

Unit 8

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Robert Frost (1874 – 1963)

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this unit students will:

- construct the meaning of the poem through understanding the key theme
- identify the speaker in the poem
- identify alliteration in the poem
- interpret the imagery in the poem
- paraphrase and summarize the poem
- respond to the poem by giving a personal point of view
- use adjective phrases and adverb phrases

Pre-reading:

- Does the title reflect the theme of the poem?
- What makes nature poems appealing to you?



For the Teacher:

- Help students read the poem aloud with proper stress and intonation, then read it silently to infer the theme of the poem.

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer 5
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake. 10
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep, 15
And miles to go before I sleep.

What hidden meanings do the following words convey to us?
woods, house, horse, harness
bell, downy flake

Note the alliteration and imagery in the poem.

Notes and Comments:

Robert Frost was a famous American poet. He was born in San Francisco on March 26, 1874. He was an internationally acclaimed poet who won the famous Pulitzer Prize for four times. His poetry focuses on the theme of nature in which he embedded the contemporary and philosophical issues of his time. He died in Boston on January 29, 1963.

Other poems by Robert Frost:

Birches, After Apple Picking, Mending Walls, Desert Places, Home Burial, The Road not Taken

Theme:

The poem points out at the attractive and exciting beauty of nature and simultaneously hints at the need to carry on with the daily affairs of life. The world of fantasy is very inviting. But one must maintain balance between the world of reality and imagination.



For the Teacher:

- While-reading activity may be conducted to interact with the poem. More while-reading questions may be asked.

Glossary:

woods	-----	forest
queer	-----	strange
harness	-----	control
downy	-----	soft, feathery
flake	-----	very small loose mass of snow

Comprehension**A. Answer the following questions.**

1. Who is the speaker in the poem?
2. Whom does the speaker refer to in the first stanza of the poem?
3. Why does the speaker stop on 'the darkest evening of the year'?
4. Why does the horse impatiently await the next move of his master?
5. The speaker in the poem is captivated by the beauty of nature. Why doesn't he stop for long to enjoy nature's beauty?

B. Some statements are directly supported by the poem, some are inferences based on evidences from the text while some are not supported by any evidence. Put a tick in the right column.

Statements	Directly supported by the poem	Inference based on some evidence from the poem	Statement not supported by any evidence
It is a cold and dark winter.			
The speaker knows the owner of the woods.			

**For the Teacher:**

- Explain to the students that sometimes ideas in writing are not stated directly but are given in the form of clues. The reader draws meanings by carefully studying these clues which are called **evidences**. When meaning is not stated directly but is reached through examining evidences, it is called an **inference**.

Statements	Directly supported by the poem	Inference based on some evidence from the poem	Statement not supported by any evidence
The speaker feels guilty about stopping in the woods.			
The speaker thinks about his commitments and restarts his journey.			
The speaker is tired and wants to rest.			
The horse feels strange to stop unexpectedly .			
The speaker appreciates the beauty of nature.			

C. Paraphrase the following.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
 But I have promises to keep,
 And miles to go before I sleep,
 And miles to go before I sleep.

Vocabulary

Alliteration

Alliteration refers to the repetition of the same consonant sound in words which are used closely together in the poem.

Examples :

Whose woods

His house

..see me stopping

Imagery

Imagery is the construction of details used to create mental images in the mind of the reader through the visual sense as well as the sense of touch, smell, taste and sound.

Examples of imagery:

visual	- huge trees in the thick and dark forest
auditory	- the rustling of leaves
smell	- scent of apples
taste	- sweet and juicy oranges
touch	- rugged and rough path

A. Underline the words and phrases that depict clear imagery in the poem.

B. Identify alliterations and metaphors in the poem.

C Here are some words opposite in meaning. Match the columns.

Column A	Column B
village	melt
stopping	water
snow	silence
frozen	city
darkest	shallow
sound	moving
downy	hard
deep	brightest

D. Circle the correct options.

- i. The poem is suggestive of profound thoughts about _____.**
- a scene of woods in winter
 - reality of life and death
 - a song of enjoyment



For the Teacher:

- Help students read and analyze literary techniques such as alliteration and repetition.

- ii. The poem presents a conflict between _____.
- the poet and his friend
 - the obligations of life and desire to escape from them
 - the poet and forces of nature
- iii. After reading the poem we _____.
- feel fed up of life
 - wish to sleep for a long time
 - get ready to face the challenges of life
- iv. The poem conveys to us only _____.
- a surface meaning
 - a profound thought
 - no meaning at all
- v. Dark woods symbolize _____.
- darkness spread around the poet
 - death and departure to another world
 - darkness in the mind of poet

Grammar

Adjective Phrase

An adjective phrase is a group of words that does the work of an adjective.

