



Poetry



INTRODUCTION TO POETRY

What is poetry for? Why do people write it?

Writing poetry is a way of expressing one's ideas and emotions, or of recording a special event. The poet's purpose is usually to communicate with other people. Sometimes, a poet may write to sort out her/his own thoughts.

Read the poems in the Poetry section. If you find a poem that you like, read it again. Practise reading it out loud. Ask yourself, 'Why do I like this poem?' and 'What's it about?'

You may have noticed that although the subject matter is important in a poem - as in all forms of writing - poetry has a special quality that enables atmosphere and mood to be passed on by the poet to the reader. When you ask yourself what a poem is about, you should probe beyond the obvious narrative of the poem and ask further questions about the poet's feelings and your response.

Below are some guidelines to help you to focus on the poems and explore and enjoy them more fully.

Why do you like a poem?

Do you like the poem because it:

- is realistic and natural?
- tells a good story?
- makes you laugh, feel sad, loving, tender?
- reminds you of something in your own life?
- Or do you like it for some other reason?

What's the poem about?

- Who is speaking in the poem?
- To whom?
- What about? (Remember that it may be about several things.)
- What does the poet feel, and what do you feel? (This is the **mood** of the poem.)
- How are the ideas being expressed?

You will have an opinion on the first four questions after a close reading of the poem and discussing it with other people. There may be several different, well-supported points of view; all of them deserve consideration.

The fifth question, 'How are the ideas being expressed?' will be better answered using the following guidelines.

What to look for

Language - choosing words:

you may have noticed that the poet uses words in an extremely concise and vivid way. Every word is

chosen with care. The poet, while selecting a word is thinking about its sound as well as its meaning. Examine the poet's choice of words as you read each poem and see how words are used, keeping the following aspects in mind:

Context is determined by key words used in a particular position in a line to maximise their impact.

Double meanings or suggested meaning may lurk behind words and phrases.

Repetition of words and phrases is used for emphasis of meaning or to contribute to atmosphere and rhythm.

The **music** or **rhythm** of each line depends on the choice and placing of words. Rhythm, working alongside the meaning of words, helps to shape the whole poem. A fast rhythm can make words exciting or angry. A slow rhythm may emphasize thoughtfulness or peace.

Ask yourself why the poet has used a particular form. What effect is the poet trying to achieve? Has the poet succeeded?

This example from the poem "A Walk by Moonlight" [stanza 8] shows how Henry Derozio made words work for him.

*"There was a dance among the leaves
Rejoicing in her power,
Who robes for them of silver weaves
within one mystic hour"*

Images

One of the key features of poetry is that it uses images. Images or **word pictures** are a way of creating atmosphere or illustrating ideas. One form of word picture is achieved by using **metaphors**. When the poet surprises you by symbolizing indirectly unlikely things, it helps you to form a memorable picture in your mind. Imagery may be graphic [creating a visual picture] kinetic [suggesting movement] or something sensuous [of the senses]. What kind of imagery do you think this stanza conjures up eg. Curtain by Helen Spalding: Incredulously the laced fingers loosen slowly.

Metaphors

In *Seamus Heaney's* poem 'At a Potato Digging', there is strong visual picture of the potatoes freshly unearthed eg. [part II, stanza 2]

*"The rough bark of humus erupts
knots of potatoes [a clean birth]
whose solid feel, whose wet inside
promises taste of ground and root.
To be piled in pits; live skulls, blind eyed" .*

Similes

Another figure of speech, a **simile**, may be used where a comparison or likeness is stated directly.

In the words of *John Keats*

*"And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook" .*

In the poem '*Ode: To Autumn*', the poet uses the reference to a gleaner as a simile to suggest the generosity of Autumn, when the season offers plenty as left overs for those who search for and gather them.

While reading the poems in your Literature Readers pick the interesting or unusual metaphors. Think about them and discuss them. The images evoked by the metaphors may not be the same for everybody.

As you get used to looking closely at poems you will become aware of all kinds of images and half-images, formed both by direct comparisons and the merest suggestions. You do not necessarily need to identify the images by name to enjoy their impact but it is useful to think about how their effect is achieved, when you make attempts at writing poetry yourself.

Form of structure

A quick glance at how a poem is set out on a page will tell you something about form. As you look through the pages of this book, you will notice:

- poems with verses (or stanzas) of equal length
- verses of irregular length
- lines in a single group
- lines of varying length
- end-stopped lines, which finish or pause before the next line
- some poems which rhyme, others with irregular or no rhyme
- poems written in sentences, obeying the rules of grammar
- poems using words more randomly, with no punctuation or capital letters.

In general, people writing poetry today will use the form that they feel best suits each poem and adds the greatest impact to it. Probing and questioning may lead a poet to a loose, open style, whereas deeply held views and tight emotions might best be contained within a formal pattern. But not necessarily. There is no right and wrong style for particular situation.

It may interest you to know that till the twentieth century there were accepted conventions and styles to poetry, partly depending on subject matter, which influenced poetry writing. Some poets still prefer to work within a tight framework of rules.

There are several types of verse and line forms:

- Blank Verse

- Free Verse
- Rhyming Couplet

Metre - A combination of stressed and unstressed syllables makes up a metre.

Rhyming couplets: They are written using iambic pentameter as their basic meter. These couplets also use rhyme at the end of the lines.

Blank verse: It is written in *iambic pentameter* but has no rhyme at the end of the lines.

Iambic: When the syllables are arranged as unstressed and stressed.

Pentameter: A stressed/unstressed or any other permutation and combination makes a meter.

Free verse: It is written without rhyme and without any traditional metrical* pattern. It has no recurring rhythm. The stress therefore depends on the meaning of the lines.

*Some traditional metrical patterns being Trochee, Spondee, Anapest and Pyrrhic.

The Darkling Thrush

by Thomas Hardy

Warm up: Study the pictures

- a) Natural and manmade catastrophes trigger chaos and destruction. Share your thoughts about each of the scenes given here.



- b) Hardy's best known bird poem was written on December 31, 1900, but its acknowledgment of defiant hope, or even optimism, still holds good.

Read this poem about the poet's feelings about life and how he looks upon its challenges in his way.

The Darkling Thrush

1. I leant upon a *coppice* gate
When frost was spectre-gray
And winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings of broken *lyres*,

coppice: dense growth, bushes

lyres: stringed musical instrument

And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.

2. The land's sharp features seemed to be
The Century's corpse out leant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervourless as I.
3. At once a voice arose among
The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted *evensong*
Of joy *illimited*;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.
4. So little cause for *carolings*
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or *nigh* around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blesse Hope, whereof he knew
And I was unaware.



