

2.3 The Worm

WARMING UP

- (1) **‘Worms play a very important role in maintaining ecological balance. They are friends of farmers.’**

Form groups and discuss the significance of worms in the above two roles.

- (2) **Think and write down how the following creatures can be useful :**

- (a) Dragonfly :
(b) Spider :
(c) Ants :
(d) Honeybees :
(e) Earthworms :

- (3) **Little creatures in nature can also be your teachers.**

Think and write what we can learn from the following.

- (a) Bees :
(b) Ants :
(c) Spiders :
(d) Caterpillars :

- (4) **Breeding worms to use them to convert organic waste into fertilizer is called vermiculture or vermicomposting.**

- Find out more about Vermiculture and how you can carry out the same in your garden / backyard, to fertilize your plants at home.

The Worm

Turn, turn thy **hasty** foot aside,
Nor crush that helpless worm!
The frame thy **scornful** looks **deride**
Requir'd a God to form.



The common Lord of all that move,
From whom **thy being** flow'd,
A portion of His boundless love
On that poor worm **bestow'd**.



The sun, the moon, the stars He made
To all His Creatures free :
And spreads o'er earth the grassy blade,
For worms as well as thee.



Let them enjoy their little day,
Their **lowly bliss** received;
O do not lightly take away
The life thou canst not give !



– Thomas Gisborne

- **hasty** : hurried and careless
- **scornful** : filled with hate
- **deride** : express hatred
- ◆ *Why should we take care even of small worms?*
- **thy being** : your life, existence
- **bestow'd** : given as a gift

◆ *What other creations of God are mentioned?*

- **lowly** : humble, simple
- **bliss** : joy, pleasure

◆ *Explain the thought in the last two lines in simple words.*

ENGLISH WORKSHOP

1. Read the poem aloud and you will find some old outdated words that we do not use in everyday language now.

However, some writers / poets use them to impart an old-fashioned flavour to suit the background of their write-up. Such words are called **Archaic words**.

Give the modern words for the archaic words from the poem.

thy

being

bestow'd
thee
thou
cans't

Read any poem / sonnet by William Shakespeare. Pick out archaic words and guess what they mean.

2. The poet uses a device where he directly addresses someone absent or abstract. Such a device is the Figure of Speech called 'Apostrophe'.

For example : Turn, turn thy hasty foot aside.

- **Pick out any two other lines from the poem that contain an Apostrophe.**

3. Think and answer in your own words in your notebook.

- (a) Why does the poet appeal to us, to respect the life of a worm?
- (b) Why do you think God created worms? What is their ecological importance?
- (c) 'Live and let live' is a famous proverb. Which lines from the poem support this proverb?
- (d) Does the poem urge us to protect only worms?

What is the general message conveyed through this poem?

4. Find from the library or internet other poems composed on tiny living creatures.

Try to understand the message in each of them.

5. 'Even small things in nature play a big role. So protect nature!'

Frame some slogans based on the above topic.

- **Draft a short speech on the above topic, which you could give at your school assembly.**
- **Use the following steps while drafting.**
 - Greeting
 - Salutation
 - Self - introduction
 - Introduction of the topic
 - Body of the speech
 - Conclusion
 - Expression of gratitude to the audience

6. Paraphrase the poem in your own simple language. Write it down in your notebook.

7. Frame a pointwise analysis of the poem 'The Worm'. Use the following points.

- (a) Poem and poet :
- (b) Theme :
- (c) Tone :
- (d) Structure and stanzas :
- (e) Rhyme and Rhythm :
- (f) Language and Imagery :
- (g) Figures of Speech :

