

1.1 Past, Present, Future



Tell me, tell me, smiling child,
What the past is like to thee?
'An Autumn evening soft and mild
With a wind that sighs mournfully.'



Tell me, what is the present hour?
'A green and flowery spray
Where a young bird sits gathering its power
To mount and fly away.'

And what is the future, happy one?
'A sea beneath a cloudless sun;
A mighty, glorious, dazzling sea
Stretching into infinity.'

– Emily Bronte

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Emily Brontë and her sisters were well-known authors who lived in the nineteenth century. Emily Brontë uses nature to talk about her thoughts, feelings and ideas in many of her poems. This poem about time is presented in the form of a dialogue between the poet and a happy child. For the child in the poem, the past was a pleasant time, but sadly, we cannot go back to it. The present is a time when you prepare for the future which is unknown but exciting.

ENGLISH WORKSHOP



1. Read the poem aloud using proper rhythm and intonation.
2. Link the items in the three columns properly.

A

The past

B

A sea beneath a
cloudless sun

C

A pleasant time
which has ended

The present
hour

A soft and mild
autumn evening

An exciting, thrilling
time which has no end.

The future

A green and
flowery spray where
a young bird sits

A time, full of life
in which you gather
strength

3. Find the meaning of the following words.
 - thee • mournfully • spray • mighty
4. Write the adjectives that are used to describe the following.
 - evening • spray • sea
5. Write one line about each of the following with the help of the poem.
 - wind in the autumn evening • young bird on the spray • the sea
6. Language Study:
 - A **simile** is an imaginative comparison of two different things which have something in common. A simile always includes the words 'as' or 'like'. For example : as tall as a tree, as lovely as a flower
 - A **metaphor** is an imaginative expression that refers to someone/something as another person/thing. It shows that the person or thing has some quality of that other person or thing. The words 'as' or 'like' are not used in a metaphor. For example : He is a gem of a person. Time is money. Books are our friends. The clouds are white sheep.

There are three metaphors in the poem. Can you find them?