



## **ABSTRACT**

Our work is about Robert Frost, one of the most popular American poets. Frost was considered the most successful poet of nature in the United States. Frost was born in San Francisco, California, in 1874 and died in 1963.

Robert Frost loved nature. His poetry was full of sentimental expressions about his personal life and conduct. Besides, his poems are simple and profound. He also wrote simple stories about everyday people, often inhabitants of rural New England. Robert Frost wrote extraordinary prose, using simple and direct language; his poems contain symbolism, hidden meanings, sounds, rhyme, meter, metaphors and more.

The first part of our work is about Robert Frost's life; it is divided into four parts: early life, adult years, marriage and family and death.

The second part is a summary about the history of the United States during Frost's lifetime. It contains information on the Spanish – American War, World War I, Women's Suffrage, the Stock Market Crash, the New Deal, the World War II, Korea and the Space Technology.



The third part is an analysis of ten selected poems with respect to nature and philosophy. *“Reluctante”, “The Pasture”, “The Road not taken”, “Fire and Ice,” “Acquainted with the Night,” “Mending Wall,” “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening”, “Nothing Gold can Stay”, “The Sound of the Trees” and “Into my Own.”* With respect to each poem we have analyzed the literary devices used by Frost such as meter, rhyme, symbolism, metaphor, simile, and personification, among others.

In the fourth part there is a comparison of Frost to Emily Dickinson with respect to nature and philosophy in their poetry.

Key words:       symbolism; direct language; meter; rhyme;  
                          metaphor; simile; personification.



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# UNIVERSIDAD DE CUENCA



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FROST'S POETRY"**

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*A poem . . . begins as a lump  
in the throat, a sense of wrong, a  
homesickness, a lovesickness. . . .  
It finds the thought and the thought  
finds the words.*

*Robert Frost*



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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## **DEDICATION**

*This thesis is dedicated to my parents, and especially to my mother, who taught me that the best kind of knowledge is learned for its own sake; she is my mirror of example and wisdom, and through her I have managed to achieve my goals. It is also dedicated to my brother, who taught me that even the largest task can be accomplished if it is done one step at a time. This thesis would be incomplete without the mention of the support given me by my cherished friend, Hilda, to whom this thesis is dedicated. She was my own "soul out of my soul," who kept my spirits up when my mind failed me. Without her lifting me up when this thesis seemed interminable, I doubt it should ever have been completed. God bless her.*

**MÓNICA**



## **DEDICATION**

*I dedicate this thesis to my parents who always supported and guided me with love and patience all the time since the beginning of my studies; to my dear husband, Adrián, to my beloved sons, David and Ariel, who have been a source of encouragement and inspiration to me throughout my life; also, this thesis is dedicated to my sisters, Karla and Paola, and to my brother, Paul, who encouraged me to continue and to finish my studies with success. Finally, a very special thanks to my dear friend Mónica who always supports me and helps me at all times.*

**HILDA MERCEDES**



## **INTRODUCTION**

Our thesis is about Robert Frost, one of the most popular and traditional of twentieth century American poets. Frost was born in San Francisco, California, in 1874 and died in 1963.

He lived partly in the nineteenth century and partly in the twentieth century. He experienced World War I and II which brought desolation, poverty, suffering and illness to the people. After that, there began scientific, economic, and intellectual progress. During both good and bad times, Robert Frost wrote poetry about nature and philosophy, and about human relations, showing that people should open their hearts and pull down the barriers between them.

Robert Frost became a legend in his own lifetime. Frost published regularly from 1913 to 1962. Along the way, he received four Pulitzer Prizes as a writer, and by the end of his life he had received many honorary degrees, including honorary degrees from Oxford, Harvard, and Yale. In 1996, more than thirty years after his death, he won no less than three Nobel Laureates.

Robert Frost had a life full of successes and failures. He lived to see the deaths of four of his children, his



parents, his sister and his wife. All these tragedies influenced Frost's poetry.

Robert Frost loved nature. Frost's poetry is a simple, solemn photograph of New England. His poetry is full of sentimental expressions about his personal life and conduct. In addition, it is simple and profound revealing many complexities. His poetry is related to ancient and modern traditions. He also wrote simple stories about everyday people, often inhabitants of rural New England. Robert Frost offers a complete vision of the universe, even a fully formed poetic world.

Robert Frost wrote extraordinary poetry and prose, using simple and direct language. His poems contain symbolism, hidden meanings, sounds, rhyme, meter, metaphors, and more, that make his poetry even more memorable. Nowadays, we realize that in spite of the passage of time, Robert Frost still has a great influence on the poets and playwrights of today.

The first part of our work is about Robert Frost's life; it is divided into four parts: early life, adult years, marriage and family and death.

The second part is a summary about the history of the United States during his lifetime. Some events are covered



such as Spanish – American War, World War I, Women's Suffrage, the Stock Market Crash, the New Deal, World War II, Korea, and Space Technology.

The third part is the analysis of ten selected poems with respect to nature and philosophy such as *“Reluctante”*, *“The Pasture”*, *“The Road not taken”*, *“Fire and Ice,”* *“Acquainted with the Night,”* *“Mending Wall,”* *“Stopping by Wood on a Snowy Evening”*, *“Nothing Gold can Stay”*, *“The Sound of the Trees”* and *“Into my Own.”* According to each poem we have analyzed the literary devices such as meter, rhyme, symbolism, metaphor, simile, and personification, among others.

In the fourth part there is a comparison of Frost to Emily Dickinson with respect to nature and philosophy in their poetry.

After finishing this work we have realized why Robert Frost is considered one of the most widely read American poets. In addition we have focused upon the themes of nature and philosophy in Frost's poetry.

We hope that this investigative work will be a useful and valuable contribution to the study of culture and literature. Moreover Besides, our purpose is to incentivate the reading of Robert Frost's poems; his simple and direct





language will guide the reader into a deeper feeling of connection with nature and philosophy.



## CHAPTER I

### 1. BIOGRAPHY OF ROBERT FROST

#### 1.1. EARLY LIFE



Robert Lee Frost was born on March 26, 1874, in San Francisco, California, in the United States. He was the first child of Isabelle Moodie Frost, a Scottish immigrant schoolteacher, and William Prescott Frost Jr. a journalist, local politician. Frost's family lived in California until his father died. He had one sister called Jeanie Florence.<sup>1</sup>

In 1879 Robert attended kindergarten, but went home after one day suffering from nervous stomach pain and did not come back, Frost attended first grade, but soon dropped out again in 1880. He entered second grade and the same year was baptized in his mother's Swedenborgian church in 1881. He left school and was educated at home in 1882. Frost heard voices when he stayed alone and his mother told him that he shared her gift for "second hearing" and "second sight." But because his father drank continually his health deteriorated In 1883.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://famouspoetsandpoems.com/poets/robert\\_frost/biography](http://famouspoetsandpoems.com/poets/robert_frost/biography)



Robert Frost's life was plagued with grief and loss. He moved with his mother and sister to New England at the age of eleven when his father died. Then they moved to Lawrence, Massachusetts, where Frost's paternal grandfather, William Prescott Frost, gave his grandson a good schooling. Robert and Jeanie disliked their grandparent's sternness and rigorous discipline. Frost entered third grade while his younger sister entered fourth grade in 1885. They moved to Salem Depot, New Hampshire, where his mother began teaching from the fifth to the eighth grades. Robert and Jeanie entered the fifth grade in 1886.<sup>2</sup>

His mother being a teacher, young Robert was early on exposed to the world of books and reading and he became interested in reading and writing poetry during his high school years after studying the works of William Shakespeare, Robert Burns, and William Wordsworth. Also, he was very interested in nature, the great outdoors, and the rural countryside.

Frost lived in the city and passed the entrance examinations for Lawrence High School in June, 1890. He enrolled in the "Classical" Program. Soon he was writing his own poems, including "La Noche Triste" in 1890, based on an episode from Prescott's Conquest of Mexico, which was published in the School Bulletin in April; a second poem, "The Song of the Wave," appeared in the Bulletin in May. He excelled in many subjects, including history, botany, Latin and Greek, and he played football. He finished the school year, graduating as the best student of his class.

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<sup>2</sup> [www.helium.com/items/975552-biography-robert-frost](http://www.helium.com/items/975552-biography-robert-frost)



## 1.2. ADULT YEARS



Robert Frost passed the preliminary entrance examinations for Harvard University. He was elected chief editor of the *Bulletin* for the 1891 and 1892 school years. He fell in love with his classmate Elinor Miriam White during the fall.



In 1892, after graduating from high school, he became engaged to Elinor. He depended upon his grandparents' financial support, and entered Dartmouth College instead of Harvard because it was cheaper. Also, his grandparents blamed Harvard for his father's bad habits. Frost was at Dartmouth for a few



months. He was a member of the Theta Delta Chi fraternity<sup>3</sup>. But soon he was bored by college due to the atmosphere of campus life, he was restless, and left Dartmouth at the end of December.