About the poet

Thomas Hardy was one of the most renowned poets and novelists in English literary history. Hardy's long career spanned the Victorian and the modern eras. Thomas Hardy's poem about the turn of the twentieth century, '*The Darkling Thrush*,' remains one of his most popular and anthologised lyrics. Written on the eve of the new century and first published in *Graphic* with the subtitle *By the Century's Deathbed* and then published in *London Times* on New Year's Day, 1901. The thirty-two line poem uses a bleak and wintry landscape as a metaphor for the close of the nineteenth century and the joyful song of a solitary thrush as a symbolic image of the dawning century.



even song: evening prayer
illimited: unlimited
carolings: songs of joy
nigh: (OE) near

I. Understanding the poem:**1. On the basis of your reading choose the most appropriate option.**

- a) What is the setting of the poem?
 - i) The poet has moved from the city to the country side
 - ii) The poet talks about the last day of a century
 - iii) The poet walks through a forest
 - iv) The poet discusses the landscape
- b) How is the third stanza a contrast to the previous stanza?
 - i) The thrush's song serves as a harbinger of life in the blank landscape
 - ii) The song of the thrush is about the arrival of the spring season
 - iii) The first stanza is about the germination of a seed
 - iv) The poet is awaiting a new era

1.2 Answer the following briefly.

- a) Why doesn't the speaker feel joyous while the bird could see the good things ahead?
- b) Identify the following:
 - time of the day
 - time of the year
 - place where the poet finds himself
- c) Pick out the images in Stanza 1 that convey the following moods
 - thoughtfulness
 - despondency
- d) Why is the thrush referred to as an 'aged bird'?
- e) Why does the poet disbelieve the bird's "carolings"?
- f) Explain the images of contrast presented in stanza 4.
- g) How does the poet establish a sense of the following (throughout the poem)?
 - time
 - space
 - mood
- h) What is suggested by the following words / phrases in the poem?
 - spectre-grey
 - haunted
 - joy illimited
 - blast - beruffled
- i) What do the thrush and the poet have in common?
- j) Bring out the significance of the title, "The Darkling Thrush".

2. Appreciation:

2.1 Fill in the table with suitable examples from the poem.

1. Setting	
2. Tone	
3. Theme	

2.2 Hardy has used a specific style in bringing out the theme of the poem. Complete the table by identifying the images / words / phrases used in the poem.

1. Time eg : sunset	Ending of the century etc.
2. Nature	
3. Hope	
4. Music	

2.3 Identify the rhyme scheme in the given stanza

I leant upon a coppice **gate**
 When Frost was spectre-**grey**,
 And Winter's dregs made **desolate**
 The weakening eye of **day**.
 The tangled bine-stems scored the **sky**
 Like strings of broken **lyres**,
 And all mankind that haunted **nigh**
 Had sought their household **fires**.

2.4 Figures of speech

- Identify the *simile* in the poem and explain.
- Identify and explain an alliteration.
- What is a *metaphor*? The poem has several metaphors. One has been done as an example. Find the others and explain them.
 e.g.: 'Had chosen thus to fling his soul' refers to a bird song as the soul.

3) Writing Skills:

3.1 Identify words that signify positivity and negativity in the poem

Positive	Negative

3.2 Compose a 10 line poem bringing out your own optimism while facing the new year / century.

3.3 As Thomas Hardy, write a diary entry about how the song of the thrush changed your thoughts, in about 80-100 words.

3.4 The "The Darkling Thrush" is both a lament for the death of music and a celebration of its rebirth. Substantiate this observation in about 80 -100 words.

4) Speaking Skills:

Speak briefly on the topic: ***Lessons of life can be learnt from nature.***

5) Activity:

Suppose that you are seated in a time machine. You travel from the 21st century era to go back to the 19th century. Share your thoughts about the changes you would notice. Use the following clues to write an article in about 200-250 words. You may express your feelings about what you see during the journey.

- a) Politics, Administration
- b) Monuments
- c) Literary personalities
- d) Great scientists / leaders

You may need to refer to the encyclopedia, history books in your library or surf the internet to help you develop your article. Give an interesting title.

Hope

by Emily Dickinson

Warm up:

Interpret the scenes in the pictures what does each suggest to you?



What keeps people going under such circumstances? Share your ideas with the class.

READ THE POEM:

1. "Hope" is the thing with feathers-
That perches in the soul-
And sings the tune without the words-
And never stops-at all-
2. And sweetest-in the Gale-is heard-
And sore must be the storm-
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm-
3. I've heard it in the chilliest land-
And on the strangest Sea-
Yet, never, in Extremity,
It asked a crumb-of Me.



About the poet

In 1830, Emily Dickinson was born in Amherst, Massachusetts, USA. She attended Mount Holyoke Female Seminary in South Hadley, but only for one year. Throughout her life, she seldom left her house and visitors were few. Dickinson lived in almost total physical isolation from the outside world, but actively maintained many correspondences and read widely.

Dickinson's poetry reflects her loneliness and the speakers of her poems generally live in a state of want. Her poems are also marked by the intimate recollection of inspirational moments which are decidedly life-giving and suggest the possibility of happiness.



1. Understanding the poem:

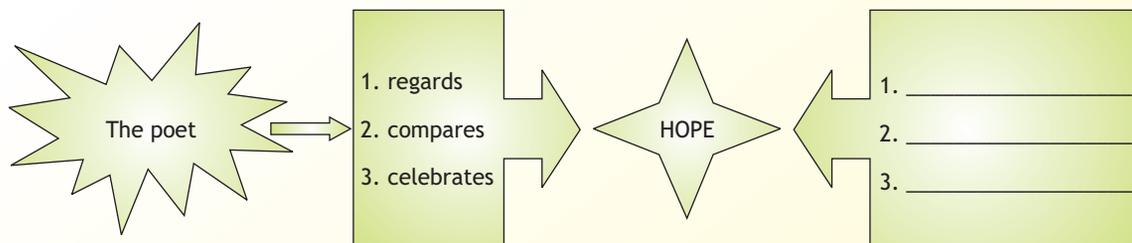
1.1 Choose the best option

- a) 'That perches in the soul' implies
 - i) soul is the home for hope.
 - ii) bird rests in its home.
 - iii) bird sings from its soul.
- b) Emily Dickinson uses the bird as a symbol for
 - i) optimism
 - ii) pessimism
 - iii) Both of the above

1.2 Based on your understanding of the poem and the given visuals, answer the following questions briefly. Do this individually, in a word or two.

- a) To what does the poet, compare the bird?
- b) Where does the bird perch?
- c) What is a 'gale'?
- d) What does the 'gale' represent in the poem?
- e) Why is hope "endless"?
- f) How can a song keep a person "warm"?

1.3 a) Complete suitably



- b) Why does Dickinson say 'Yet, never, in Extremity, It asked a crumb of Me!'

1.4 Fill in the spaces appropriately

'HOPE' is represented in words like

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The 'PAIN' of life is represented in words like

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

2. Appreciation:

- 2.1 The poet has used 'dashes' as punctuation marks rather than a 'full stop' or a 'comma' in her poem. Explain why?
- 2.2 In the poem, *Imagery* is used explicitly. Pick out an image in each stanza and explain.
- 2.3 Pick out the alliteration and explain its influence on the poem.
- 2.4 Identify the figures of the speech/poetic devices used in the poem, and illustrate them with examples.

Poetic device	Stanza No.	Lines from the poem
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

3. Writing Skills:

- a) When one loses something, he/she is shocked and goes into a state of denial, leading to anger. In such a situation, coping leads to acceptance and a changed way of living with loss. Write an article on how 'Hope' helps one to 'Cope with Loss', with suitable examples from the two poems in about 100-120 words.
- b) Write an article about the 'Philosophical View of the World' to be published in the 'Youth Forum' of a journal. Write the article in about 150 words, based on suitable examples from both the poems.
- c) What does the bird symbolise in the poems, 'The Darkling Thrush' and 'Hope'? Identify yourself with the bird and express your thoughts in a diary entry, in about 150 words.

