



BREAK BREAK BREAK (POEM)

Lord Alfred Tennyson

After completing this lesson, students will be able to:

- read with accurate pronunciation, appropriate pitch and voice variation suitable for fictional and nonfictional texts. Recite, understand, interpret and analyze the poem and its characteristic features
- evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader. Discuss others' reading critically, taking account of their views. Identify poetical devices and use of figurative language
- ask and answer higher-order questions to guide/assess reading (e.g., Why is the author saying this right now? Why did the author choose this word? How is this different from what I read somewhere else? Identify images and symbols used in the poem and their function in the interpretation
- demonstrate knowledge and application of parts of speech in oral and written communication in varying identify figures of speech used in the poem specifically
- use paraphrasing skills to paraphrase a poem
- use summary skills to write an objective summary of the given text and poem comprehend the poem and answer questions appended to it
- summaries complex concepts, processes, or information by paraphrasing them using correct language structure, transitional devices, own words and relevant punctuation marks.
- paraphrase and summarize the poem
- understand and identify interjections, their types and their usage
- punctuate given lines
- understand and use phrasal verbs in sentences

Pre-Reading

- Guess what the poem is about?
- Speculate on the title of the poem

Reading

Break, Break, Break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O, well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O, well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

While-reading

- Skim for the main idea.
- Scan for specific information.
- Summarize or paraphrase.
- Draw a mind picture of the poem.



Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809 - 1820) Alfred Tennyson, one of the most celebrated poets of the Victorian Era was born in England. He was an enthusiastic reader and worked hard to perfect his own craft as a poet. He composed short lyrics as well as longer works. In 1850 Lord Tennyson was named Poet Laureate of England. He wrote 'Break Break Break' on the death of his friend Arthur Henry Hallam who died at the young age of 22. The poem is a

moving elegy that captures the pain and sorrow of losing a loved friend and the struggle to come to terms with the loss. The poem expresses how Tennyson uses these elements to express his grief.

Theme: Break Break Break is a short poem with an overwhelmingly sad and nostalgic tone. The poem presents a sea-side image, complete with a wild sea, playing children, fishermen, sailors and sailing boats in the background of majestic ships. Tennyson subtly juxtaposes these elements with the sense of impermanence on the death of a beloved friend

Speaker: The poet himself is the narrator

Poetic form: This poem is broken into four stanzas each of which is a quatrain. Each quatrain is further broken down according to its rhyme scheme; ABCB where the second and fourth lines always rhyme.

Summary: The poem is a short elegy that expresses the poet's personal sorrow against the backdrop of a powerful ocean scene where despite his loss the affairs of the world go on unperturbed.

Post-reading

- What does the poet mean by saying 'the tender grace of a day'?

Figures of Speech and Literary devices in BREAK BREAK BREAK

- Lines 1-2: The speaker uses **apostrophe** when he addresses the sea directly as though it were capable of responding to him. He also uses **repetition** within the first line, repeating the same word three times. The **assonance** in the second line, or the repetition of that long "o" vowel sound ("cold," "stones," and "O") helps to slow the reader down.
- Lines 9-10: The speaker uses **alliteration** in line 10 when he repeats the "h" sound ("haven" and "hill"). The "stately ships" that go to their "haven under the hill" might be a metaphor for coffins - going "under the hill" sounds a lot like going underground, or being buried. As "stately" or fancy as these "ships" might be, that doesn't make us want to be passengers.
- Lines 13-14: The speaker **repeats** lines 1-2 almost exactly, again **apostrophizing** the sea. Then, in the third stanza, we start to figure out why he can't talk: it's because his friend's "voice is still." Our speaker is all choked up on grief that he doesn't know how to express.