During the next ten years he held a number of jobs. Frost worked in a textile mill, he was employed delivering newspapers, he served as a teacher of Latin at his mother's school in Methuen, Massachusetts; he worked as a cobbler, and finally as an editor of the magazine of Lawrence high school called *The Sentinel*. He did not enjoy these jobs at all because he only wanted to be a poet dedicating his time to writing poetry.

While he attended college, the New York newspaper, *The Independent*, published Frost's first professional poem, "My Butterfly: An Elegy"<sup>4</sup>, earning him \$15 on November 8, 1894. This seemed to be the star of a successful career for Frost as a poet. He returned to teach the first to the sixth grade in Salem while writing. Frost continued writing and publishing his poems in magazines. Two copies of his collection of poems called *Twilight* were printed. Proud of this accomplishment, he tried to convince Elinor to marry him at once. He visited Elinor to show his poems, but she did not receive him very well; so he destroyed his poems and returned home. Depressed, he decided to go on an excursion to the Great Dismal Swamp on the Virginia border with North Carolina. He left Lawrence on November 6 and traveled by train and boat to Norfolk, Virginia, then he followed a wagon road and walked for miles into the swamp at night. He met a group of boatmen at the canal lock who agreed to

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<sup>3</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert\\_Frost](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Frost)

<sup>4</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert\\_Frost](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Frost)



take him to Elizabeth city, North Carolina. He crossed Albemarle Sound to Mags Head on the Atlantic coast. He returned from this journey by car from Elizabeth City to Baltimore, Maryland. Exhausted and frightened, he arrived at Lawrence on November 30.

In 1893, for a short time, he taught an unruly eighth-grade class in Methuen for several weeks. Again Frost tried to convince Elinor to marry him before returning to St. Lawrence University, but he failed. They had gone their separate ways upon graduation to attend college, and while Frost had left the university early, Elinor wanted to wait until she was finished with the university before getting married.



### 1.3. MARRIAGE, FAMILY, TRAGEDIES AND LITERARY WORKS



A year later, a wish he had had for some time came true after Elinor graduated. Robert married her in a ceremony conducted by a Swedenborgian pastor on December 19, 1895, in Lawrence, Elinor was his co-valedictorian and sweetheart from his school years who became a major inspiration to his poetry until her death in 1938; they had six children together: son Eliot, Lesley, son Carol, Irma, Marjorie and Elinor. After two years, Frost left Harvard to support his growing family. The newlyweds continued teaching, but Frost continued publishing his poems in magazines. Also, he worked as a reporter in Lawrence for “The Daily American” and “The Sentinel”.





His first son, Eliot, was born on September 25, 1896.

In 1897, His grandfather borrowed money for Frost to study at Harvard University in Massachusetts. Frost passed, the entrance examinations and entered as a freshman.

The couple moved to Derry, New Hampshire, where Frost worked as a cobbler, farmer, and a teacher at Pinkerton Academy. When he sent his poems to *The Atlantic Monthly*, they were returned with this note: "We regret that *The Atlantic* has no place for your vigorous verse."

Frost pulled out from Harvard on March 31, 1899, without receiving a formal degree, due to family problems and poor health. Despite his withdrawal, Harvard was one of many institutions that would award him an honorary degree later on. His daughter, Lesley, was born on April 28. At the same time, Frost insisted that his mother see a doctor and he learned that she had advanced cancer.

The "Derry Years" were the next ten years. In this time, Frost had to take care of his growing family. Grandfather Frost purchased a farm for the young couple in Derry, New Hampshire, where they worked at poultry farming. Frost wrote early in the mornings, producing many of the poems that would later become famous. The same year his son Eliot died of cholera on July 8, 1900, and was buried in Lawrence. For this reason Elinor suffered severe depression and Frost's health declined. They both suffered greatly from grief and guilt, and compounding this situation, his mother entered at a sanatorium in





Penacook. There his mother died of cancer on November 2, and was buried in Lawrence, too.

In 1901, he read Thoreau's *Walden* for the first time. His grandfather William Prescott Frost, died on July 10; he left Robert \$500 per year for the rest of his life and the use of the Derry Farm for ten years, after which Frost received the increased value of \$800 per year and the ownership of the farm.

His son Carol was born on May 27, 1902.

In February, 1903, he published a short story "Trap nests;" it would be published 11 times in "The Poultryman" and in "Farm-Poultry" between 1903 and 1905. In the same year his daughter, Irma, was born on June 27. Frost worked on the farm for nine years.

His daughter Marjorie was born on March 28, 1906. He wanted to continue farming, but he was not successful at it. For this reason Frost returned to education as an English teacher. He started to work part-time teaching English literature at Pinkerton Academy in Derry. He published a poem, "The Tuft of Flowers," in "The Derry Enterprise." Eventually, he assumed full-time teaching at Pinkerton Academy until 1911, and then at the New Hampshire Normal School.

In 1907 Elinor Bettina was born on June 18, and died on June 21 just three days after her birth. The farm had a peaceful and secluded setting and Frost enjoyed farming, tending to his orchard trees, chickens and various other chores. This period inspired him to write such poems as, "The Mending Wall,"



in 1913, and “Hyla Brook” in 1906. Actually, the house built in the typical New England clapboard style is now a restored State Historical Landmark.

In 1909, Frost impressed the New Hampshire superintendent of public instruction, and lectured about his teaching methods before several conventions of New Hampshire teachers. The poem, “*Into My Own*,” appeared in “The New England Magazine” in May. Frost sold all this poultry and moved with his family to an apartment in nearby Derry village.



In 1910, he revised the English curriculum for the Pinkerton Academy and the Developer program emphasizing an informal and conversational teaching style. He wrote in the school catalog, “The general aim of the course in English is twofold: to bring our students under the influence of the great books, and to teach them the satisfactions of superior speech.” Lamentably, in this year, his father-in-law died in May 1926.

He accepted the offer to teach at the State Normal School and moved with his family to Plymouth, Massachusetts. He taught courses in education and



psychology. As the couple had not been successful at farming, they wanted a change. Robert wanted to move to Vancouver and Elinor to England. In 1911 he sold the farm and they sailed to England on August 23. Elinor was enthusiastic about travelling.



Cottage - England

The couple and four young children sailed and arrived in England in 1912. They stayed in London briefly before renting a cottage in Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, 20 miles north of London.<sup>5</sup>

Robert became a full-time poet and was influenced by contemporary British poets such as Edgard Thomas, who was a member of the group known as the Dymock Poets, who formed a close friendship with Frost, Rupert Brooke, Hilda Doolittle, Hermann Hueffer (Ford Madox Ford), Ernest Rhys, William Butler Yeats and Robert Graves. While in England, Frost also established a friendship with the poet, Ezra Pound, who helped to promote and publish his work, Frost's first collection of poems, A BOY'S WILL.<sup>6</sup> Pound would become the first American to write a favorable review of Frost's work. She said that A

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.americanpoems.com/poets/robertfrost>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.poemofquotes.com/robertfrost/>



Boy's Will was "the best poetry written in America in a long time." In England, Frost wrote some of his best works. After writing poetry and trying to get the attention of publishers for over twenty years, Frost's first collection of poetry, *A Boy's Will*, was published in England on October, 1913, by the small London firm of David Nutt and Company. The American Publisher Henry Holt printed the edition in 1915.

In 1914, Frost moved near Dymock, Gloucestershire. While in England Frost became well known to F.S. Flint, Edgard Thomas, and Ezra Pound who called Frost's poems "modern georgics", Frost also became known by the Georgian Poets, Wilfred Gibson and Lascelles Abercrombie.

Frost's work was well received. His second collection, THE NORTH BOSTON, was published on May 15, 1914, and it gained international acclaim. The collection contains some of Frost's best-known poems: "Mending Wall," "The death of the Hired Man," "Home Burial," "A Servant to Servants," "After Apple-Picking" and "The Word Pile." The poems, written in blank verse or in the free verse of dialogue, were drawn from his own life from recurrent losses, everyday tasks, and loneliness. Edward Thomas wrote, "This is one of the most revolutionary books of modern times." Frost encouraged Thomas to write poetry. He enjoyed it when English people thought that he can't possibly be a spy when war broke out in August. He learned that Henry Holt and Company would publish his books in the U.S.A.. He hoped that the review by Pound might encourage Americans to consider him to be one of Pound's "party of American literacy refugees."



