



INDIAN SCHOOL MUSCAT
SENIOR SECTION
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
CLASS IX
The Brook

Theme : ‘The Brook’ describes the journey of the brook, as it originates from wild places and mingles with the river. It parallels the journey of the brook with that of human life. Through this analogy, the poet suggests the transitory nature of human life as compared to the eternity of nature’s existence. The brook passes through many ups and downs on its continuous journey to the river. Man has also to face many ups and downs in life. The brook overcomes many hurdles on its way, so does man. The poet suggests that no journey can be completely smooth.

There’s a clear-cut difference between the journey of the brook and the human journey. The journey of the brook is continuous. However, the human journey comes to an end with death. The brook as a symbol of nature is immortal, whereas man is mortal.

Man has a lesson to learn from the brook. The brook overcoming all hurdles reaches its destination. Man too, should overcome all hurdles in life and must move towards his goal. He must learn to take joys and sorrows in his stride. He must accept the fact that difficulties and hurdles are a part of life.

Message : The brook faces and overcomes many difficulties and hurdles in its way. It takes them in its stride. It does not cease in its onward march. Man should learn a lesson from the brook. He should not lose heart in the face of hurdles, pressure and dangers. He shouldn’t fret and fume but face all hurdles with courage and move on in life till he reaches his destination like the brook.

Poetic Devices : Alliteration.... repetition of consonant sounds in a sequence of words placed at important positions to create a musical effect. Eg: ‘t’ sound in ‘twenty thorpes, a little town’

‘w’ sound in ‘with willow-weed and mallow’

‘d’ and ‘t’ sounds in ‘I wind about and in and out’

‘b’ sound in ‘I bubble into eddying bays’

‘f’ sound in ‘Philip’s farm I flow’

Personification... ‘I’ make a sudden sally ‘I’ chatter over stony ways... the brook here is personified, wherein ‘I’ is used to show its movement, speech , and experiences like a human.

Repetition... words or phrases are repeated, to emphasize a point or create a musical effect. Eg. I chatter, chatter, as I flow ...this shows the loud noise made by the brook as it flows.

Imagery: many words and phrases are used to create mental pictures through figurative illustrations. ‘thirty hills’ ‘silvery water-breaks’ ‘netted sunbeams’ ‘sailing blossom’ ‘the brook’ itself is a symbol of life .

Onomatopoeia ... combination of words whose sound resembles the sound it describes. In the poem, words like ‘bicker’ ‘chatter’ ‘fret’ ‘babble’ ‘murmur’ create the sound effect as it moves along showing the variations in the sounds made by the brook in the course of its journey.

Rhyme Scheme ... the rhyme scheme of the poem is **abab**.

I come from haunts of coot and hern; - a

I make a sudden sally - b

And sparkle out among the fern, - a

To bicker down a valley. - b

1. Read the following extracts and answer the questions that follow :

A.

‘By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorpes, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.’

- Name the places ‘visited’ by the brook. What does this movement signify?
- Or slip between the ridges. Explain.
- What is the significance of the number words in the above lines?
- Which poetic device, has the poet used in the stanza? Why?

B.

‘I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.’

- Who touches the surface of the brook? Why?
- What does ‘netted sunbeam’ refer to? How does it seem to dance?
- Which poetic device has the poet used in the first line of the stanza?
- Explain, ‘my sandy shallows.’

C.

‘And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river;
For men may come and man may go,
But I go on for ever.’

- How does the brook make its last move to reach its destination?
- Why is the river brimming?
- What is the refrain in the poem? What effect does it create?
- Describe the brook’s movement towards the end of its journey.

2. Answer the following questions in short :

- How is the brook a symbol of life?
- Give examples from the poem to prove that the brook is a source of life?
- ‘I wind about, and in and out.’ What picture does this line create in the mind of the reader?
- Why does the poet use the word ‘bicker’ in the first stanza of the poem?
- How has the poet shown the brook’s movement by day and by night ?

3. Long Answer Question:

- Describe the brook’s journey from its origin to its joining the brimming river. What values or lessons have you learned from the poem, ‘The Brook’?