

3.3 Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Warming up!

Chit-Chat

Share this chat with your bench-mate/classmates :

- Where did you go for a picnic recently?
- Who all accompanied you?
- Why did you select that picnic spot?
- What games/food/sights did you enjoy there?
- What did you feel when it was time to return home?

1. Look at the picture and frame questions.



- (a) Where are the trekkers trekking?
- (b)
- (c)
- (d)
- (e)

2. Form groups of 4 to 6 students. Every student should close his/her eyes. As the group leader reads aloud the following lines, the students try to create a picture in his/her mind. Later, each one gives a heading for each description.

(a) Bright blue sky – soft white clouds sweeping by – tiny specks of birds flying high – the sun playing hide and seek behind the clouds.

Heading

(b) Miles of smooth barren land-sparkling sand stretched till the horizon, in wave-like forms-thorny, cacti propping here and there – an occasional cluster of palms provide a shady spot – a caravan of camels moving in a line, in the distance.

Heading

- Such a figurative description that creates mental pictures, in the mind of the reader/listener is called **Imagery**. It is a poetic device that enhances the poem.
- Compose in your group, a four to six line poem, which contains Imagery.

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Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

- ✦ Where has the poet stopped?
- ✦ What season of the year is described here?
- ✦ What time of the day is described here?
- ✦ On what date every year is the darkest evening?

● **queer** : strange

● **harness bells** : bells tied in the neck of a horse to control it

● **downy flake** : soft feather like snow-flakes falling

- ✦ List the sounds mentioned in the poem.
- ✦ Why does the traveller have to leave the lovely woods?

Robert Lee Frost (1874–1963) was an American poet. He is highly regarded for his realistic depictions of rural life and his command of American colloquial speech. He is one of the most popular and critically respected American poets of the 20th century. He received four Pulitzer prizes for poetry.

In this poem, the poet describes a little incident happening in a snowy evening. As a traveller, the poet is fascinated by the beautiful scenes in the woods. He stops to enjoy but his mind urges him to go on.



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**
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.
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,
And miles to go before I sleep.

– Robert Frost

ENGLISH WORKSHOP

1. Put mark in front of true statement or mark in front of false statement.

- (a) The speaker stops to watch rain falling among the trees.
- (b) The owner of the woods is known to the speaker.
- (c) The horse is worried about the cold and wants to keep going.
- (d) The speaker doesn't emphasize upon the beauty of woods, he is passing through.

2. Find out line/lines from the poem as a proof for the following explanation.

- (a) There is no one to catch the speaker trespassing.
- (b) The little horse draws his master's attention.
- (c) His horse seems anxious to keep going.
- (d) The speaker prefers to stay but is forced to move onwards.
- (e) The poem is set in the bygone era.

3. The poem is believed to have a reference to the poet's life itself. What could the following signify? Choose from the bracket below :

(duties and responsibilities/old age/life/death/everlasting peace)

- (a) The speaker's journey
- (b) Snowy Evening
- (c) Lovely, deep, dark woods
- (d) Promises
- (e) Sleep

4. Tell whether the rhyme scheme of the following stanzas is right or wrong. For the wrong rhyme scheme, give the correct one.

- (a) stanza 1 - a a b a
- (b) stanza 2 - b b c b
- (c) stanza 3 - c c d c
- (d) stanza 4 - d d e d

5. Give your own rhyming words for the following.

- (a) house -
- (b) woods -
- (c) easy -
- (d) wind -
- (e) dark -
- (f) watch -

6. Match the lines of the poem with their Figures of speech.

Group A		Group B
(1) Whose woods these are I think I know	(a)	Alliteration
(2) The woods are lovely, dark and deep	(b)	Personification
(3) And miles to go before I sleep And miles to go before I sleep.	(c)	Inversion
(4) My little horse must think it queer	(d)	Repetition

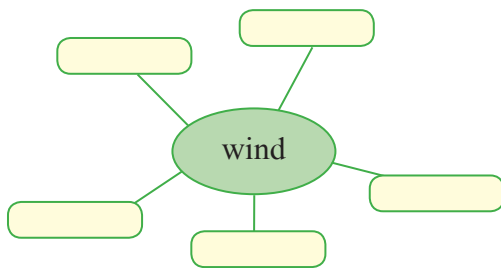
(1) (2) (3) (4)

7. Match the words given in Group A with their meanings in Group B.

(A)		(B)
(1) mistake		(a) strange
(2) downy flakes		(b) ice
(3) woods		(c) error
(4) queer		(d) jungle
		(e) soft snow falling

(1) (2) (3) (4)

8. Complete the following web-diagrams by adding suitable describing words in the boxes. One is done for you.



9. Pick out lines from the poem that contain Imagery. Write them in your notebook.

10. Prepare a set of questions to interview—

- (a) a person who has just returned from a trek in the woods
- (b) a person who has recently scaled Mt. Everest.