When World War I started Frost decided to return to The United States with his family. He arrived in New York on February 23. He bought a new farm near Franconia, New Hampshire, in 1915, where he began a career of writing, teaching, and lecturing. The family homestead, a house at Franconia, served as his summer home until 1938. It is now maintained as a museum and poetry conference site. His wife, Elinor, suffered a miscarriage. At the same time, Frost met with a number of editors in New York. He published two full-length collections: North of Boston was published in America on February 20 and A Boy's Will, in April. He met Edwin Arlington Robinson and Louis Untermeyer, and his reputation was established. When the editor of "The Atlantic Monthly" asked for poems, he gave his first poems that had previously rejected.

From 1916 to 1920, 1923 to 1924 and 1927 to 1938, Frost was an English professor at Amherst College, encouraging his students to account for the sounds of the human voice in their craft. He accepted the offer from Alexander Meiklejohn, president of Amherst College, to teach for one semester at a salary of \$2,000. He worked as a teacher in Michigan University, too. In 1916 he was named member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters. In the same year appeared his third collection of verse, MOUNTAIN INTERVAL,



published on November 27, written at Franconia, which contained such poems as, “The Road Not Taken,” “The Oven Bird,” “Birches” and “The Hill Wife.” Frost’s poems showed deep appreciation of the natural world and sensibility about human aspirations. His images of woods, stars, houses, and brooks are usually taken from everyday life. With his down-to-earth approach to his subjects, readers found it was easy to follow the poet’s insights into deeper truths, without being pedantic. He was also starting lecture tours for his ever-growing public of avid readers. He gave talks and readings throughout New England. Often Frost used the rhythms and vocabulary of ordinary speech, or even the looser free verse of dialogue.

On January, 1917, he moved to Amherst and published one act play called “A War Out.” He grieved over the death of Edward Thomas killed during the battle of Arras. In that year, Frost’s daughter, Lesley, entered Wellesley College, After a time he was pleased when Lesley left college in 1918 after her freshman year to work in an aircraft factory. During a nacional epidemia, Frost suffered a severe case of influenza that lasted for months. During that time he met Vachel Lindsay, Sara Teasdale, and James Oppenheim.

In 1920 Frost purchased a farm called “Stone House” which is now a museum, in South Shaftsbury, Vermont, near Middlebury College.<sup>7</sup> There he wrote many of the poems contained in his fourth collection of poetry from New Hampshire in 1923. He resigned from his position in Amherst in February over disagreements with Meiklejohn, who Frost considered to be too morally

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<sup>7</sup> [www.gradesaver.com/author/robert-frost/](http://www.gradesaver.com/author/robert-frost/)



permissive and he devoted more time to write. He began serving as consulting editor for Henry Holt and company at a salary of \$100 per month.

His sister Jeanie was arrested in Portland, Maine, on March 25, for disturbing the peace. She became mentally ill and was attended by a physician. Frost committed Jeanie to the state mental hospital at Augusta, Maine, where she died nine years later. Mental illness apparently ran in Frost's family, as both he and his mother suffered depression, too.

In 1921 he gave talks and readings, receiving at least \$4,100 plus expenses for each. He spent one week of March as a "poet in residence" at Queens at the University of Kingston, Ontario.

From 1921 to 1922, Frost moved to Ann Arbor to accept a fellowship teaching at the University of Michigan at the high school. He did not have to teach, but advised students and gave talks.

He began a long association with The Bread Loaf School of English in 1921, and for the next 42 years, Frost spent his summers at the Bread Loaf School of English of Middlebury College in Ripton, Vermont. Nowadays, the college owns Robert Frost's farm and maintains it as a national historic site near the Bread Loaf campus.

In 1922 he helped arrange a lecture series for poets which included Carl Sandburg, Louis Untermeyer and Amy Lowell. His fellowship at Michigan was renewed for another year.



Frost's fourth collection of poetry in New Hampshire was published by Henry Holt in March in 1923 and won him the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in this same year. It included "Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening." While he also worked on his farm, another project Frost undertook was the founding of the Bread Loaf School of English. He was awarded a title of honor by the University of Vermont. He accepted an appointment as profesor of English at Amherst College after Mieklejohn was dismissed. He discussed quantum theory with physicist Neils Bohr during a visit to Amherst in October. After his son Carol married Lilian LaBatt and his grandson Prescott arrived, he gave them "Stone House" to live in where Carol planted a thousand apple trees. Frost bought a second farm in Shaftsbury called "The Gulley".

In 1924, Robert Frost aceptted a post at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor as a Fellow in Letters, with no teaching obligations. He resided there until 1927. Frost's Ann Arbor home is now the house of Henry Ford. Frost was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in New Hampshire in May. He received Honorary Literary degrees Negrees from Middlebury College and Yale University. His grandson, William Prescott Frost, son of Carol, was born on Octubre 15.

In 1925, his friends gave Frost a "Fiftieth Birthday Dinner" because Frost believed he was born in 1875, not 1874. He wrote an obituary tribute to Amy Lowell for *The Chistian Science Monitor* in May. He worked in Ann Arbor, while Elinor and the family stayed at home. His daughter Marjorie was hospitalized in December suffering from pneumonia, peri-cardiac infection, chronic apendicitis and nervous exhaustion.





In 1926, his family joined him in Ann Arbor in the spring. After he visited Amherst president Daniel Olds, Frost accepted the offer to rejoin the college as a part-time professor of English for \$5,000 a year and no obligation to teach formal classes. He participated in the inaugural session of the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference.

On January 1927, Frost returned to Amherst where he taught for ten weeks. Marjorie entered Johns Hopkins Hospital for ten weeks of treatment.

In 1928, he signed a new contract with Holt providing a royalty increase from 15 to 20 percent 5,000 copies of a book were sold, and Frost received \$2,000 advance and monthly payments of \$250 for the next five years. He sailed to France with Elinor and Marjorie in August. He traveled through England and Scotland with Elinor, who was suffering from depression. During the voyage he met T.S. Eliot for the first time. When he returned to America in November, he learned that his daughter, Lesley, who married in September, was unhappy and contemplating divorce. At the height of his career, his next collection of poems "West-Running Brook" was published by Holt, which also published and expanded the edition of Selected Poems.

In 1929, he permitted Marjorie to begin nursing school. Another great loss was the death of his sister, Jeanie Florence, in the state mental hospital in August, in Maine. Frost and Elinor moved to a new farm that they purchased in South Shaftsbury.



Frost was a popular speaker and had a demanding schedule with Elinor, acting as his secretar, so he spent a mount of time traveling, though he continued to write poetry.

Unfortunately, his beloved daughter, Marjorie, became ill with tuberculosis and was hospitalized in Baltimore. In 1931 he decided with the doctors that Marjorie should enter the sanatorium in Boulder, Colorado.

He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry for the second time in June, 1931 for his *collected Poems* published in November, 1930.

Leslye's second daughter was born, and her divorce became final soon after. He received Russel Loines Poetry Prize from the National Institute of Arts and Letters.

In 1932 he moved into a new house in Amherst. He met Marjorie's fiancé in Boulder. He attended The Olympic Games in Los Angeles. He was displeased with T.S. Eliot's slighting remarks concerning Robert Burns and other Scottish poets.

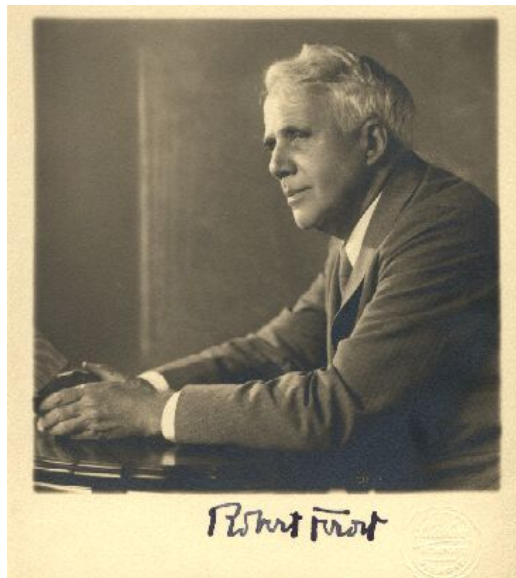
In 1933 he continued a heavy lecture schedule to earn extra money for his children's expenses. Due to exhaustion, he was unable to attend Marjorie's wedding in Billings, Montana.

All his children were married and he spent much time with them and his grandchildren, though it was not long before the heavy blows of loss struck again; his beloved daughter Marjorie developed puerperal fever after her daughter was born in March, and she died May 2, 1934, after the birth. She was



buried in Billings. Her baby was taken care of by Carol and his wife Lilian. Elinor suffered a severe attack of angina pectoris in November. Under doctor's orders, Frost and Elinor went to Key West in December.

In 1935 Frost met Wallace Stevens in Key West. Frost gave lectures at the University of Miami. He returned north with Elinor in March. He wrote a preface to Edwin Arlington Robinson's last book, *King Jasper*. Afterwards, Robert and Elinor went to Coconut Grove in Florida.



