



INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR

Class: VIII	Department: ENGLISH	Date of Submission: August 2020
STUDY NOTES	Topic: The Nightingale and the Glow-worm	Note: Reference

The Nightingale and the Glow-worm **- William Cowper**

SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

A Nightingale had pleased the village with his music throughout the day. At night he felt hungry. He looked around for food. He saw a Glow-worm. He came down to eat it. The Glow-worm requested him to spare his life. He said that both of them were beautiful creations of God. The Glow-worm cheered the world with his light while the Nightingale with his music. God had created both of them to fulfil their duties in this world. The Glow-worm's speech had a great impact on the Nightingale. He let the Glow-worm go and went in search of food somewhere else.

CENTRAL IDEA OF THE POEM:

The poem, 'The Nightingale and the Glow-worm' is based on the idea: 'LIVE AND LET LIVE' and revolves around the virtue of universal brotherhood. This poem is indeed a great composition and teaches us that every living or non-living being has its own importance. Each one has a unique quality and is useful in its own way. For the world to be happy and prosperous, one must learn to co-exist with each other in a spirit of mutual respect and understanding.

ANALYSIS OF THE POEM:

'The Nightingale and the Glow-worm' is essentially a fable written in verse form. Just like in fables, we have animals behaving like human beings and delivering a strong message. Similarly, in this poem, we have a Nightingale and a Glow-worm encountering each other with human attributes. Through their encounter, the readers learn the powerful message of living in peace and harmony. The Nightingale first views the Glow-worm as its evening supper. However, the Glow-worm manages to save his life by reminding the bird that both of them beautify the world with their unique gifts/ talents created by the same creator. Hence, instead of destroying each other, they must respect each other's existence and live in harmony.

LITERARY DEVICES:

1. **PERSONIFICATION:**

It is used to bestow human qualities or attributes on something that is not human. In this poem, the poet uses this device with respect to the Glow-worm, giving it the human ability to speak. The Nightingale listens attentively to the short oration or speech of the Glow-worm. They are shown engaged in a conversation.

2. **METAPHOR:**

The poet uses the device of Metaphor when the Glow-worm compares the Nightingale to a minstrel.

IMAGERY:

Imagery is the author's or poet's use of language that appeals to the five senses in order to help the reader imagine exactly what is being described.

**He spied, far off upon the ground,
A something shining in the dark,
And knew the Glow-worm by his spark...**

The poet has used imagery in the above lines. On reading the above lines, an image of a glow-worm shining in the dark comes to the reader's mind.

TONE OF THE POEM:

A **Didactic Poem** is one that instructs or teaches us something. It is a poem with a moral lesson, message or purpose.

Definition: Didactic poetry

Poetry that instructs, either in terms of morals or by providing knowledge of philosophy, religion, arts, science, or skills. Although some poets believe that all poetry is inherently instructional, didactic poetry separately refers to poems that contain a clear moral or message or purpose to convey to its readers.

This poem is a didactic poem because Cowper is instructing his readers about warring factions and giving the reason that all creatures on earth are equal (Moral/ Message).

THEMES:

1. Peace and Harmony
2. Respecting differences/ mutual respect
3. Divinity
4. Universal brotherhood