

The Brook

Lord Alfred Tennyson

A. Lead – in:

Our country is a land of rivers. Some rivers are big and some are small. Have you ever seen the place of the origin of a river ? Most of the rivers rise in the form of small streams in hills or mountains. These small streams sometimes fall into big rivers. A stream in the course of its journey covers a long distance and passes through plains, valleys and forests.

Read the poem to know what a stream feels as it rushes to join a brimming river.

B. Let's Listen to the Poem :

- Your teacher reads the poem aloud. Listen to him/ her without opening the book. Mark the teacher's voice, tone and expressions. S/He reads the poem again.
- Now open the book and try to follow him/ her. Mark the words, phrases and expressions that appeal to you. Add more words and phrases that occur to you as relevant to the context.
- Read the poem silently. You may refer to the notes and glossary to understand the text.

C. Text:

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

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

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
 Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
 Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
 To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots ;
 I slide by hazel covers ;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
 That grow for happy lovers.

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

I murmur under moon and stars
 In brambly wildernesses ;
I linger by my shingly bars ;
 I loiter round my cresses ;

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

D. About the Poet:

Lord Alfred Tennyson (1809 -1892) was born in Lincolnshire in Great Britain. His poetry is noted for its pictorial quality and musical beauty. He was Poet Laureate for over 40 years.

E. Notes and glossary :

- brook - a small mountain stream
- fern - a type of plant with large, delicate leaves having no flowers
- haunts - places frequently visited
- coot - water bird with a white spot on the forehead
- hern - (Heron) another kind of water bird
- sally - emerge suddenly
- bicker - (Here) flow down making a lot of noise.
- thorp - a village
- trebles - high-pitched sound
- eddying - spiral movement of water
- babble - sound made when one talks gaily
- fallow - land left uncultivated
- foreland - a projecting land mass.
- mallow - plant with hairy stems and leaves with pink, white or purple flowers
- lusty trout - a big freshwater fish
- grayling - another type of fish
- ridges - a narrow area of highland along the top of a line of hills
- brimming - become full of something
- chatter - to talk quickly

sharps	-	musical raised by one semitone
fret	-	gradually wear away (something) by rubbing or grawing
willow weed-		a bush with flexible branches and long narrow leaves often growing near water.
gravel	-	small stones
hazel	-	a small tree or bush with edible nuts.
forget-me-nots-		a type of flower.
shingly bars	-	covered with small rounded pebbles.
cresses	-	pungent-leaved plant
slide	-	to move smoothly
gloom	-	partial darkness
linger	-	to stay for a time
brambly	-	a thorn-covered shrub.

F. Let's understand the poem:

1. Where does the brook come from ?
2. How does it "sparkle" ?
3. What does the brook pass through during its journey ?
4. Where does it finally meet the river ?
5. What does the poet mean by the statement "with many a curve my banks I fret" ?
6. Why does the poet repeat the word 'chatter' in the poem ?
7. What does the poet want to say by using the words 'steal' and 'slide' ?
8. What does the poet mean by 'the netted Sunbeam' ? How does it dance ?
9. Some lines of the poem given below are not in order. Arrange them in their sequential order to make them meaningful.

- i) In brambly wildernesses;
I loiter round my cresses;
I linger by my shingly bars;
I murmur under moon and stars
- ii) To join the brimming river,
And out again I curve and flow
But I go on for ever.
For men may come and men may go

G Let's appreciate the poem:

- (a)
1. What do you mean by the word 'bicker' ?
Why does the poet use this word here ?
 2. What picture do you imagine when you go through the line " I wind about, and in and out" ?
 3. How does the brook chatter ?
 4. Why has the poet used the word "brimming" ?
 5. What kind of a picture does it create in your mind ?
 6. Why does the poet repeat the expression, 'For men may come and men may go, But I go on for ever' ?
- (b) Answer the following questions choosing the correct alternative.
- 1- The poet compares the journey of the brook with _____ .
 - a) the worries and anxieties in a man's life
 - b) the talkative nature of human beings
 - c) the death of a man
 - d) the life of a man
 - 2- The lines "And here and there a lusty trout, And here and there a grayling" suggest that _____
 - i) the brook is full of life
 - ii) the brook enjoys all kinds of scenes

- iii) people enjoy the beauty of the brook
 - iv) fishes are alive because of water
- 3- The poem is narrated in the first person by the _____ .
- i) poet
 - ii) nature
 - iii) flower
 - iv) brook
- 4- The message of the poem is that the life of a brook is _____ .
- i) temporary
 - ii) short-lived
 - iii) eternal
 - iv) momentary

(c) Make a list of seven pairs of rhyming words used by the poet in the poem.

The brook has been personified in this poem. It has also a message for us.

Compose a poem of 6 to 8 lines on something inanimate such as **a hill**, a **desert**, **a paperweight** or **a lamp**, **a book** or **a pen**.

(Teacher can make it a group activity)

H. Let's listen and speak :

- (i) One student asks a question. Another student reads aloud the relevant stanza. The exercise should create a context as if the Brook is answering to the questions of many children.

Question- Where do you come from ?

Reply - One student reads aloud the first stanza.

Question - What did you pass on your way ?

Reply- Another student reads aloud second stanza. (The activity continues)

The Brook has been awarded a vital grant as part of the Government's £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund (CRF) to help face the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic and to ensure they have a sustainable future, the Culture Secretary has announced today. For tickets purchased from The Brook box office directly, please contact the box office using the contact form on our website. Keep hold of your tickets, and we will be able to process refunds once we get the box office open again. Dear all, the warmest of well wishes from our Brook family to yours. We want to thank you for all the messages of support we have had this past week. Yes, it is a terrible blow to the business but we are conscious that this is a trying time for everyone. The Brook. worship. grow. serve. together. Sundays @ 9:00 & 10:45 AM. The Brook is a private club located at 111 East 54th Street in Manhattan (New York City). It was founded in 1903 by a group of prominent men who belonged to other New York City private clubs, such as the Knickerbocker Club and the Union Club. The name is derived from the Alfred Lord Tennyson poem The Brook, whose lines "For men may come and men may go, but I go on for ever" were consistent with the intention that the Club would provide 24-hour service and would never close its doors. In 1992, the City of London registered charity in England and Wales (1085760) and Company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (4119581). Close modal. Privacy Preference Center. When you visit any website, it may store or retrieve information on your browser, mostly in the form of cookies. This information might be about you, your