4. Speaking Skills:

Speak for a minute or two on the topic - "All odds, all challenges, all tragedies and all handicaps of life, can be overcome with strong hope, determination, persistent hard work, insurmountable patience and unshakeable tenacity."

5. Activity:

Critically review the poems, gain an insight into the life of the two poets and create a colourful, informative and visually appealing collage to represent their poems. Remember that the poets and their compositions are invariably affected by their life experiences which manifest in their creative work.

Survivors

by Siegfried Sassoon

Warm up:

The present century has witnessed several wars and conflicts that erupted in different parts of the world.

Discuss in pairs:

- a) What led to so many wars?
- b) War causes much suffering. Who are the victims? In what ways do they suffer?

Read the poem.

No doubt they'll soon get well; the shock and strain
have caused their stammering, disconnected talk.
Of course they're 'longing to go out again, '-
These boys with old, scared faces, learning to walk.
They'll soon forget their haunted nights; their cowed
Subjection to the ghosts of friends who died,
Their dreams that drip with murder; and they'll be proud
Of glorious war that shatter'd all their pride...
Men who went out to battle, grim and glad;
Children, with eyes that hate you, broken and mad.



Craiglockhart. October, 1917.

I. Understanding the poem:

a) Complete the summary of the poem:

The men who went out into the battlefield and survived the war will _____ .
The shock and strain may have caused _____. Soon, they will
_____ to go out again. These men who fought at the battlefield though old now
are learning _____ and live life once again. The trauma of the battle, their
_____ nights, memories of the friends who _____ will soon
be forgotten. Their dreams that drip with murder today will also be a part of the
_____ past. The wounds will heal and they will be _____ of
the glorious war though it _____ pride yet, it is sad that the men who went out
to battle _____ and glad, return to their motherland looking like children with
eyes that _____, broken and _____.

cowed subjection: to cause suffering and bring under control by using threats and violence
Craiglockhart: (1916-1919) Military psychiatric hospital for the treatment of shell - shocked officers

II. Appreciation:

1. "No doubt they'll soon get well.
Of course they're longing to go out again."
 - a) Who is being referred to in these lines?
 - b) Who is the speaker?
 - i) a fellow soldier
 - ii) a non - combatant
2. "Men who went out to battle, grim and glad;
children, with eyes that hate you, broken and mad."
 - a) What contrasting picture of soldiers is given in the last two lines?
 - b) Bring out the significance of the following phrases from the poem.
 - i) 'grim and glad'
 - ii) 'eyes that hate you'

III. Writing Skills:

- a) Do you know that one of the symptoms of combat fatigue or 'neurasthenia' is a stammer and a failure to string sentences together coherently? The poem portrays the grim untold reality of war. Is it a truthful one? Give reasons.
- b) What does the poet mean by "haunted nights' cowed subjection dreams that drip with murder"?
- c) The combatants went into war as men, 'grim and glad' and returned as children, 'broken and mad'. Explain why?
- d) Why do people go to war? Has war ever served any purpose? Substantiate your point of view by giving examples from world events.
- e) You have been asked to speak on the plight of survivors in war. In the light of the above poem and your own perception, write your speech in about 100 -120 words.

Use the following hints:

- the contradictory attitudes to war
- the effects of war
- the tragedy of war
- loss of lives
- disillusionment
- destruction
- death of the young

Discussion:

Discuss the following in groups of three or four, with reference to the poem 'Survivors'.

- a) Why do people go to war?
- b) Has a war ever served any purpose? Substantiate your point of view.

At A Potato Digging

by Seamus Heaney

- Below are images of possible disasters that can completely change one's life, unless one happens to be one of the lucky survivors. Discuss how.

1)



3)



2)



4)



1) _____

3) _____

2) _____

4) _____

Read the Poem.

At a Potato Digging

I
 A mechanical digger wrecks the drill,
 Spins up a dark shower of roots and mould.
 Labourers swarm in behind, stoop to fill
 Wicker *creels*. Fingers go dead in the cold.
 Like crows attacking crow-black fields, they stretch
 A *higgledy* line from hedge to headland;

creels: basket worn slung on the shoulder
higgledy: higgledy-piggledy means being in disorder

Some pairs keep breaking ragged ranks to fetch
A full creel to the pit and straighten, stand
Tall for a moment but soon stumble back
To fish a new load from the crumbled surf.
Heads bow, trucks bend, hands fumble towards the black
Mother. Processional stooping through the turf
Turns work to ritual. Centuries
Of fear and homage to the famine god
Toughen the muscles behind their humbled knees,
Make a seasonal alter of the sod.

II

Flint-white, purple. They lie scattered
Like inflated pebbles. Native
to the blank hutch of clay
where the halved seed shot and clotted
these knobbed and slit-eyed tubers seem
the petrified hearts of drills. Split
by the spade, they show white as cream.
Good smells exude from crumbled earth.
The rough bark of humus erupts
knots of potatoes (a clean birth)
whose solid feel, whose wet inside
promises taste of ground and root.
To be piled in pits; live skulls, blind-eyed.

III

Live skulls, blind-eyed, balanced on
wild higgledy skeletons
scoured the land in 'forty-five,'
wolfed the blighted root and died.
The new potato, sound as stone,
putrified when it had lain
three days in the long clay pit.
Millions rotted along with it.
Mouths tightened in, eyes died hard,



flint-white: white stone used to light a fire
wolfed: devoured voraciously

faces chilled to a plucked bird.
In a million wicker huts
beaks of famine snipped at guts.

A people hungering from birth,
grubbing, like plants, in the bitch earth,
were grafted with a great sorrow.
Hope rotted like a *marrow*.

Stinking potatoes fouled the land,
pits turned pus in filthy mounds:
and where potato diggers are
you still smell the running sore.

About the author

Seamus Justin Heaney was an Irish poet, playwright, translator and lecturer, and the recipient of the 1995 Nobel Prize in Literature. In the early 1960s, he became a lecturer in Belfast after attending university there, and began to publish poetry. Heaney was born on 13 April 1939, at the family farmhouse called Mossbawn. He lived in Sandymount, Dublin from 1972 until his death. Heaney was a professor at Harvard from 1981 to 1997 and its Poet in Residence from 1988 to 2006. From 1989 to 1994 he was also the Professor of Poetry at Oxford and in 1996 was made a Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et Lettres. Other awards that Heaney received include the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize (1968), the E. M. Forster Award (1975), the PEN Translation Prize (1985), the Golden Wreath of Poetry (2001), T. S. Eliot Prize (2006) and two Whitbread Prizes (1996 and 1999). In 2012, he was awarded the Lifetime Recognition Award from the Griffin Trust For Excellence In Poetry. Heaney's literary papers are held by the National Library of Ireland.