In 1936, privately, he published a small volume of Marjorie's poems in Franconia. He began work as the Charles Eliot Norton Professor of Poetry at Harvard University. *A Further Ranger*, was published by the Holt Company and in May was made a selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club.

In 1937, he won the Pulitzer Prize for *A Further Range*. He was elected a member of the American Philosophical Society. Frost's wife, Elinor, also experienced bouts of depressions. She had heart problems throughout her life



and developed breast cancer in 1937. She underwent surgery for breast cancer in early October of that year.

Elinor died of a heart attack in Gainesville, Florida, on March 20, 1938. Frost has also lost two of his children up until this time. Frost collapsed and was unable to attend the cremation. He suffered deep depression and continual self-doubt. He resigned his position at Amherst College and returned to South Shaftsbury.<sup>8</sup> After the death of his wife, he fell in love again with Kathleen Morrison, who was married to Theodore Morrison. He asked Kathleen Morrison to marry him but she refused. Frost employed her from 1938 as his secretary and adviser, but she probably became his lover too. She worked for him for the rest of Frost's life. Frost also composed for her one of his finest love poems, "A Witness Tree." The only son of the Morrises had a car accident in 1955. After threatening to leave the Henry Holt Company, the firm offered Frost a contract which guaranteed a 20 percent royalty on all books sold and raised Frost's monthly salary to \$300.



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<sup>8</sup> [www.frostfriends.org](http://www.frostfriends.org)



Leaving the Stone House and The Gulley in 1939, Frost bought the Homer Noble Farm in Ripton, Vermont, for his summer residence, located near the Bread Loaf School. He occupied the cabin of the property, while his friends and colleagues, the Morrises, stayed in the main house. He was awarded the Gold Medal by the National Institute of Arts and Letters in New York. Frost took his first plane trip, flying to Cuba with Paul and May Engle for a short stay. His enlarged edition of *Collected Poems* was Published by Holt in February. He accepted a two-year appointment as the Ralph Waldo Emerson Fellow in Poetry at Harvard in May. He designated Lawrence Thompson as his “official” biographer on the condition that the biography only appear after his death. He suffered a painful attack of acidosis in December.

In 1940, Frost underwent surgery for hemorrhoids. His health improved and he purchased five acres of land in Coconut, Grove, Florida. He called the place *Pencil Pines* and spent the winters there for the rest of his life. Two of his daughters suffered mental breakdowns. He tried to talk to his son, Carol, who had a long-standing depression and suicidal thoughts. His son Carol, a frustrated poet and farmer, committed suicide in 1940 using a deer rifle. Frost was in Boston when Carol killed himself on October 9. He returned to South Shaftsbury immediately to make funeral arrangements and to be with Carol's son Prescott, who had discovered the body. Frost wrote to Untermeyer: “I took the wrong way with him. I tried many ways and every single one of them was wrong.” Frost also suffered from depression and continual self-doubt. Incredibly, after all these great losses, he won the Nobel Prize for literature.



On March, 1941, Frost moved to Cambridge and continued living there for the remainder of his life, spending summers at Noble Farm, and winters in South Miami.

In 1942, A Witness Tree was dedicated to Kathleen Morrison, and was published by Holt in April. Frost sold reach almost 10,000 copies within two months.

In 1943, Frost was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for A Witness Tree, becoming the first person to receive the Prize four times. He accepted a position at Dartmouth Collage as the George Ticknor Fellow in humanities, with a \$2,500 stipend and \$500 for expenses. However he was hospitalized in December with a serious case of pneumonia.

A Masque of reason was published by Holt in March of 1945.



During 1946, his daughter, Irma, suffered a mental condition and she deteriorated more and more.

In March of 1947, Frost received his 17th honorary degree from Berkeley. The Holt Company published Steeple Bush in May and A Masque of Mercy in September. Frost suffered pains in his arms after reading a critical review in "Time" magazine. Only Lesley and Irma outlived their father. However, Irma's condition was deteriorating. Frost had the unfortunate duty of committing Irma to a mental hospital in Concord, New Hampshire.



In 1948, despite the fact that he was enjoying his work at Dartmouth, Frost felt close to Amherst and accepted an offer to return there as the Simpson Lecturer in Literature with a salary of \$3,500, a position he would hold until his death.

In 1949 Frost was angered by the awarding of the Bollingen Prize to Ezra Pound, who was confined to a mental hospital and under indictment for treason for his radio broadcast from Italy during WWII. The *Complete Poems* of Robert Frost was published in May.



In 1950 the United States Senate adopted an honorary resolution towards Frost on his 75th birthday. He began a friendship with Connery Lathem, who would become a posthumous editor of Frost's work. Frost had been told in 1950 that he was among the candidates nominated by the Swedish comité for a prize in literature.

In 1951 he lost his eyesight, for this reason he recited poems from memory. He had a cancerous lesion removed from the upper right side of his face.

He was awarded the Fellowship of the Academy of American Poets, with a stipend of \$5,000 in March of 1953. He underwent surgery in late December for a recurrence of facial skin cancer.



In 1954 Frost was invited to the White House by his friend Sherman Adams who was serving as chief of staff to President Eisenhower. There, Robert celebrated his 80th birthday. He served as a delegate to the World Congress of Writers held in Sao Paulo, in August. The Holt Publishing Company published *Aforesaid*, a new selection of Frost's poems, in a limited edition of 650 copies.

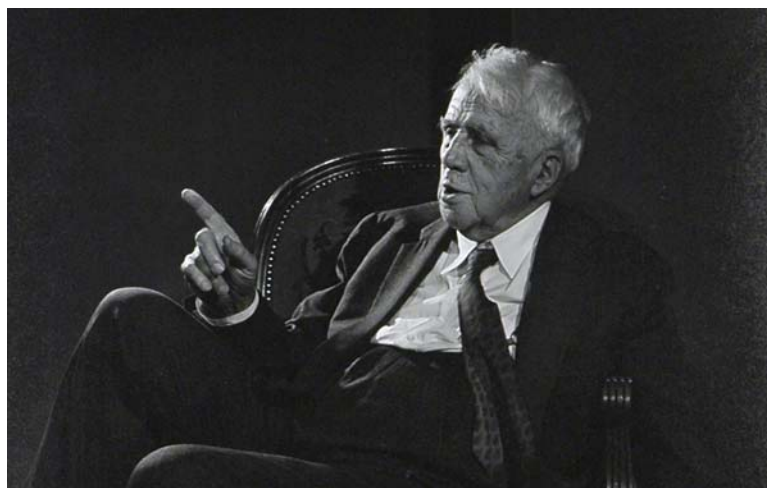




From 1955 to 1966, the Vermont state legislature named a mountain in Ripton after Frost. Patchwork was quilts made from 26 of the academic hoods Frost had received along with honorary degrees.



In 1957 Frost, T.S.Eliot, and Ernest Hemingway signed a letter, drafted by Archibald Macleish, asking Attorney General Herbert Brownell to drop the treason indictment against Ezra Pound. Frost became the third American to receive an honorary Literature Degrees from Oxford and Cambridge. With his future biographer, Lawrence Thompson, Frost traveled to England and Israel. There he met W.H. Auden, E.M. Forster, and Graham Greene. Frost became actively involved in the effort to free Ezra Pound.



In 1958 President Eisenhower invited Frost to the White House in February. The drafted statement in support of Pound's release ended with the



dismissal of the indictment. Pound was discharged from the federal mental hospital in May. Frost was appointed that same month as Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress. He received the Emerson-Thoreau Medal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

In March 1959, Frost predicted that John F. Kennedy would win the presidential election in 1960. He was appointed to a three-year term as Honorary Consultant in the Humanities at the Library of Congress.

In 1960 Frost testified before the Senate subcommittee in favour of a bill to establish a National Academy of Culture. Congress passed the Hill Award giving Frost a gold medal in recognition of his poetry.



On January 20, 1961, Kennedy was elected President of the United States. Kennedy invited Frost to take part in the inaugural ceremonies. He wrote a new poem for inauguration, but he was unable to read it in the glare of



bright sunlight and recited only *The Gift Outright* from memory.<sup>9</sup> Robert also represented the United States on several other official missions. He became known for his poems that interplay voices, such as *The Death of the Hired Man*, and received numerous literary and academic honors. He traveled while lecturing in Israel and Greece. The Vermont state legislature named Frost “Poet Laureate of Vermont.”



