



1. What is the central idea of the poem 'Fire and Ice'?

The poet has tried to bring the difference between the fire and the ice, which represent two different kinds of people. According to the poet, the world can perish by fire and also by ice. Thus it can perish twice- one by fire and then by ice. The poet feels that the ice of hatred is as powerful as the fire of desire to bring complete end of this world.

2. What is the Theme of the Poem "Fire and Ice"?

There are several themes in the poem "Fire and Ice" by Robert Frost, including fear, love, hate and choices. The poem is packed with numerous emotions, such as humor, want, animosity and bluntness, and it leaves the reader with an ambiguous response to the choices presented.

Frost equates fire with desire, a burning force that originates out of love and is equally destructive as ice, which he presents as similar to hate. In addition, Frost seems to feel no fear while referring to a daring question of how the world will end. He even finds humor and detachment in relating the different methods in which the world could be destroyed, further increasing the impact of the underlying message. In the end, the poem leaves the reader guessing as to which choice, fire or ice, is a better mode of destruction of the Earth, as they are both equally damaging.

3. What message does the poet give to the reader?

Once Robert Frost claimed, "my poem begins in delight but ends in wisdom". The present poem echoes the above statement. In this poem, the poet considers the age-old question whether the world will end in fire or in ice. It is quite interesting that the poet does not give his own opinion in this regard. It is meaningless to ask which one is stronger as we know both of them are equally harmful to the world. We can associate fire with lust, greed, avarice and intolerance whereas ice can be associated with hatred and indifference. The fire of lust and greed gets publicity but the coldness of hatred is also dangerous as it is a silent killer. All of such black sides of human nature can obstruct the progress of human civilization.

4. Write a brief note on how Frost deals with the theme in his poems.

The poetic themes in Frost are beaten track but his handling of them is unique. To Frost, the incident is not so important but he gives importance to its dramatic possibilities. Truth for Frost is not a philosophical concept rather it is a rational observation of facts and their representation in a direct way with intimacy. This is why there is so little of philosophy in Frost and so much of wit and wisdom. The poet leads his reader towards wisdom by giving him some pleasure at the very outset.

5. Comment on the ending of the poem.

The ending of the poem implies that ice has also the power to bring about the destruction of the world. So we should not bother about the matter that which one of the two (fire and ice) is stronger rather, we should keep in mind that both of them have destructive power. We should not ignore the potential power of ice which is equally harmful.

6. “But if it had to perish twice”

Why does the poet use ‘if’ in the above quotation?

Nobody knows whether the world will end in fire or in ice. But the idea of the destruction of the world twice is somewhat complicated. The poet does not believe that the world will end twice. That’s why the poet expresses his suspicion by using the term ‘if’.

7. Is the poet’s personal view regarding the end of the world clear enough?

The poet in the present poem represents the dominant views regarding the probable causes of the destruction of the world. It may end either in fire or in ice. In other words, both of them have the power to ruin the world. But the poet does not give his own stand in this regard rather he leaves the question unanswered.

8. “I think I know enough of hate.” What does the speaker know about hate?

The speaker in the above line says that he knows enough of hate, but we are not told he has first-hand knowledge about hate or he experiences it at a distance. But the poet’s intuitive power reminds him it is no less dangerous than the fire of lust, greed, hatred. It can also play a trick upon anybody as it a silent killer.

7. Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow-

*Some say the world will end in fire
Some say in ice.
From what I’ve tasted of desire
I hold with those who favour fire.*

- (a) What do people think of the world?
- (b) What is the poet’s opinion about the world?
- (c) Which two things will destroy the world?
- (d) What is the prediction of the people about how the world will come to an end?

Ans. (a) The world will be destroyed with fire and ice.

- (b) The poet thinks that we should check our growing desires and love our fellow-beings.
- (c) Hatred and Desire.
- (d) Some people say that the world will come to an end in a fire while others say it will come to an end in ice.

*But if it had to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate
To say that for destruction ice*

*Is also great
And would suffice.*

- (a) Why does the poet feel that 'ice' is also great for destruction?
- (b) What is the rhyme scheme of this stanza of the poem?
- (c) The two things that the poet thinks are good enough for destruction are
- (d) What does 'it' stand for in the first line?

Ans. (a) Ice equates with 'hatred', which is enough to destroy the world.

(b) a b a b a.

(c) fire and ice which means 'hatred' and 'desire'

(d) 'it' here stands for the world.

VERY SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q.1, What is 'fire' a symbol of?

Ans. 'Fire' is a symbol of lust and endless desires.

Q.2. What is 'Ice' a symbol of?

Ans. 'Ice' is a symbol of hatred.

Q..3. What will fire do to the world?

Ans. Fire will put the world to an end.

Q.4. What will the world end in?

Ans. The world will end in fire as well as ice.

Q.5. Why does the poet hold with those who favour fire?

Ans. The poet holds with those who favour fire because the lust for material things is increasing.

Q.6. Why do some people say that the world will end in ice?

Ans. They say so because hatred among people is increasing.

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. What will the world end in?

(A) fire

(B) ice

(C) both (A) and (B)

(D) none of the above

Ans. (C) both (A) and (B)

2. What does violent desire refer to?

(A) fire

(B) ice.

(C) both (A) and (B)

(D) none of the above

Ans. (A) fire

3. What does 'ice' symbolizes?

(A) love

(B) hatred

(C) violent desire

(D) all of the above

Ans. (B) hatred

4. What do some people think, the world will end in?

(A) fire

(B) sun

(C) moon

(D) rain

Ans. (A) fire

5. What does the poet think, the world will end in?

(A) love

(B) ice

(C) both

(D) none of the above

Ans. (B) ice

6. Can hatred destroy the world?

(A) yes

(B) no

(C) maybe

(D) may not be

Ans. (A) yes

7. According to Robert Frost, what will end one day

(A) fire

(B) ice

(C) both (A) and (B)

(D) the world

Ans. (D) the world

8. Who is the poet of the poem 'Fire and Ice'?

(A) Robert Frost

(B) William Cowper

(C) Ben Jonson

(D) William Blake

Ans. (A) Robert Frost