1. Understanding the poem.

1.1 Answer by choosing the best option.

- A. The poem is about _____
- a) potato harvests
 - b) two different ways of harvesting potatoes
 - c) people in Ireland
 - d) None of the above.
- B. The rhyme scheme in the third section of the poem is
- a) aabb

marrow: squash

- b) abab
 - c) irregular pattern
 - d) abcabc
- C. In 'Scoured the hand in 'forty five'; 'Forty five' refers to the
- a) Date when the Irish potato famine occurred
 - b) Suffering of the Irish for 45 years
 - c) Freedom of Ireland
 - d) Invention of mechanical diggers.

1.2 Complete the passage given below by using the words/phrases in the boxes.

blighted root	modern	like inflated pebbles
ground	contrasting	vitality
contentment and well-being	revisitation	sharp contrast
At a Potato Digging	metaphor	figurative
simile	poor	health
disgusted	relationship	fouled the land

Seamus Heaney's poem "1 _____," features two 2 _____ depictions of a potato harvest. In the first section of the poem, the speaker describes a 3 _____ potato harvest with "a mechanical digger". The second section provides details about what a healthy potato harvest should look like. Heaney uses details and 4 _____ language to create realistic imagery of the potatoes' appearance. He uses a 5 _____ in line eighteen, "like 6 _____;" the poet's diction suggests 7 _____ and 8 _____; the earth has "good smells" and "a clean birth" of the potatoes, using a birth 9 _____ to describe the harvest.

The third section of the poem offers a 10 _____ to the prior section. In this section, Heaney describes a time when the harvest was 11 _____; his poem conjures imagery of sickness and disease with phrases like "-12 _____" and "stinking potatoes-13 _____". He carefully describes the famine's effect on the population by flashing images of the aftermath in tight, controlled phrases. His 14 _____ tone reflects the speaker's anger at the failure of the crop.

The final section of the poem is a 15 _____ of the scene in the first section. Here, the workers sit and have lunch after working at the potato harvest. Heaney uses their 16 _____ to contrast the previous section in which the people were starving from the famine. The workers "take their fill" on the "faithless ground;" the depiction of the ground as "faithless" 17 _____ the earth as not only being uncertain and unreliable, but also suggests a 18 _____ between the earth and the farmers, in which the earth has betrayed the farmers' trust in the past.

1.3 Answer the following briefly:

- a) Why does the poet compare the two potato harvests?

- b) What view does the poem give of humanity's relationship with the Earth?
- c) Contrast the quality of the harvest being described here.
 - by machine
 - by hand
 - during the famine
- d) How is the image of death linked in parts 2 and 3?
- e) Bring out the importance of the potato harvest to the Irish?
- f) How can Mother Earth give, as well as take away from her children?
- g) How does Heaney compare the past and present in the poem?

2. Explain the following lines.

- a) "Like crows attacking crow-black fields".
- b) "To fish a new load from the crumbled surf".
- c) "Turns work to ritual".
- d) "They lay scattered like inflated pebbles".
- e) ".....wild higgledy skeletons scoured the land in 'forty-five'".

3. Writing Skills

- 3.1 Write a report on the theme "The Impact of nature on the quality of human life", in about 200 words. Support your answer with suitable references from the poem and your own ideas.
- 3.2 As a farmer, design a poster / pamphlet to convey the message that it is the responsibility of all to preserve and protect Mother Earth with suitable references from Heaney's poem.
- 3.3 The Indian economy depends on agriculture and the harvest festival is popularly celebrated throughout the land. Based what you have seen or read about and together with your own ideas, write an article describing the harvest festival in your locality in about 150-200 words.

4. Speaking Skills

- a) Our country is experiencing drought and water shortage due to low and inadequate rainfall. You are concerned about this. Address your class for two or three minutes about periodic conditions drought in the country, and what should be done to counter its impact. Use illustrative examples from the poem.

- b) Listen to the poem. Speak on the commonality between "At a Potato Digging" and the poem "Patrolling Barnegat" by Walt Whitman.

*WILD, wild the storm, and the sea high running;
Steady the roar of the gale, with incessant under-tone muttering;
Shouts of demoniac laughter fitfully piercing and pealing;
Waves, air, midnight, their savagest trinity lashing;
Out in the shadows there, milk-white combs careering;
On beachy slush and sand, spurts of snow fierce slanting-
Where, through the murk, the easterly death-wind breasting,*

*Through cutting swirl and spray, watchful and firm advancing
(That in the distance! is that a wreck? is the red signal flaring?),
Slush and sand of the beach, tireless till daylight wending,
Steadily, slowly, through hoarse roar never remitting,
Along the midnight edge, by those milk-white combs careering,
A group of dim, weird forms, struggling, the night confronting,
That savage trinity warily watching.*

- c) In groups of four, brainstorm the topic **Nature's Fury - Its Consequences and Alternatives**. Make a powerpoint presentation of about 3-4 minutes expressing your group's views to the class.

Ode: To Autumn

by John Keats

Warm up:

- Think of as many words associated with seasons that come to your mind. What kinds of colours, images, sounds and activities do you associate with each of them? Discuss with your partner
- Now complete the following table.

Season	Colours/Images	Sounds	Activities	What I feel about it
Summer	yellow gulmohar trees in bloom			

Read the poem.

Season of mists and *mellow* fruitfulness,
 Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun:
 Conspiring with him how to load and bless
 With fruit the vines that round the *thatch-eves* run;
 5 To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,
 And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
 To swell the *gourd*, and plump the *hazel* shells
 With a sweet *kernel*; to set budding more,
 And still more, later flowers for the bees,
 10 Until they think warm days will never cease,
 For summer has o'er-brimmed their *clammy* cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid they store?
 Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
 Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,

mellow: (of fruit) ripe, soft, of a golden brown colour

thatch-eves: roof covering of straw, reeds

eves: part of a roof that meets or overhands the walls of a building

gourd: fruit with a hard skin

hazel: shrub or small tree bearing round nuts called hazel nuts

kernel: softer part inside the shell of a nut, or fruit stone

clammy: damp and sticky

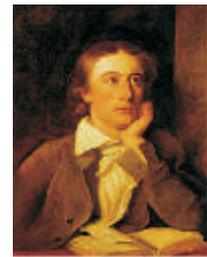
- 15 Thy hair soft-lifted by the *winnowing* wind;
 Or on a half-reaped *furrow* sound asleep,
 Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
 Spares the next *swath* and all its *twined* flowers:
 And sometimes like a *gleaner* thou dost keep
- 20 Steady thy laden head across a brook,
 Or by a *cider-press*, with patient look;
 Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
 Think not of them, thou hast they music too, -

- 25 While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
 And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
 Then in a wailful choir the small *gnats* mourn
 Among the river *sallows*, borne aloft
 Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
- 30 And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly *boorn*;
 Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
 The red-breast whistles from a *garden-croft*;
 And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

About the poet:

John Keats, one of England's great poets, was born on October 31, 1795 in London. A voracious reader from childhood, Keats was introduced to the works of Elizabethan dramatists and poets. Keats was studying medicine in London when his sonnets were first published in the Examiner. In 1819 he became ill with tuberculosis and died in Rome on February 23, 1821. He wrote *Endymion* in 1818 while *Lamia*, *Isabella*, *The Eve of St. Agnes* and other Poems appeared in 1820 and within this short period, Keats became recognized as a major poet. Among the most successful of his poems are the great odes - *To Psyche*, *To a Nightingale*, *On Melancholy*, *On a Grecian Urn* and finally *Ode To Autumn* - all written between April and September, 1819. In *Ode To Autumn*, which was written impromptu, the method is objective, the mood serene and the plan and details close to perfection.



thee: archaic or old form of *you*

winnowing: blowing air through grain in the order to remove the chaff or cover

furrow: long narrow trench made in the ground by a plough

swath: row or line of grass, corn, etc. as it falls when cut down

twined: wound round something

gleaner: one who gathers leftover grain after a harvest

cider-press: apparatus for pressing out apple juice to prepare an alcoholic drink

gnats: small two-winged flies

sallows: trees of the willow family

boorn: small stream

garden-croft: small rented farm in Scotland or northern England

I. Understanding the poem:

*'Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun,
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run'*

1. Complete the sentence suitably, based on the given extract.

The poet is describing a _____ called _____. It is full of _____ and _____ . Its close friend is the _____ because they both conspire and fill all _____ with ripeness. The _____ are climbing over the roof of the cottage.

