

TO DAFFODILS

Robert Herrick

ROBERT HERRICK (1591-1674) is a well known poet of the 17th century. His poems have simplicity, lucidity and brevity. This poem "To Daffodils" deals with the perishable nature of daffodils which ultimately suggests the transitory existence of all human beings. Nothing is static in this world. Marked by a note of sadness, the poem has philosophical overtones.



A. Work in small groups and answer the following questions orally:

1. Which is your favourite flower? Why do you like it?
2. A flower blossoms and decays. Can it be compared to the life of a human being?

TO DAFFODILS

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
 You haste away so soon;
As yet the early-rising Sun
 Has not attain'd his noon.
 Stay, stay,
 Until the hasting day
 Has run
 But to the even-song;
And, having pray'd together, we
 Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,
 We have as short a Spring;



5

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As quick a growth to meet decay	
As you, or any thing.	
We die,	15
As your hours do, and dry	
Away	
Like to the Summer's rain;	
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,	
Ne'er to be found again.	20



GLOSSARY AND NOTES

daffodil (n): a yellow trumpet shaped flower with a long stem that blooms in the spring

fair (adj): beautiful

haste away (v): leave the place hastily, quickly or hurriedly

attained (v): gained, reached

even song: service of evening prayer in the church of England

decay (n): rotten state (v) to wither

ne'er (adv): never, not ever, on no occasion

dew (n): a small drop of water formed on the ground and other surfaces outside especially during the night.

B.1. Answer the following questions very briefly:

1. To whom does the speaker address the poem?
2. Why does the speaker weep to see fair daffodils?
3. What does the speaker want the daffodils to do?
4. What time of day does the speaker say it is?
5. Name three things that, according to the speaker, 'die away'.
6. Why does the speaker repeat the word 'stay' in this poem?
7. What does the summer's rain symbolise in this poem?

C.1. LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Why does the poet weep to see fair daffodils? What does he want it to do? Do you ever have such a feeling?
2. Do you think that the title of the poem is suggestive and evocative?
3. How has human life been compared to the life of daffodils?
4. Give the main idea of the poem.
5. Who are 'we'? What do 'we' and the daffodils have in common?

C.2. GROUP DISCUSSION

Discuss the following in groups or pairs:

1. Love the life you live, live the life you love.
2. 'Take life as it comes.'

D.2. COMPOSITION

1. Write a letter to your friend telling him how you feel to see a flower blooming and how you feel to see it decaying.
2. Write a letter to your cousin congratulating him on his success at the examination.

D.3. WORD STUDY

Ex. 1. Below you'll find some words with an adverb 'away' which is often used with verbs of movement, such as 'go' and 'drive' and also in phrasal verbs such as 'run away', 'take away' etc.

Make meaningful sentences with the following phrasal verbs. One has been done for you.

run away, take away, give away, put away, fade away
The Headmaster gave away prizes to the students.

Ex. 2. See the following words:

rising sun, hasting day

rise + ing + Noun, haste + ing + Noun

Present Participle + Noun = Adj

Complete the following sentences with words given in the brackets (rolling, rising, crying, running, sleeping)

1. Let the dogs lie.
2. A stone gathers no moss.
3. Everyone adores the sun.
4. I saw a baby on the road.
5. A motorcycle dashed against my friend

Ex. 3. Match the following words under 'A' with the explanations given under 'B'

A

hasting
 attained
 spring
 decay (v)
 dry
 dew

B

rot, decompose
 free from moisture
 condensed water vapour
 The season between winter and summer
 gained, accomplished
 leaving the place hastily

Ex. 4. Correct the spelling of the following words:

hesting decey due grouth sumer

E. GRAMMAR

1. **Sub. + Verb + Infinitive**

He wants to sleep.

We eat to live.

Make ten more sentences on the pattern given above.

2. 'as' is a Conjunction. It is used in various forms. Below it has been used "in the manner"

Do as you like.

Do as I do.

Make five more sentence using 'as' given in the examples above.

3. *Until, with, from, to, on, of, in, along*

Fill in the blanks with suitable prepositions given above.

i. I saw a rat sitting the corner of my room.

ii. Wait here I return.

iii. The dog ran the road.

iv. He is staying his friend

v. He came Delhi.

vi. My uncle went America.

vii. The book is lying the table.

viii. The average age students in my class is 15.

F. ACTIVITIES

1. What kind of flowers are found in your locality. Write their names on your activity note book. Draw their pictures and name their parts.
2. You want to grow flowers in your school garden. How will you prepare flower beds in the garden.

G. TRANSLATION

Translate the poem into Hindi or any other language that you know