- Lines 3-4: The speaker uses **synecdoche**, or substituting a part of something for the whole thing, when he wishes that his "tongue could utter." Because, yeah, your "tongue" is the part that does the speaking, but not on its own, unless you're talking in your sleep or something. The speaker uses **metaphor** when he says that his "thoughts" "arise," since thoughts don't literally move around.
- Lines 5-6: The "fisherman's boy" is "shout[ing]," but we do not know what he is saying - it may be utter nonsense as he's playing with his sister. The "O" that opens the line is just as empty of meaning as the shouts of the boy.
- Lines 7-8: The sailor's song is likewise without words - we do not know what he is singing; "Again, the speaker's "O" that opens the line is just as meaningless. It is as though the speaker is starting to wonder if utterances - shouts, songs, or poems - have any meaning at all.
- Line 12: Ah, here is why the speaker is so down on utterances lately. It is because of his friend's "voice that is still." Again, he is using **synecdoche** by imagining that his friend's "voice" stands in for the his friend who is dead.



Glossary

Given below are the difficult words from the unit. Look at their meanings and give synonyms of each in the given column. The first one is done for you. Also use these words in your own sentences.

Words	Meanings	Synonyms
thy	your in archaic English	your
bay	gulf, a deep inlet of the sea surrounded by land	
stately	grand, majestic in appearance,	
haven	a place of safety or refuge	
crag	a steep or rugged piece of rock face	
tender	showing gentleness kindness or affection	



Reading and Critical Thinking

a) Answer the following.

1. Analyze the speaker's perspective in the poem.
2. To whom is the poem addressed?
3. Comment on the effect produced by the use of repetition in the poem.
4. How do you analyze feeling of the poet in the first two lines?
5. Identify personification in the poem.
6. How is the poem a juxtaposition of transience and permanence?
7. Comment on the images and symbols used in the poem.
8. Evaluate as to where are the ships going.
9. Critically evaluate the poet's notion of never coming back.
10. Identify personification, metaphors, anaphora, hyperbole, alliteration, refrain, symbolism in the poem.

b) Choose the correct answer:

- i. What is the phrase that suggests the poet's inability to express his grief?
a) cold gray stone b) fisherman's boy
c) stately ships go on d) never come back
- ii. What is the fisherman's boy doing?
a) singing in his boat b) fishing with his father
c) sleeping under the sun d) shouting with his sister at play
- iii. What are the phrases that signify the sense of loss in the third stanza?
a) vanished hand, voice that is still b) the stately ships go on
c) sound of a voice d) haven under the hill



Oral Communication

Discuss in groups the interpretation of the poem. Group leaders to relate their interpretation to the rest of the class.

Activity

Recite the poem in the class room.

THE FAREWELL

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea,
Thy tribute wave deliver:

No more by thee my steps shall be,
 Forever and forever.
 Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,
 A rivulet then a river:
 Nowhere by thee shall my steps be
 Forever and forever.
 But here will sigh thine alder tree
 And here thine aspen shiver;
 And here by thee will hum the bee,
 Forever and forever.
 A thousand suns will stream on thee,
 A thousand moons will quiver;
 But not by thee my steps shall be,
 Forever and forever.

Alfred Lord Tennyson



Vocabulary and Grammar

Interjection: - An interjection is a word or phrase that mainly expresses spontaneous or abrupt feeling or emotion. They can show happiness, surprise, anger, stress, impatience, fright or hatred etc. While interjections are a part of speech but they are grammatically independent. For example:-

Wow! That bird is huge.

Uh-oh! I forgot to get gas.

Shoot! I've broken a nail.

Oh! really? I didn't know that.

We're not lost! We just need to go, um, this way.

The poem "Break Break Break" is a fine example of use of interjections. The powerful emotions of loss in this case are represented by interjections for instance 'O Sea!' and 'the sound of a voice that is still!'.

Types of Interjections

Primary interjections

A primary interjection is a word or sound that can only be used as an interjection. Primary interjections do not have alternative meanings and can't function as another part of speech (i.e., noun, verb or adjective).