*'With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;
To bend with apples the massed cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees.'*

List the various activities that autumn and summer are busy in

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

2. Appreciation:

*'Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimmed their clammy cells.'*

- a) Who is being referred to as 'they'?
- b) What do they think? Why?
- c) What kind of effect is achieved with the use of words such as 'o'er brimmed' and 'clammy'?
- d) What is the overall effect of this stanza?
- e) Describe the images and word pictures in this stanza.

3. *'For summer has o'er-brimmed their clammy cells.'*

- a) Who is being referred to as 'thee'?
- b) What figure of speech is being used here?
- c) What is the 'store' in this line?

4. 'Who hath not seen thee oft amid they store'? The person who seeks autumn can find her in a number of places. Autumn is no longer as full as described in Stanza 1. Autumn has been personified here.
- a) What are the various places that autumn can be found in? Read lines 12-22 carefully and complete the table:

Autumn's apperances	Location	
• _____	granary floor	i) What effect do these pictures have on the reader? ii) How is this stanza different from stanza 1?
• _____	_____	
• _____	_____	
• _____	_____	

- a) What are the various activities which autumn is doing or has paused in doing?

Lines 14 - 15 _____

Lines 16 - 17 _____

Lines 17 - 18 _____

Lines 18 - 19 _____

Lines 21 - 22 _____

- b) 'Where are the songs of spring? Ay, where are they?

Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,'

- a) What question does the poet ask here? Why?

- b) What answer does the poet give?

- c) What does the poet suggest by the phrase 'songs of spring'?

- c) 'While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue'

- a) Pick out the words which describe the following:

- clouds
- day
- plains

- b) Why does the poet use these words?

5. *'Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-cricket sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;*

And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.'

You may have noticed that in Stanza 1, the images were all connected to a cottage and its surroundings. In Stanza 2 the poem takes us to open spaces, Stanzas 1 and 2 are rich in visual detail.

6. In stanza 2 from lines 27-33, what are the images being evoked? Which of your senses do these lines stimulate?
7. Read lines 27-33. Complete the following table:

Name of insect/animal	Where	Words describing sound
• gnats	• river	• wailful choir
• _____	• _____	• mourn
• _____	• _____	• _____
• _____	• _____	• _____
• _____	• _____	• _____

II. Appreciation:

1. a) Study the given picture. To which stanza does it relate? Give the description in the boxes in your own words.

a)

b)

c)



2. The paragraph below is a critical appreciation of the poem. Choose the correct word(s) from those given in the box and fill in the blanks suitably.

perfect	red-breast	gleaning	questions	Keats
images	reaping	harvesting	wailing	swallows
sun	sounds	beating	conspiring	stubble
abundance	second	answered	To Autumn	woman
singing	hedge-crickets	whistling	barred	
fruit	closing	twittering	sights	

flowers	personification	first	cutting	lambs
---------	-----------------	-------	---------	-------

_____ by _____ has been termed by many critics as the _____ poem because it gives the reader a complete picture of the _____ and _____ of autumn.

The first stanza is full of beautiful and vivid _____ of the season. There exists a close friendship between Autumn and the _____. During autumn both are _____ how to 'load and bless' plants, vines and trees with _____ and _____. All the descriptions in stanza 1 build up to give us an image of _____.

In the _____ stanza, the poet describes autumn as a _____. The figure of speech used here is _____. Most of the images are those of a figure in a static position or in arrested motion. The poet shifts his view in this stanza beyond the 'cottage trees' of the _____ stanza to the granary. Various activities connected with _____ are mentioned such as winnowing, _____, _____ and _____.

The final stanza begins with a disturbing and wistful _____ but it is _____ quickly. The poet now gives us the images of _____ plains and _____ clouds at the _____ of an autumn day. There are several striking sound images in the stanza such as the _____ of gnats, the _____ of _____, the _____ of _____, the _____ of the _____ and the _____ of _____.

III. Writing Skills:

1. You have read the poem 'Ode To Autumn', studied it closely and found how Keats uses various visual, tactile (touch), auditory (sound) images to create a complete picture of the season. Now write to a friend abroad who has never experienced an Indian summer or an Indian monsoon.

2. Choose the season you most like and write an article/poem on it. Use the given clues.

- the sights
- the sounds
- the activities
- your thoughts and feeling

Hamlet's Dilemma(from the play *Hamlet*) by William Shakespeare**Warm up:**

1. Have you heard or come across these idiomatic expressions? What do they mean?
 - a) Hobson's choice
 - b) on the horns of a dilemma
 - c) cat on the wall
 - d) between the devil and the deep sea
 2. Given below are a few famous lines from Shakespeare's plays. Match them with the play in which they occur.
 - a) *'Friends, Romans country men
Lend me your ears'*
 - b) *'All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;'*
 - c) *'The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath.'*
 - d) *'If music be the food of love play on'*
- Twelfth Night
Julius Caesar
As you Like it
The Merchant of Venice
- In Shakespearian plays, **soliloquies** are popular. A soliloquy is a speech rendered by a character in a play, which is meant for the audience / reader.
3. Given below are a few statements about the soliloquy. Are they true or false?
 - a) A long speech spoken by a single character that reveals inner thoughts.
 - b) The character reveals inner thoughts, and puzzles out personal problems
 - c) Only the male character renders a soliloquy
 - d) It's a part of a dialogue with other characters
 - e) It is rendered in the final scene.

Background: A ghost appears at Elsinore castle. Prince Hamlet goes to the castle ramparts to watch for the apparition. When the ghost reappears, it speaks to Hamlet and claims to be his dead father. The ghost asks Hamlet to avenge his murder. Hamlet, horrified, vows to "remember." Uncertain of whom he can trust, Hamlet feigns madness. Convinced that his step father, Claudius is guilty, Hamlet finds him alone but is unable to go through with killing him. Claudius sends Hamlet to England, where he has given orders for Hamlet to be killed, but Hamlet escapes. Hamlet returns to Denmark to complete his vengeance, and succeeds in killing Claudius before he himself is killed.

Source: From the Folger Shakespeare Library Edition (New York: Washington Square Press, 1992).

