

Chapter -2

Leisure

Summary

- The poet William Henry Davies is complaining about a life that has been made complicated by the human lifestyle. The poet is not happy with the modern lifestyle that is full of stress and he thinks that today man is too busy to enjoy the bounties (gifts) of the earth that are beautiful and soothing.
- Appreciating Mother Nature is the true essence of a meaningful life and the poem implicates about taking time out from being busy. A meaningful life is like a life of a child. A life full of anxieties is a poor life. The poem teaches us about the value of time and its usefulness of time.
- The poet wants humans to start enjoying the marvellousness of nature. He suggests that one must put an end to the stress. People, unfortunately, feel that a serious life is worthy. But one should discard the worries and take out time to witness the beauties of nature.
- We should sit and enjoy nature under the trees and look at birds and butterflies that silently glide from one branch to another. A poor life is one that is under the pressure of the commitments of life. One should sometimes break away from the shackles of life and celebrate the beauty of nature.

Important points from the text:

1. The poet emphasizes on life which is full of care and consideration.
2. The poet is not happy with the modern lifestyle that is full of stress. In his opinion, life is an opportunity to enjoy the beauty around us. Today man thinks that he is too busy to enjoy the bounties (gifts) of the earth that are beautiful and soothing.
3. Appreciating Mother Nature is the true essence of a meaningful life.
4. The poem suggests taking time out from being busy. A meaningful life is like a life of a child. A life full of anxieties is a poor life; one should not run away from the small pleasure of life. The poem teaches us about the value of time and its usefulness of time.
5. The poet wants humans to start enjoying the marvellousness of nature. He suggests that one must put an end to the stress.
6. A happy and content life should be devoid of worries and stress.
7. We should sit under the tree and look at birds and their movements.
8. We should find time to stand like cows and sheep who endlessly look at things as if they are lost in a dream and have ample time to recognize the natural beauty in the environment. They are seldom found moving in a hurry.

9. While passing through the woods, we must stop to see the squirrels running off with nuts. Sometimes we can see the glitter of the sunlight reflecting upon the ripples of the streams. A poor life is one that is under the pressure of the commitments of life. One should sometimes break away from the shackles of life and celebrate the beauty of nature.
10. We should spend more time appreciating the beauty of nature.
11. We should break away from the world of the rat race and stand silently to enjoy and caress mother earth.
12. By choosing the title "leisure", the poet tries to convey that everybody should indulge in relaxation and enjoyment. One should enjoy life by paying attention to the beauty around us.

Lesson to be learnt: We should take out time to appreciate nature such as mountains, trees, animals, and rivers no matter how busy we are. Nature delights the senses and mind through its beauty and the wonders it has to offer.

Learn new words:

- Anxieties- excessive worry
- Stare – Look/ see
- Beneath – Under
- Bough – The main branch of a tree
- Woods – Forests/ trees
- Streams – Rivers
- Enrich- improving the quality or value of something

Literary devices used in the poem:

- 1) Simile- *streams full of stars*

The poet compared the stars at night with the sparkling water in the stream. It provides the picture of a stream shimmering under the sun and at night.

- 2) Alliteration- *stand and stare*

The alliteration of the 'st' sound in the phrase slows down the rhythm of the line. This reflects the action of stopping and standing and looking at something.

- 3) Personification- *Beauty glance And watch her feet, how they can dance*

The poet personifies the beauty of nature as it is the name of a person. This helps us to picture nature as a beautiful girl with dancing feet and a lovely smile.

Do you know?

Hobbies and leisure activities are truly important and can be beneficial in many ways. It is proven that spending time doing the things we enjoy can help delay the signs of aging and the pleasure of participating can lead to positive feelings that can help fight against some illnesses. Recreational activities enhance the immune system, improve flexibility, memory and also lead to a more restful night's sleep.

Extend your horizon

A human body is a machine and like any other machine, it also requires rest after working for some time. Analyze the poem in your own words and write an essay on the topic "value of leisure" in one's life.

Evaluate yourself.

1. What do you understand by the word 'care' in the first line?
2. "The poet conveys that our lives are full of worries and responsibilities and that we have no time to enjoy the beauties of nature and our surroundings." Justify and explain this line
3. "We have no time to stand and stare." Explain the phrase, with the help of the poem.
4. About what kind of life is the poet complaining?
5. Why does the poet pick up the example of sheep and cows?

Maximize your marks

- Read the poem carefully and attempt all the questions.
- Try to understand the true idea of the poem and why does poet emphasizes living a pleasurable and peaceful life?