In February 1962, Frost fell seriously ill with pneumonia and was hospitalized in South Miami. The Holt Company published *In the Clearing* in March. In late August, Frost traveled to the Soviet Union as a member of a goodwill group and as part of a cultural Exchange program organized by the President Kennedy. Frost was exhausted and ill and was too weak to stay in the guesthouse. Soviet Premier Niñita Khrushchev came to visit him; they talked for 90 minutes. Khrushchev described Frost admirably as “no fathead;” as smart, big and “not a coward.” Frost also reported that Khrushchev had said the United

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<sup>9</sup> [www.answers.com/topic/robert-frost](http://www.answers.com/topic/robert-frost)



States was “too liberal to fight.” This caused a considerable stir in Washington. When Frost returned to America he reported Khrushchev’s words and caused a controversy that strained his friendship with Kennedy. Frost learned that an anonymous donor had given \$3.5 million for the construction of The Robert Frost Library at Amherst. He admitted in October during Cuban Missile crisis that Khrushchev had not said the words he had attributed to him. He underwent prostate operation in December. Doctors found cancer in his prostate and bladder. He suffered pulmonary embolism in December 23.<sup>10</sup>

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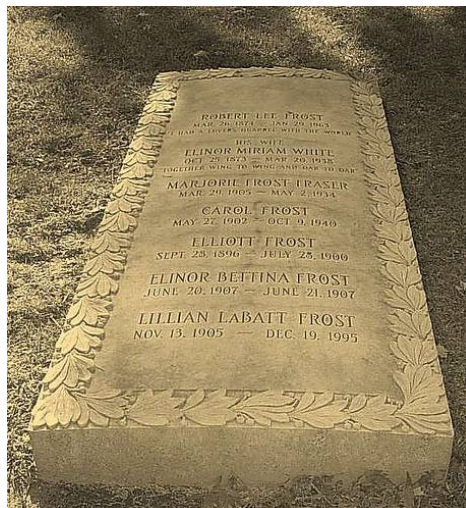
<sup>10</sup> [www.ketzle.com/frost/](http://www.ketzle.com/frost/)



## 1.4. DEATH



In 1963, he was awarded the Bollingen Prize for poetry. He suffered another embolism attack in January 7. Robert Frost died a little more than two years later, from a blood clot in the lungs. This was a chain reaction from the prostate surgery in December 1962. He died shortly after midnight in Boston in the United States, on January 29, 1963. A private memorial service of his family and friends was held in Appleton Chapel in Harvard Yard, and a public service was held at Jonson Chapel, Amherst College. Frost was buried in the family plot at the Old Bennington Cemetery in Vermont. He was 88 years old. His gravestone has an epitaph: "I had a lover's quarrel with the world."





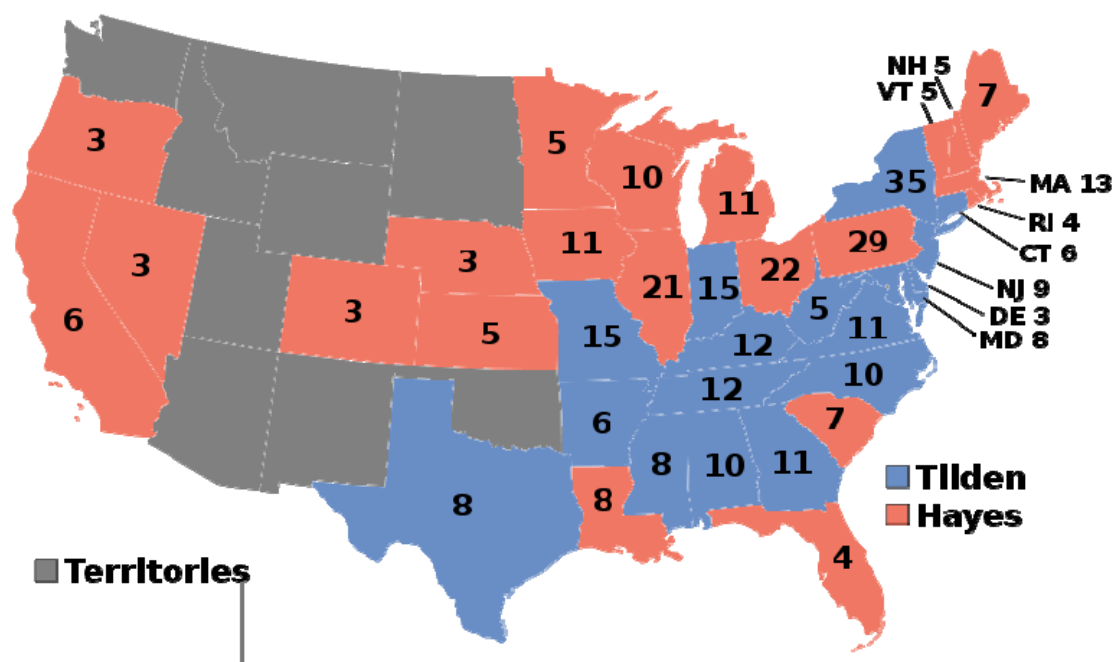
Just nine months after Frost's death, Kennedy gave a speech at Amherst College, singing Frost's praises and speaking on the importance of the Arts in America. Later he said: "The death of Robert Frost leaves a vacancy in the American spirit" and "His death impoverishes us all; but he has bequeathed to his Nation a body of imperishable verse from which Americans will forever gain joy and understanding."



## CHAPTER II

### 2. HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES DURING ROBERT FROST'S LIFE IN ORDER TO SHOW THE INFLUENCE ON HIS PHILOSOPHY

#### 2.1. THE ELECTION CRISIS



blue: Republicans    red: Democrats

In 1874 the U.S. House election occurred in the middle of President Ulysses S. Grant's second term. It was an important turning point, as the Republicans lost heavily and the Democrats gained control of the House. It signaled the imminent end of Reconstruction, which Democrats opposed.

In the elections of 1874 the result was clearly defined with a "No", for the Republican Party. The Democrats had gotten the victory, obtaining control of



the next House of Representatives which would stand 168 Democrats, 14 Liberals and Independents, and 108 Republicans as against the two-thirds Republican majority secured by the election of 1872. Since 1861 the Republicans had controlled the House and now their loss decreased their majority in the Senate.

The political revolution from 1872 to 1874 was due to the failure of the Southern policy of the Republican party, to the Credit Mobilier and Sanborn contract scandals, to corrupt and inefficient administration in many departments, and to the persistent advocacy of Grant by some close friends and hangers-on for a third presidential term.

The opposition had been influenced by the President Grant's failure in the cause of civil service reform, and by the successful attack concerning the financial situation of the Republican Party.

The depression, following the financial Panic of 1873, and the number of men consequently out of employment had weighed in the scale against the Republican Party in power.

But the elections did not mean that the country placed implicit faith in the Democratic Party. The Republicans were not in favor of the Democratic agenda.





## 2.2. RECONSTRUCTION



"Reconstruction" refers to the policies between 1863 and 1877 when the U.S. focused on abolishing slavery, destroying the Confederacy, and reconstructing the nation and the Constitution at the end of the Civil War.

Abraham Lincoln's presidency began the reconstruction in each southern state as soon as federal troops controlled the area. When Reconstruction ended in 1877 it caused the collapse of the last Republican state governments in the South.

Reconstruction brought new Constitutional Amendments and legislative reforms which were enacted. By the 1870s, Reconstruction provided the Freedmen with equal rights under the law, and Freedmen were allowed to vote and take political office.

Republican legislatures, coalitions of whites and blacks, established the first public school systems in the South. Beginning in 1874, however, there was a rise in white paramilitary organizations, such as the White League, the Red Shirts and the Ku Klux Klan, which sought to project white interest through terror and violence. The Klan had been prohibited, but white Democrats,



“Redeemers,” still continued the use of violence and fear to get control of their state governments.

In 1877, President Rutherford Hayes took away federal troops, causing the collapse of the last three Republican state governments. After 13 years Reconstruction ended. The system of segregation and oppression began in 1896 when the Supreme Court ruled for equal, but separate, facilities for whites and blacks; however, the South had unequal facilities for blacks. Blacks were segregated in as public transportation, theaters, sports and cemeteries. Most blacks and some poorer whites could not vote because they could not pay the poll taxes or pass the literacy test. Blacks who had been accused of small crimes were sentenced to hard labor and many were hunted and killed. Some blacks continued working as farmers. Therefore, although blacks were legally free, they continued to live and be treated like slaves.

Whites in the North and South undertook reconciliation in the early 20th century. This period established the rights for blacks and their white “allies”.



### 2.3. THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR



This was a military conflict between Spain and the United States that began in April, 1898. Hostilities stopped in August of that year, and the Treaty of Paris was signed in December.

The war began after the Americans demanded a peaceful resolution from Spain since the Cuban plea for independence had been rejected.

The government of the United States was motivated by a strong expansionist sentiment to claim Spain's remaining overseas territories: Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, Guam and the Caroline Islands.

Disturbances in Havana by pro-Spanish "Voluntarios" gave the United States a reason to send in the U.S. warship called "the Maine" to investigate the situation. Tension among the American people was increased because of the



explosion of "The Maine", and "yellow journalism" that accused Spain of huge atrocities, agitated American public opinion. The war ended after decisive naval victories for the United States in the Philippines and Cuba.