4. Read to this famous soliloquy from the play 'Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark' .

1. To be or not to be-that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
And, by opposing, end them. To die, to sleep-
No more-and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to-'tis a *consummation*
Devoutly to be wished. To die, to sleep-
10. To sleep, perchance to dream. Ay, there's the *rub*,
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life.
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's *contumely*,
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th' unworthy takes,
20. When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare *bodkin*? Who would *fardels* bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscovered country from whose bourn
No traveler returns, puzzles the will
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution

Consummation: end or death

Rub: impediment, obstacle

Contumely: contemptuous treatment

Quietus: a release from life.

Hodgkin: a sharp instrument like an awl, dagger

Fardels: burden

30. Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great *pitch* and moment
With this regard their currents turn *awry*
And lose the name of action.

I. Understanding the poem

a) Complete the summary based on your understanding

Hamlet was in a deep dilemma. He wondered if he should _____ to live or die. His mental conflict centered around _____ possibilities. He asks if - it is nobler to _____ the slings and arrows of an unbearable situation than to fight against the sea of _____ that afflicts one and by opposing them, end them. He pondered over the prospect of dying because with death we _____ the heartaches and the innumerable natural _____ that human beings have to endure. It is an end that we all hope for -to sleep _____.

There is a problem in this solution also .In the sleep of death we might have _____ and these dreams add more _____ .

Despite the calamity, the dreams usher, death is _____ because none can tolerate the whips and scorns of time. In such traumatic situations, a _____ person would choose to make the final settlement by ending his life with a sharp knife.

A weak-minded person is unable to bear the _____ of life and so chooses to end his life. But what prevents him from embracing this option is he dreads the _____ after death. No _____ man has come back to share his post- death experience. Luckily this makes the meek, cowardly to put up with the travails of life and not _____ to the thought of committing suicide. There is a general belief that those who commit suicide have a guaranteed place in hell. This belief, fortunately, _____ one from putting an end to one's life. According to Hamlet, too much thinking _____ one's action.

b) Read the following extracts and answer the questions:

1. 'Or to take arms against a sea of troubles

And, by opposing, end them. To die, to sleep...'

i) Identify the figure of speech in the first line

ii) What, according to Hamlet, is the solution to the problems that engulf us?

iii) 'Sleep' here, refers to _____. What figure of speech is it?

2. 'For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,

Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,

The pangs of despised love.'

i) What are the situations mentioned here that force one to end one's life?

ii) Identify the figure of speech in the first line and explain.

Pitch: strength or vigour
Awry: obliquely

3. 'The undiscovered country from whose bourn
No traveler returns, puzzles the will'.
i) Who is a traveler here?
ii) Why is it called an 'undiscovered country'?
 4. 'Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought'
i) How does our conscience influence us?
ii) Identify the contradiction in the first two lines and explain.
 5. 'For in the sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil'
i) What do you understand by the phrase 'mortal coil'?
ii) Shuffling off this mortal coil refers to_____.
iii) What dreams does one have in 'the sleep of death'?
 6. Hamlet puts forth his *thesis statement* at the beginning.
'To be or not to be' [to continue to exist or not]
i) How does he elaborate his proposition in lines 3-6?
ii) Which lines bring out Hamlet's pessimism?
iii) What dream does Hamlet refer to in lines 10 and 11?
- b) Match Hamlet's words with the given situations.

A	B
i. take arms against a sea of troubles	died
ii. shuffled off this mortal coil	to fight against endless suffering
iii. natural shocks that flesh is heir to	normal conflicts that afflict us
iv. slings and arrows of outrageous fortune	violent attacks of misfortune
v. your manager at office is rude to you	the insolence of office
vi. your proud neighbour looks down upon you	the proud man's contumely
vii. you present a bouquet to someone you love but it is not accepted	the pangs of despised love
viii. you have filed a case five years ago but it is still pending	the law's delay
ix. you follow the policy of forgive and forget and you are friendly to your enemy	the spurns that patient merit of the unworthy takes

- c) Hamlet talks about various things that make people's life miserable forcing them to feel depressed and end their lives.

III. Writing Skills:

Answer the following questions briefly.

- a) Bring out, in your words, the central idea of Hamlet's soliloquy.
- b) Review the opening line of the poem and critically analyse the reason for the speaker's words.
- c) Refer to the line 'Thus conscienceall.' Do you agree with the view referred to here? Substantiate your opinion.
- d) 'Tis nobler in the mind to suffer'. In today's context, do you think it is a practical and sensible piece of advice. Why/why not?
- e) 'Forgiveness is the sweetest form of revenge" If Hamlet had followed this adage could he have saved his life. Write your answer in a paragraph, based on the story of Hamlet's life and suitable examples from his soliloquy.

IV. Speaking Skills:

- a) As a counselor, what would be your words of advice to Hamlet? Why is it better to suffer the 'slings and arrows of outrageous fortune'?
- b) As a counselor, you have been asked to address an audience of teenagers on how to build their self-esteem. Draft your speech in about 150-200 words.

V. Creative writing: Imitating Shakespeare

Read this soliloquy written by Colleen Myers

*To snooze or not to snooze - that is the question:
Whether 'tis easier to rise on time
And face the harsh light of early day,
Or to stay huddled under the quilt,
And, by hiding, avoid the rays.
To rise, to hit the snooze button-
No more - and by rising to say I face
The early-morning preparations for the events
That each day holds-
'Tis a situation
I do not wish to face.
To snooze, to sleep-
To sleep, perhaps too long. Ay, there's the problem,
For in oversleeping what events may come about*

*When we are hiding from the alarm's harsh call
Must make us stop and think.
That's the idea
That makes disaster of sleeping in.
For who really wants to face the 6 a.m sun,
The first period's quiz,
The morning person's obnoxious cheeriness,
The disappointment in decaffeinated coffee,
The dance class's early rehearsals,
The overly chipper song of the early bird,
And the cold looks
That early-risers send in my late-sleeping direction,
When they too may sleep in
On weekends free from tribulations?
Who would heed the alarm's early call,
To squint and yawn through the first hours of the day,
But that the horror that something may be missed while dozing,
The unknown events that have occurred which
The gossips discuss
While we stand in a confused daze,
Wishing we had risen on time
Instead of seeking those futile thirty minutes?
Thus the chance of missing out does make early risers of us all,
And thus the bliss of sleeping in
Is tainted by eye-opening thoughts of lost news,
And peaceful moments of dreams and sleep
With this regard their paths are cut short
And lose the dark in favor of the harsh light.*

In groups of four choose any one of the following and write a soliloquy.

- a) To write or not to write
- b) To tweet or not to on twitter
- c) To sing or not to sing

VI. Project:

Given below are a few quotations on decision making. In groups of four, discuss whether you agree or disagree with the ideas. Give reasons.

