cough* and *dough*?  
Others may stumble, but not you  
On *hiccough*, *thorough*, *tough*, and *through*.  
Well done! And now you wish, perhaps,  
To learn of less familiar traps?

Beware of *heard*, a dreadful word  
That looks like *beard* and sounds like *bird*.  
And *dead*: it's said like *bed*, not *bead*—  
For goodness' sake don't call it "deed"!  
Watch out for *meat* and *great* and *threat*.  
(They rhyme with *suite* and *straight* and *debt*.)  
A *moth* is not a *moth* in *mother*,  
Nor *both* in *bother*, *broth* in *brother*,  
And *here* is not a match for *there*,  
Nor *dear* and *fear* for *bear* and *pear*,  
And then there's *dose* and *rose* and *lose*  
Just look them up — and *goose* and *choose*,  
And *cork* and *work* and *card* and *ward*,  
And *font* and *front* and *word* and *sword*,  
And *do* and *go* and *thwart* and *cart* —  
Come, come, I've hardly made a start!  
A dreadful language? Man alive!  
I'd mastered it when I was five.  
And yet to write it, the more I tried,  
I hadn't learned at fifty five.

Source: Lederer, Richard (1990). *Crazy English*.  
New York: Pocket Books, a division of Simon & Schuster, Inc.