Only 109 days after the outbreak of war, the Treaty of Paris, which ended the conflict, gave the United States control, among other territories, of the former Spanish colonies of Puerto Rico, the Philippines and Guam.



## 2.4. WORLD WAR I



Two American soldiers run toward bunker.

World War I was a global war which took place primarily in Europe from 1914 to 1918. Over 40 million casualties resulted, including approximately 20 million military and civilian deaths.

At first, President Wilson adopted a policy of neutrality. However, because of newspaper reports many Americans were outraged by Germany's invasion of Belgium and German attacks against Belgian civilians. In 1915, Americans were also angry when a German Submarine sank the British ship, "Lusitania," killing 128 American passengers. Then President Wilson announced the break in official relations with Germany on February 3, 1917. These factors contributed towards U.S. entry into the war.



The United States intercepted from Berlin the Zimmermann Telegram sent to Mexico asking Mexico to join the war as Germany's ally against the United States. The proposal suggested, if the U.S. were to enter the war, Mexico should declare war against the United States and enlist Japan as an ally. The U.S. would have to fight México; this would prevent the United States from having the strength to join the Allies. In return, the Germans would promise Mexico support in reclaiming Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. Wilson called for war on Germany, which the U.S. Congress declared on April 6, 1917.

Other branches of government, private vigilant groups, such as the American Protective League, and many other people opposed the American entry into the war.

The United States had a small army, but it drafted four million men and by the summer of 1918 it had sent 10,000 fresh soldiers to France every day. In 1917, Puerto Ricans were drafted to participate in World War I.

There were some treaties, but the main agreement to end the war was the Versailles Treaty. However, President Wilson never ratified the Versailles Treaty because he wanted to create the League of Nations. He was not able to do so because Americans feared that if they joined the League of Nations, they would have to fight in future World wars, whether they wanted to or not.



## 2.5. WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE



U.S. women suffragists demonstrating for the right to vote, February 1913

Lydia Chapin Taft was a forerunner in Colonial America who was allowed to vote in New England in 1756.

In 1848, at the Seneca Falls Convention in New York, activists, including Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, began to secure the right to vote for women. Susan B. Anthony, a native of Rochester, New York, joined the cause at the Syracuse Convention.

Women's suffrage activists pointed out that blacks had been granted freedom but had not been included in the language of the United States Constitution with the right to vote.

Early victories were won in the territories of Wyoming in 1869 and in Utah 1870, although Utah women were disenfranchised in 1887. Mormon men feared that if Utah women had the right to vote, they would vote against polygamy.



However, by the end of the nineteenth century, Idaho, Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming had enfranchised women.

National women's suffrage, however, did not exist until 1920. During the beginning of the twentieth century, as women's suffrage gained in popularity, suffragists were subject to arrests and many were jailed.

Finally, President Woodrow Wilson urged Congress to pass a law allowing women to vote, and it was ratified in 1920.





## 2.6. THE STOCK MARKET CRASH



The Wall Street Crash of 1929 was the most devastating stock market crash in American History. Black Thursday on October 28 and 29 precipitated widespread panic and caused unprecedented and long-lasting consequences for the United States. The collapse continued for more than three years.

The crash produced a huge impact in the economic, social, and political areas. The crash in America caused the Great Depression, a period of economic decline in the industrialized nations, and led to the institution of landmark financial reforms and new trading regulations.

Wall Street was the world's leading financial center in New York City, a major metropolis in the USA.

Euphoria and financial gains of the great bull market ended on Black Thursday, when prices collapsed; they continued to fall for a full month. The



market was severely unstable. Periods of selling and high volumes of trading were interspersed with brief periods of rising prices and recovery.



After "Black Thursday", several bankers met to find a solution to the panic and chaos on the trading floor in the Stock Market on Wall Street. In this meeting they decided to make offers improving the price of steel and blue chips, but relief was only temporary. More investors left the market and the record loss continued. The Rockefeller family and other financial giants bought large quantities of stocks to demonstrate to the public their confidence in the market, but their efforts failed to stop the slide. This was the lowest the stock market had fallen since the 19th century.



## 2.7. THE NEW DEAL



In 1932, in the Democratic nomination for president, Franklin Roosevelt promised "a new deal for the American people."

The New Deal was the title that the United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt gave to a sequence of policy programs he initiated between 1933 and 1938 with the goal of giving relief to the poor, reforming the financial system, and recovering of the economy during The Great Depression.

The economy eventually recovered with sustained improvement by 1937.

The "First New Deal" in 1933 promoted banking reform laws, emergency relief programs, work relief programs, and agricultural programs.

A "Second New Deal" from 1935 to 1936 included union protection programs, the Social Security Act, and programs to aid tenant farmers and migrant workers.



Several New Deal programs remain active and some are still operating under the original names; for example, the Social Security Act of 1935 set up the Social Security system for the U.S. citizens.

On March 22, 1933, Roosevelt signed the bill to legalize the manufacture and sale of alcohol.

As a result of the New Deal, political and economic life became politically more competitive than before, with workers, farmers, consumers, and others now able to press their demands.



## 2.8. WORLD WAR II



American and Soviet troops meet in April 1945, east of the Elbe River.

World War II, or the Second World War, was a global military conflict which involved a majority of the world's nations, including all of the great powers, organized into two opposing military alliances the Allies and the Axis. The war involved the mobilization of over 100 million military personnel, making it the most widespread war in history. Over 70 million people, the majority of them civilians, were killed, making it the deadliest conflict in human history.

The war started on September, 1939, with the German invasion of Poland and subsequent declarations of war on Germany by the United Kingdom, France, and the British Dominions. The war lasted from 1939 to 1945. Amongst the main events were the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, the start of Operation Barbarossa, and the attack on Pearl Harbor, and on British and Netherlands colonies in South East Asia.

In the United States the Depression continued with decreasing effects until the U.S. entered the Second World War. Civilian unemployment was reduced. Millions of farmers, students and housewives joined the labor force.



The gap between rich and poor narrowed dramatically in the area of nutrition, because food rationing and price controls provided a reasonably priced diet for everyone. The gap between white collar and blue collar income narrowed. Large families that had been poor during the 1930s had four or more wage earners, and these families shot to the top. Overtime provided large paychecks in war industries.

The Soviet Union and the United States emerged from the war as the world's leading superpowers.



## **2.9. KOREAN WAR**



Almost immediately after the establishment of the Division between North and South Korea, guerrilla warfare, border clashes, and naval battles erupted between the two Koreas. North Korean forces launched a massive surprise attack and invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950. The United Nations, in accordance with the terms of its Charter, engaged in its first collective action and established the UN Command (UNC), to which 16 member nations sent troops and assistance. Next to South Korea, the United States contributed the largest contingent of forces to this international effort. The battle line fluctuated between the north and the south, and after large numbers of Chinese "People's Volunteers" intervened to assist the North, the battle line stabilized the north of Seoul near the 38th parallel.

Stalin approved a North Korean plan to invade U.S.-supported South Korea in June 1950. President Truman immediately committed U.S. forces to Korea. He did not consult or gain the approval of Congress, but did gain the approval of the United Nations to drive back the North Koreans and re-unite that country.



After the early days of U.S. withdrawal and defeat, General Douglas MacArthur's success at the Battle of Inchon turned the war around. This advantage was lost when hundreds of thousands of Chinese entered an undeclared war against the United States and pushed the US/UN/Korean forces back to the original starting line, the 38th parallel. The war became a stalemate, with over 33,000 American dead and 100,000 wounded but nothing to show for it except a resolve to continue the containment policy. Truman fired MacArthur but was unable to end the war. Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1952 campaigned against Truman's failures of "Korea, Communism and Corruption," promising to go to Korea himself and end the war. By threatening to use nuclear weapons in 1953, Eisenhower ended the war with a truce that is still in effect.

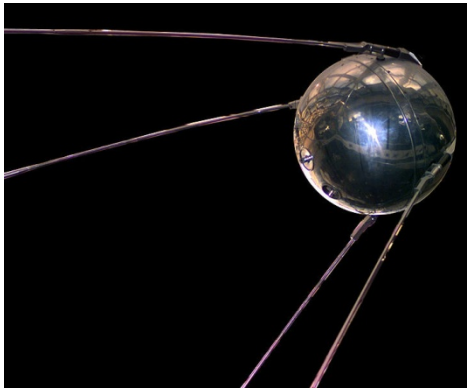




## **2.10. SPACE TECHNOLOGY**

The United States of America advanced considerable in space technology. Among the most important we have Spunik and the Moon Walk.