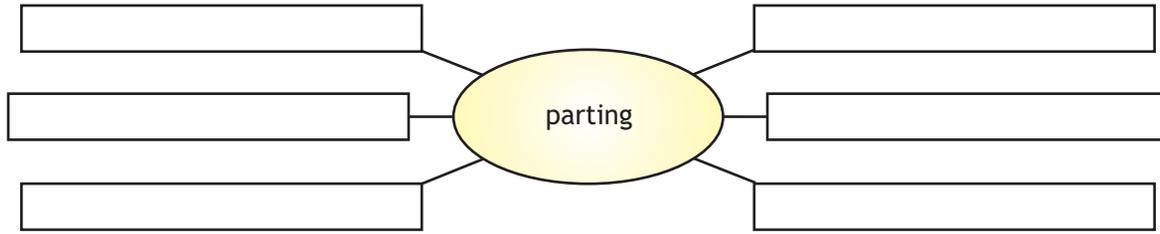
- a) *The risk of a wrong decision is preferable to the terror of indecision.* Maimonides
- b) *No sensible decision can be made any longer without taking into account not only the world as it is, but the world as it will be.* Isaac Asimov
- c) *Decisiveness is a characteristic of high-performing men and women. Almost any decision is better than no decision at all.* Brian Tracy

Curtain

by Helen Spalding

Warm up:

- How do you feel when you part with a close friend?



- Suppose you wake up in a new place tomorrow. What are the things or people you will miss?
- Read the poem which is set in the period 1930-1946. Those were turbulent times in England, representing the confusion and violence in the west, leading to the Second World War. The theme of separation may be read against this background.

Curtain

Goodbye.

Incredulously the laces fingers loosen,
 Slowly, sensation by sensation, from their warm interchange,
 And stiffen like frosted flowers in the November garden.
 Already division piles emphasis like bullets;

5 Already the one dark air is separate and strange.

Goodbye.

There is no touch now. The wave has broken
 That for a moment charged the *desolate* sea.
 There is a word, or two, left to be spoken
 - Yet who would hear it? When so swiftly distance

10 Out measures time, engulfs identity?

Already like the dreamer startled from sleep
 And the vivid image lost even in waking,
 There is no taste now for the shrunken sense to keep,
 And these, the dreamer's eyes, are not alive to weep,

15 And this, the clinic heart, the dreamer's, is not breaking.

Is it so easy, then? Goodbye no more than this

incredulously: in a manner which is difficult to believe

desolate: sad, empty and lonely

Quiet disaster? And is there cause for sorrow
That in the small white murder of one kiss
Are born two ghosts, two Hamlets, two soliloquies,
20 Two worlds apart, tomorrow?

I. Understanding the poem:

1. Placed in stanza 1, is a sensory image. It creates a visual picture of two clasped hands. Find four more sensory images in the same stanza.
2. Choose the most appropriate option.
 - a) Who are the two people being separated?
 - parent and child
 - friends
 - lovers
 - husband and wife
 - b) Are they
 - young
 - middle-aged
 - old
 - c) Is the separation
 - permanent as in death
 - imposed upon themselves
 - temporary

3. Complete the summary of the poem based on your understanding:

In the first stanza, two the young lovers who know that there is no future in the relationship are being _____. They may continue to live in the same town but they know their worlds have to be two _____ ones, physically and mentally. They are physically walking away from each other and reconciling to this fact _____ also.

The second stanza states very clearly that, 'there is no _____ now and 'distance _____ and engulfs _____.

The third and the fourth stanzas deal with the emotions of the lovers who are still thinking of their _____. The speaker is trying to forget his/her _____ and get on _____. She/he feels _____ inside, but life _____ on. She/he feels so dead that she/he cannot _____ and her/his heart which has become _____ and _____, cannot break. She/he think of this separation as a '_____', a disaster known only to the two of them and wonder at the tragedy where both of them will have to live in two separate worlds from tomorrow. She/he knows that it is time to draw a _____ over their relationship, however _____ this act may be.

Hamlet: The central character of a play by William Shakespeare.

4. In the last stanza, 'goodbye' is called a 'quiet disaster'. With one murder, instead of death, are born two ghosts who will, like Hamlet, inhabit two worlds apart from henceforth. But all these stanza-specific images point to the global symbol of separation i.e., Curtain.

Now find two images from each stanza, which eventually focus on this global symbol.

- Stanza 1 (i) _____ (ii) _____
 Stanza 2 (i) _____ (ii) _____
 Stanza 3 (i) _____ (ii) _____
 Stanza 4 (i) _____ (ii) _____

5. **Collocation** is the co-occurrence possibilities of words. *Cup and saucer, chair and table* are acceptable collocations. But poets use marked collocations. Poets take liberties and use unusual collocations for effect. 'Clinic heart' (line 15) is an example of this. The poet uses it to describe the emotionless state of the heart.

In the table below are listed a few more instances of such collocations in the poem. Write down the effect of each in the space provided. Write the effect this has on the poem.

Marked collocation	Effect
laced fingers	
shrunken sense	
frosted flowers	

II. Appreciation:

Read the extracts and answer the questions:

- a) 'Already division piles emphasis like bullets,
 Already the one dark air is separate and strange'.
 i) Which words describe the 'dark air'?
 ii) Explain 'Already division piles'.
 iii) What effect does the repetition of the word 'Already' have on the poem?
- b) 'Goodbye'
 There is no touch now. The wave has broken.'
 i) Quote the line which states that the two people who are separating are not within touching distance anymore.
 ii) What does the word 'wave' symbolise?
 iii) Which one word in the above extract describes the theme of the poem?
- c) 'That in the small white murder of one kiss
 Are born two ghosts, two Hamlets, two soliloquies.
 Two worlds apart, tomorrow?'

- i) Explain the comparison in the poet's reference to the 'two Hamlets' in your own words.
- ii) Murder normally leads to death, but here, murder leads to the birth of two worlds. This is ironical. Explain the irony.
- iii) 'Two worlds apart'. How does this expression focus on the title of the poem, 'Curtain'.

III. Writing Skills:

'Separation' is always painful. Separation from a loved one when death snatches him/her away, from someone very dear (a parent, brother or sister), from the country/region you grew up in - every separation makes you a stronger person from within.

Write a story of a separation which led to an individual emerging as a character of strength. Add suitable quotes from the poem to highlight your message. [150 words]

IV. Speaking Skills:

In groups of four, discuss how we can overcome the grief of separation from a loved one. What are the qualities needed to bear an irreparable loss?

Unit - 7: A Walk by Moonlight

by Henry Derozio

I. Warm up

- What thoughts come to your mind when you think of a moonlit night ?
- What feelings would you experience when you are alone on the shore watching the sea at sunrise or sunset?

A Walk By Moonlight

Last night - it was a lovely night,
And I was very blest -
Shall it not be for Memory
A happy spot to rest?

Yes; there are in the backward past
Soft hours to which we turn -
Hours which, at distance, mildly shine,
Shine on, but never burn.

And some of these but yesternight
Across my path were thrown,
Which made my heart so very light,
I think it could have flown.