Primary interjections are typically just sounds without a clear etymology. As such, while they sometimes have standard spellings, a single interjection may be written in different ways (e.g., "um-hum" or "mm-hmm").

Examples: Primary interjections in a sentence

Ugh! That's disgusting.

Um-hum! I think that could work.

We won the game. Yippee!

Secondary interjections

A secondary interjection is a word that is typically used as another part of speech (such as a noun, verb, or adjective) that can also be used as an interjection.

Examples: Secondary interjections in a sentence

Goodness! That was a close one.

Shoot! My flight has been canceled.

Awesome! Do that trick again.

Volitive interjections

A volitive interjection is used to give a command or make a request. For example, the volitive interjection "shh" or "shush" is used to command someone to be quiet.

Examples: Volitive interjections in a sentence

Shh! I can't focus when you're singing.

Psst! Pass me an eraser.

Ahem! Please pay attention.

Emotive interjections

An emotive interjection is used to express an emotion or to indicate a reaction to something. For example, the emotive interjection "ew" is used to express disgust. Curse words, also called expletives, are commonly used (in informal contexts) as emotive interjections to express frustration or anger.

Examples: Emotive interjections in a sentence

Ew! I'm not eating that.

Yay! I'm so excited to see you.

Yum! This apple pie is delicious.

Cognitive interjections

A cognitive interjection is used to express a thought or indicate a thought process. For example, the cognitive interjection "um" can express confusion or indicate that the speaker is thinking.

Examples: Cognitive interjections in a sentence

Um! can you explain it once more?

Wow! I wasn't expecting that.

Eureka! I've solved the puzzle.

Greetings and parting words

Greetings and parting words/phrases are interjections used to acknowledge or welcome someone or to express good wishes at the end of a conversation.

Examples: Greetings and parting words/phrases in a sentence

Hey! How's life?

Hello! It's good to see you.

Bye! See you later!

See you soon! Drive safe.

Interjections and punctuation

How an interjection is punctuated depends on the context and the intensity of the emotion or thought being expressed.

Exclamation points are most commonly used along with interjections to emphasize the intensity of an emotion, thought, or demand.

When the emotion or thought being expressed is less extreme, an interjection can also be followed by a period. If an interjection is used to express uncertainty or to ask a question, it should be followed by a question mark.

Examples: Interjections and punctuation

Oh! I don't know.

We've just won the lottery. Hurray!

Are you done .Hmm?

When an interjection is used as part of a sentence, it should be set off from the

rest of the sentence using commas.

Examples: Interjections within a sentence

Hmm, how are we going to do this?

It was an interesting lecture, indeed.

The project is, uh, going well.

In the following sentences, identify the interjection and encircle it.

- i. Hi, I'm glad that you could make it to my party.
- ii. Wow! You look great tonight.
- iii. That was the best performance that I have ever seen, bravo!
- iv. Hmm, I wonder where I put my keys and wallet?
- v. "Shoo, go away!" shouted the woman when she saw the cat licking milk from her cereal bowl.
- vi. I guess that's the end of the movie, darn.
- vii. Stop! You should always wear a helmet when riding a bike.
- viii. Yippee, I made this picture all by myself.



Writing

- a) Summarize the poem "Break Break Break" highlighting the salient points
- b) Justify how the theme of the poem goes with the thoughts given by the poet?
- c) Which figurative speech has the poet used in the poem? Discuss.

d) Punctuate the given lines.

flow down cold rivulet to the sea _____

thy tribute wave deliver _____

no more by thee my steps shall be _____

forever and for ever _____

e) Use the given phrasal verbs in sentences.

log in _____

log out _____

look after _____

look down on _____

look into _____

look out _____

look forward _____

Teacher's Point

- Reading between the lines, symbolism, interpreting on their own
- Readers rewriting the poem's meaning.
- Help the students see the key word for setting the tone and atmosphere of the poem
- Ask students to search and study about Tennyson and his other works.