### **2.10.1. SPUTNIK**



On October 4, 1957, the Soviet Union successfully launched Sputnik I. The world's first artificial satellite was about the size of a beach ball and took about 98 minutes to orbit the Earth on its elliptical path. It brought new political, military, technological, and scientific developments. While the Sputnik launch was a single event, it marked the start of the space age and the U.S.-U.S.S.R space race.

The Sputnik launch changed everything. As a technical achievement, Sputnik caught the world's attention. In addition, the public feared that the Soviets' ability to launch satellites also translated into the capability to launch ballistic missiles that could carry nuclear weapons from Europe to the U.S. Then the Soviets triumphed again on November 3rd. Sputnik II was launched, carrying a much heavier payload, including a dog named Laika.

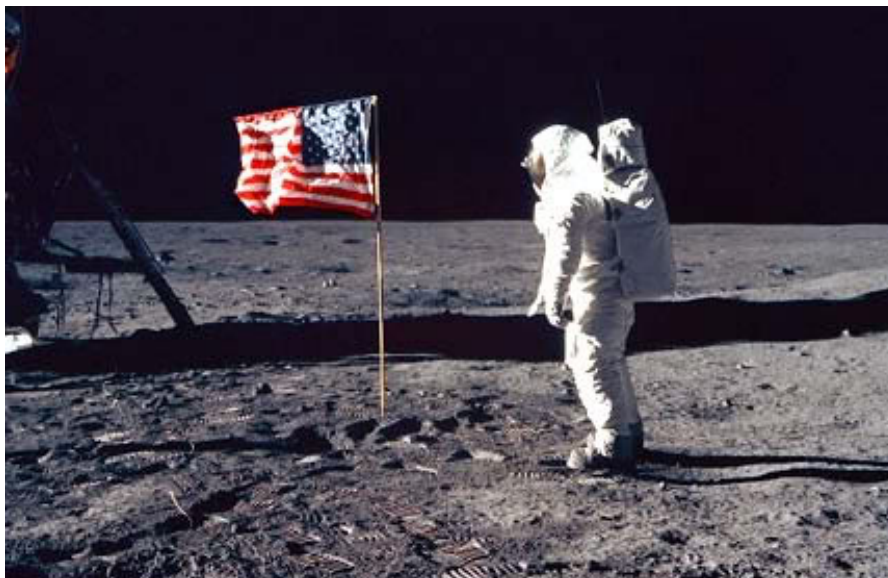


The U.S. Defense Department responded to the political furor by approving funding for another U.S. satellite project. As a simultaneous alternative to Vanguard, Wernher von Braun and his Army Redstone Arsenal team began work on the Explorer project.

On January 31, 1958, the tide changed, when the United States successfully launched Explorer I. This satellite carried a small scientific payload that eventually discovered the magnetic radiation belts around the Earth, named after principal investigator James Van Allen.

The Sputnik launch also led directly to the creation of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, NASA, on October 1, 1958.

### **2.10.2. THE MOON WALK**



At 9:30 p.m. Houston time on July 20, 1969, Armstrong and Aldrin put on their bulky moon suits and prepared to take the first steps on the moon while Michael Collins stayed in orbit with the command module.



Armstrong was the first to leave the spaceship called Apollo 11 and he touched the moon's surface; Aldrin was the second to arrive. They filmed the event with a TV camera and the world could watch the first men on the moon. After a day they started back to the Earth.

After two hours, Aldrin and Armstrong went back into the Eagle. Both men had been awake for 22 straight hours. They should have rested but they could not because they were too cold.

600 million people watched this event on television. When Armstrong touched the moon's surface he said, "That's one small step for man... one giant leap for mankind."

Aldrin and Armstrong planted an American flag on the moon's surface. President Nixon congratulated them. Finally, they gathered 50 pounds of rocks and set up experiments.



## CHAPTER III

### 3. ANALYSIS OF SELECTED POEMS WITH RESPECT TO NATURE AND PHILOSOPHY



Robert Frost stands as one of the most popular and traditional of twentieth century American poets. He lived in an age of internationalized and experimental art, gaining fame in the 1920s.

The setting for his poems is predominantly the rural landscapes of New England, and his poetic language is the language of the common man.

His work has often been criticized for its unequal quality, as well as its simple philosophy and form. However, Frost's best poems explore fundamental



questions of existence confronted an indifferent universe. He wrote moral and deceptively simple poems, in traditional verse forms. The efforts of ordinary men to develop individual identities in a hostile world were one of his most persistent themes. Frost described poetry as “a little voyage of discovery.”

One of Robert Frost's most powerful poetic figures is anthimeria. Turning nouns into adjectives is Frost's favorite substitutions and he does this because, interestingly, this form of grammatical substitution is typical of New England dialects.

Among the best known works of Frost are “Mending Wall,” “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening,” and “The Road Not Taken.” All of these poems are inspired by the natural world.

Robert Frost was greatly influenced by the emotions and events of everyday life. Within a simple event from a normal day Frost discerned a deeper meaning, a metaphysical expression of a larger theme such as love, hate, or conflict.

He was a poultry farmer in New Hampshire and in his adulthood in New England, Frost was primarily a “city boy” who spent nearly all of his time in an urban environment; however, the rural side of New England gave Frost the inspiration to write his poems about the natural world thus making him a pastoral poet.

In 1930, after the publication of his Collected Poems, Frost clarified his interest in the pastoral world as a subject for his poetry writing: “Poetry is more often of the country than the city... Poetry is very, very rural – rustic. It might



be taken as a symbol of man, taking its rise from individuality and seclusion – written first for the person that writes and then going out into its social appeal and use.”

Frost expressed the pastoral not only in terms of beauty and peace, but also in terms of the harsh conflicts of the natural world between urban and rural lifestyles.

Frost's poetry is very important because it has a lot of autobiographical material. Frost was not a happy man; he had depression and anxiety throughout his life and was never convinced that his poetry was truly valuable, as evidenced by his obsessive desire to receive a Nobel Prize.

He suffered the deaths of his father, mother, grandfather and sister, as well as of four of his six children and his beloved wife. These tragedies brought on the melancholic mentality that appears in many of Frost's poems.

The sense of loss in Frost's poetry is particularly clear through his straightforward verse style. Although he worked within some traditional poetic forms, usually iambic meter, he was also flexible and changed the requirements of the form if it affected the expression of a particular line, refusing to sacrifice the clarity of his poetry. With that in mind, he was particularly interested in what he called “the sound of sense,” a poetic belief system in which the sound of the poetry, rhythm, rhyme, and syllables, is as important to the total work as the actual words.

Frost's use of “the sound of sense” is most successful. Frost said, “All poetry is a reproduction of the tones of actual speech.” In terms of the narrative



and in terms of “the sound of sense,” the readers comprehend the basic emotion of a poem almost instantly and then explore the deeper, more metaphysical meanings behind each simple line.

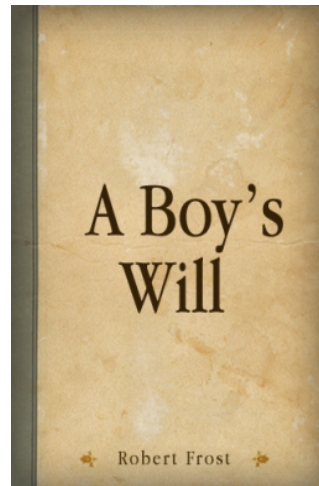
During his beginnings as a poet, Frost was criticized for using a colloquial tone in his poetry. When his first poem was published in The Independent in 1894, Sydney Lanier suggested Frost work more in a traditional tone and meter. After his success as a poet, Frost was still censured, apparently for works that were not considered reminiscent of high art.

Frost's ability to express the deepest feelings in his poems through the medium of colloquial speech reveals more of a great knowledge of the human language than many of his critics would admit. For the clarity of his poetry his poems are beloved and studied in high schools throughout the United States.

### **a. Short Summary**

Robert Frost has seven collections of poetry: A Boy's Will (1913), North of Boston (1914), Mountain Interval (1916), New Hampshire (1923), West-Running Brook (1928), A Witness Tree (1942), and Come In and Other Poems (1943).

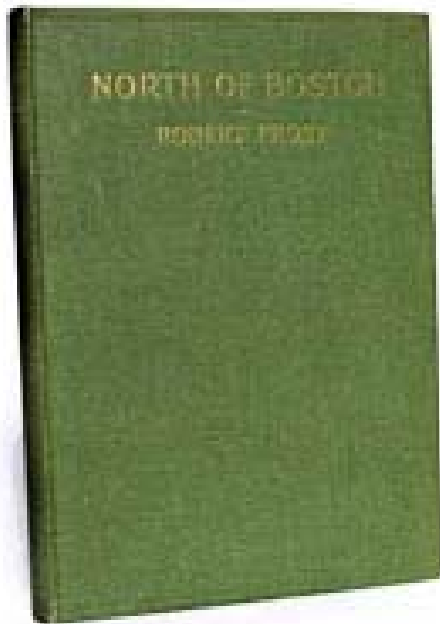
The poems demonstrate different aspects of Frost's style; some are long narrative works that are more like short stories than poems, and others speak from his sharp sense of irony and literary brilliance. His poems show the deeper meanings of everyday activities, the rural setting of New England, and the “truth” of real people and real struggles.