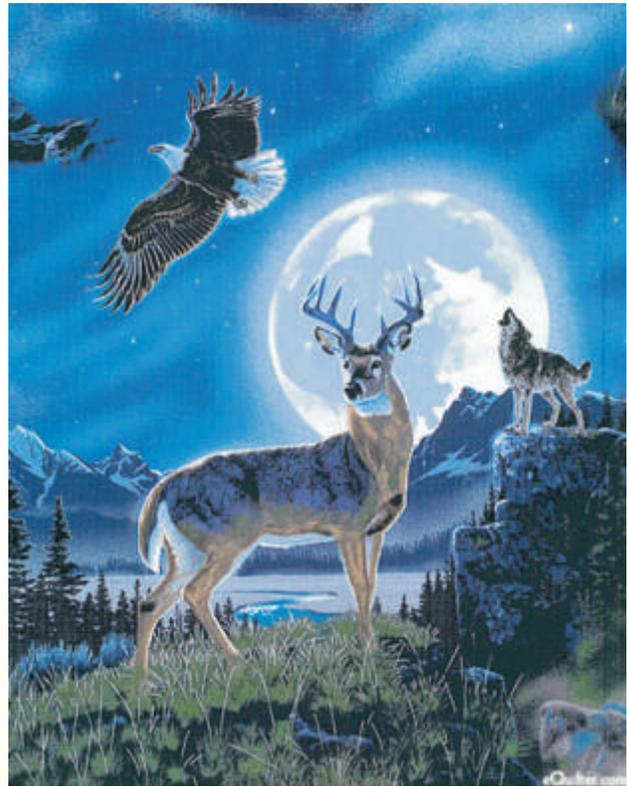
I had been out to see a friend
With whom I others saw:
Like minds to like minds ever tend -
An universal law.

And when we were returning home,
'Come who will walk with me,
A little way', I said, and lo!
I straight was joined by three:

Three whom I loved - two had high thoughts
And were, in age, my peers;
And one was young, but oh! endeared
As much as youth endears.

The moon stood silent in the sky,
And looked upon our earth:
The clouds divided, passing by,
In homage to her worth.

There was a dance among the leaves
Rejoicing at her power,
Who robes for them of silver weaves
Within one mystic hour.



There was a song among the winds,
Hymning her influence -
That low-breathed minstrelsy which binds
The soul to thought intense.

And there was something in the night
That with its magic wound us;
For we - oh! we not only saw,
But felt the moonlight around us.

How vague are all the mysteries
Which bind us to our earth;
How far they send into the heart
Their tones of holy mirth;

How lovely are the phantoms dim
Which bless that better sight,
That man enjoys when proud he stands
In his own spirit's light;

When, like a thing that is not ours.
This earthliness goes by,
And we behold the spiritualness
Of all that cannot die.

'Tis then we understand the voice
Which in the night-wind sings,
And feel the mystic melody
Played on the forest's strings.

The silken language of the stars
Becomes the tongue we speak,
And then we read the sympathy
That pales the young moon's cheek.

The inward eye is open then
To glories, which in dreams
Visit the sleeper's couch, in robes
Woven of the rainbow's beams.

I bless my nature that I am
Allied to all the bliss,
Which other worlds we're told afford,
But which I find in this.

My heart is bettered when I feel
That even this human heart
To all around is gently bound,
And forms of all a part;

That, cold and lifeless as they seem,
The flowers, the stars, the sky
Have more than common minds may deem

To stir our sympathy.

Oh! in such moments can I crush
The grass beneath my feet?
Ah no; the grass has then a voice,
Its heart - I hear it beat.



About the Author

Henry Louis Vivian Derozio belonged to the Anglo Indian community. He had intense zeal for both teaching and poetry. He wrote many inspiring poems in English of which *The Fakeier of Junghire* was one of the most important. His poems are considered as an important landmark in the history of patriotic poetry in India namely, *To India - My Native land, Young Bengali*.

I.

1. Based on your understanding of the poem complete the summary using appropriate words / phrases:

In the poem 'A Walk by Moonlight', Derozio recalls how a _____ walk with _____ friends proved to be a transforming experience. The _____ moon, the _____ leaves and the song of the wind created _____ around them. He feels such a night was a _____ for memory to rest. The natural world fills our hearts with _____. The poet's _____ eye perceives _____ that seem to appear only in dreams. When the poet realizes that _____ is allied to the _____ of nature he experiences _____ on earth. In such a _____ state he can't bear to crush the _____ beneath his feet because he can't _____ its _____.

2. Answer the following questions briefly:

1. Why was 'yesternight' very special for the poet ?
2. What is the universal law the poet refers to ? How does the poet's experience justify it?
3. How does the poet describe the physical beauty of the night ? What was its immediate effect?
4. What are the 'mysteries' that bind man to the earth?
5. What benefits does man derive from the awakening of conscience?
6. When does man stand 'proud'?
7. What thoughts 'better' the poet ?
8. How does the last stanza bring out the poet's heightened sensitivity?

3. Read the extracts and answer the questions that follow:

- a) 'And I was very blest -
Shall it not be for Memory
A happy spot to rest'?

- (i) Why does the poet feel 'blest'?
- (ii) Explain the phrase 'a happy spot for memory to rest'.
- b) 'Soft hours to which we turn -
Hours which, at distance, mildly shine,
Shine on, but never burn'.
- (i) What does the phrase "soft hours" convey?
- (ii) Why are the soft hours at a distance ?
- (iii) Pick out words / phrases which convey the impact of 'soft hours'.
- c) 'How vague are all the mysteries
Which bind us to our earth;
How far they send into the heart
Their tones of holy mirth;'
- (i) How does the splendid scenario influence the poet ?
- (ii) As a result what does he realize?
- (iii) What effect do 'they' have on man?
- (iv) Explain 'holy mirth'?
- d) 'How lovely are the phantoms dim
Which bless that better sight,
That man enjoys when proud he stands
In his own spirit's light;'
- (i) What are 'Phantoms din'?
- (ii) How do they help us?
- (iii) How do they make man 'proud'?
- e) 'The inward eye is open then
To glories, which in dreams
Visit the sleeper's couch, in robes
Woven of the rainbow's beams.'
- (i) What does the poet see with his 'inward eye' ?
- (ii) What does the poet compare his experience to?
- f) 'I bless my nature that I am
Allied to all the bliss,
Which other worlds we're told afford,
But which I find in this.'

- (i) What is the 'bliss' referred to here?
- (ii) In what way is the poet allied to the bliss?
- (iii) According to the poet, where else is one likely to find such bliss?

II. Writing Skills:

- a) Based on your understanding of the two poems in the unit, write an article on the topic "Nature is to be experienced and not merely seen", in about 80-100 words.
- b) Would you like to try your hand at writing short poems? Here is an opportunity ! Let's get started.

Cinaquin (Pronounced - 'Sin-cane'): Cinaquin is a form of poetry that is popular because of its simplicity. This form of poetry originated in the United States over a century ago. There are different ways to write a cinaquin. Cinaquins do not need to rhyme. But you can include rhymes if you wish to.

Study the format given below and the sample poems before you start writing your poem. Share it with the class.

- Line 1 : One word - State the topic
- Line 2 : Two words - Use Adjectives to describe the topic
- Line 3 : Three words -Use words expressing action
- Line 4 : Four words - Using a phrase / words expressing feeling or describing
- Line 5 : One word - Synonym of title or summing up

Sample 1	Sample 2
Snow	Tiger
Lovely, white	Powerful, Fast
Falling, dancing, drifting	roaring, terrifying, fascinating
Covering everything it touches	Eyes cast magic spell
Blanket	Tremendous

III. Speaking Skills:

- a) Listen to a reading of Stanza IV of Wordsworth's poem, 'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud'

*"For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,

They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils."*

- b) Based on your understanding of the above lines, discuss the similarity in the thought processes of William Wordsworth and Henry Derozio.