Examples

- I like to see a **smiling** face. (adjective)
- I like to see a face **with a smile** on it. (adjective phrase)

Adverb Phrase

An adverb phrase is a group of words that does the work of an adverb.

Examples

- Ali ran **quickly**. (adverb)
- Ali ran **at a great speed**. (adverb phrase)



For the Teacher:

- Illustrate the use of adjective phrases and adverb phrases.

A. Replace each of the following underlined adjective phrases by an adjective.

1. He wore a turban made of silk.
2. He is a man without a friend.
3. Nobody likes a person with bad temper.
4. It is of no use.
5. He is a man of sense.

B. Replace each of the following underlined adverbs by an adverb phrase.

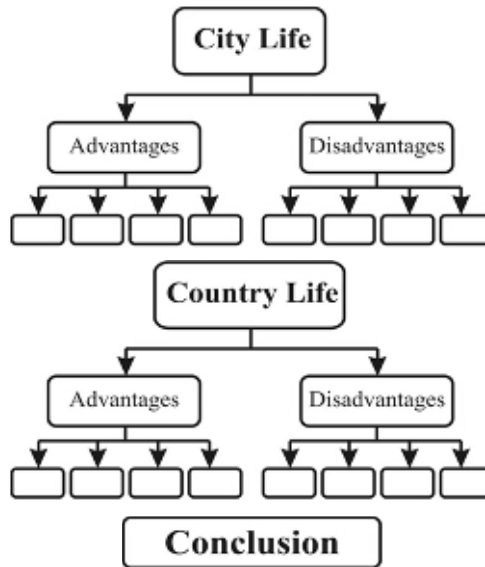
1. The pigeon flies swiftly.
2. He built his house there.
3. He tried hard.
4. He spoke eloquently.
5. Did Sara behave well?

C. Make three sentences using adjective phrases and three sentences using adverb phrases.

Writing Skills

A. Summarize the poem “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening”.

B. Write an essay contrasting living in the city with living in the country. (170-200 words)



For the Teacher:

- Recapitulate the essentials of writing a good summary.
- Help students to complete the mind map first to develop focus on their writing.

Oral Communication Skills

Expressions to refuse politely

- No please.
- I am really sorry.
- I am sorry but this is not possible.
- I regret to inform you that...
- I am afraid I can't do it.
- I apologize for not accepting the offer.
- Sorry I'm unable to do it right now.

A. Work in pairs. Read the situations below and respond using expressions of polite refusal.

No.	Situation
1	Your friend requests to borrow your book
2	Your cousin requests to use your computer.
3	Your friend wants to take you to a party.
4	You request your teacher to extend the date of the exam.

B. Form groups and discuss a situation where you faced difficulty. How did you tackle the situation?



For the Teacher:

- Help students use appropriate expressions for polite refusals.

Review II: Unit 5-8

Comprehension

A. Answer the following questions.

1. What do the daffodils represent in the poem?
2. How has the poet heightened the impact of the poem by using the figurative language?
3. What was the Quaid's concept of our nation?
4. How can we become a strong nation?
5. What does love of our country demand from us?
6. How does the interior of the masjid look?
7. Why was a separate royal room attached to the masjid?
8. Why does the horse impatiently await the next move of his master?

B. Paraphrase the following lines.

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

Vocabulary

A. Choose the correct options.

1. Branches of the tree were covered with blanket of snow. In this sentence we find an example of _____.
 - a. alliteration
 - b. personification
 - c. simile
 - d. metaphor
2. Keep up your morale.
 - a. wealth
 - b. fortitude
 - c. section
 - d. voice

3. Write an essay on a general subject:

- With a clear introductory paragraph.
- Provide key ideas which prove, explain or support the central thought.
- Use separate paragraphs for each key idea.
- Incorporate evidence (facts, quotations), examples (analogies, anecdotes, etc), or different views (elaborating an idea/opinion) to support each key idea.
- Use appropriate transitional devices to connect ideas within and between paragraphs.
- Add a closing or summary paragraph with a synthesis of central idea, synthesis of each supporting idea, and a general concluding statement.
- Use correct conventions of grammar and punctuation.
- Use appropriate vocabulary.

Oral Communication Skills

1. Prepare a class presentation on various aspects of nature as described in the poem "Daffodils".
2. Prepare a class presentation to discuss "**Do we follow the principles laid down by the Quaid?**" Give arguments in favour and against and also give a conclusion.
3. Prepare a presentation on "**The Muslim Architecture**".
4. Discuss the significance of imagery in the poem "**Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening**".