The first collection, *A Boy's Will* (1913), contains poems such as “Mowing” and “Reluctance.” The title of the work is a reference to a line from Longfellow’s poem “My Lost Youth,” which reads: “A Boy’s Will” is the wind’s will / And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.” The Pasture

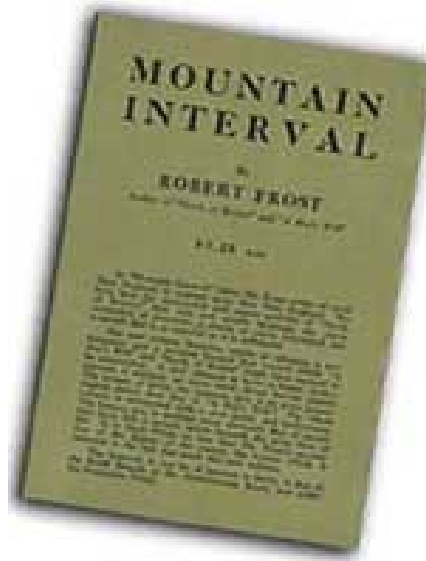
- Into My Own
- My November Guest
- Stara
- To the Thawing Wind
- A Prayer in Spring
- Flower-Gathering
- Rose Pogonias
- A Dream Pang
- In Neglect
- The Vantage Point
- Mowing
- Going For Water
- Revelation
- The Tuft of Flowers
- The Demiurge's Laugh
- Now Close the Windows
- In Hardwood Groves
- October
- Reluctance
- The Trial by Existence
- Pan With Us
- A Line-Storm Song
- My Butterfly Ghost House
- Love and A Question





The second collection, North of Boston (1914), contains poems such as “Mending Wall,” “The Death of the Hired Man,” “Home Burial,” and “After Apple-Picking.” The location in New England was for Frost the point of his inspiration for his poetry and he incorporated the location into the title.

- Mending Wall
- The Death of The Hired Man
- Home Burial
- After Apple-Picking
- The Wood-Pile
- Good Hours
- The Code
- The Fear
- A Servant to Servants
- The Self-Seeker
- The Mountain
- The Housekeeper
- The Generations of Men
- The Black Cottage
- A Hundred Collars
- Blueberries



After his return from England with his family, Frost published the collection called, Mountain Interval (1916), which established his reputation as a prominent New England poet. This collection contains “An Old Man’s Winter Night,” “A Patch of Old Snow,” “Bond and Free,” “Birches,” “Out, Out,” “The Sound of Trees,” and “The Road Not Taken,” considered to be the most famous of Frost’s poems.

- The Road Not Taken
- An Old Man's Winter Night
- The Exposed Nest
- A Patch of Old Snow
- The Telephone
- Meeting and Passing
- Hyla Brook
- The Oven Bird
- Bond and Free
- Birches
- Putting In The Seed
- A Time to Talk
- The Cow In Apple-Time
- Range-Finding
- The Hill Wife
- 'Out, Out--'
- The Gum-Gatherer
- The Line-Gang
- The Vanishing Red



NEW HAMPSHIRE  
A POEM WITH NOTES  
AND GRACE NOTES BY  
ROBERT FROST  
WITH WOODCUTS  
BY J. J. LANKES  
PUBLISHED BY  
HENRY HOLT  
& COMPANY : NEW  
YORK : MCMXXIII

The collection New Hampshire (1923) contains the poems “Fire and Ice,” “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening,” and “The Lockless Door.”

- The Grindstone
- I Will Sing You One-O
- I Will Sing You One-O
- Fragmentary Blue
- Fire and Ice
- In A Disused Grave Yard
- Dust of Snow
- To E.T.
- Nothing Gold Can Stay
- The Runaway
- The Aim was Song
- Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening
- For Once, Then, Something
- Blue-Butterfly Day
- The Onset
- To Earthward
- Good-by and Keep Cold
- Two Look At Two
- A Brook In The City
- The Kitchen Chimney
- A Boundless Moment
- Evening in a Sugar Orchard Gathering Leaves
- The Valley's Singing Day
- Misgiving
- A Hillside Thaw
- Plowmen
- On a Tree Fallen Across the Road Our Singing Strength
- The Lockless Door
- The Need of Being Versed In Country Things

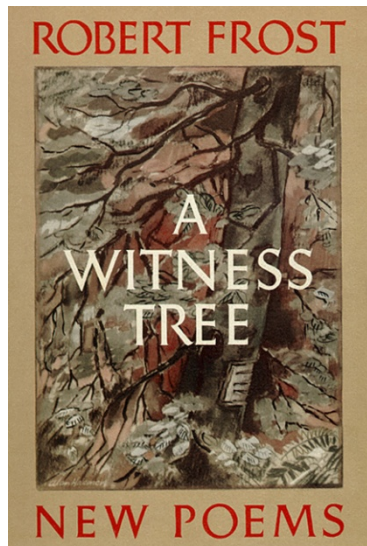


The collection West-Running Brook (1928), contains the poems, “Once by the Pacific” and “Acquainted with the Night.”

- Spring Pools
- The Freedom of the Moon
- The Rose Family
- Fireflies in the Garden
- Atmosphere Devotion
- On Going Unnoticed
- Acceptance The Cocoon
- A Passing Glimpse A Peck of Gold Once By The Pacific
- Lodged
- A Minor Bird Bereft
- Tree At My Window
- The Peaceful Shepherd
- A Winter Eden
- The Thatch
- The Flood
- Acquainted With the Night
- Sand Dunes
- Canis Major
- A Soldier
- Immigrants
- Anibal
- The Flower Boat
- The Times Table
- The Investment
- The Last Mowing
- The Birthplace
- The Door in the Dark
- Dust in the Eyes

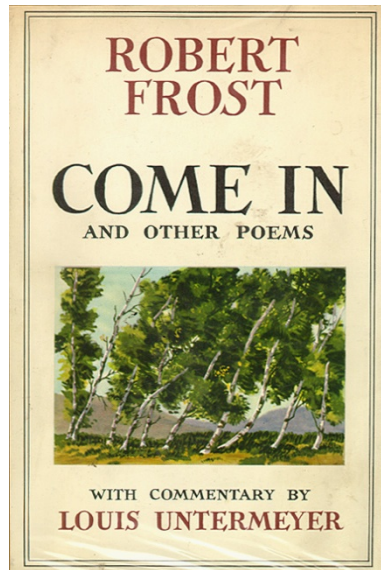


- Sitting by a Bush in Broad Sunlight
- The Armful
- What Fifty Said
- Riders
- On Looking Up By Chance At The Constellations
- The Bear
- The Egg and the Machine



The collection A Witness Tree (1942) was published after several unfortunate tragedies had occurred in Frost's personal life: his daughter Marjorie died of complications from childbirth in 1934, his beloved wife died of heart failure in 1938, and his son Carol committed suicide in 1940. Despite these losses, Frost continued to work on his poetry and eventually fell in love with his secretary Kathleen Morrison, who became the primary inspiration of the love poems in A Witness Tree. This collection is the last of Frost's books that demonstrate the seamless lyric quality of his earlier poems. This collection contains "The Gift Outright," which describes American identity and it was recited at the presidential inauguration of John F. Kennedy in 1961.

- A Question
- Come In
- The Silken Tent



The final collection, Come In and Other Poems (1943), contains the piece, “Choose Something like a Star”.

These seven collections of poetry reveal different sides of Robert Frost, in different times of his life giving a complete vision of his development as an artist. Each poem read has the most basic aspects of a work, from the number of feet in a line to the specific sound of a syllable. As a result, the poems have infinite possibilities in terms of meaning and interpretation.

#### **b. Narrator**

The majority of Frost's poems are written in the first-person form with a common narrator. Although the narrator in each of these poems is not necessarily the same, there are always aspects that relate to Frost's own voice.

Many of the poems have autobiographical elements; for example, “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening,” “Acquainted with the Night,” “Mending Wall,” and “The Lockless Door,” which automatically create a sense



od Frost's personality. The common themes of depression, isolation, and melancholy, relating directly to Frost's personal struggles with depression and loneliness, also reveal Frost as the primary inspiration for the "narrator."

### **c. Major Themes**

- **Nature**

Frost gives great importance to Nature in all of his collections. Because he spent his life in New England, the majority of pastoral scenes are inspired by specific locations in New England. However, Frost does not limit himself to stereotypical pastoral themes such as sheep and shepherds. Instead, he focuses on the dramatic struggles that occur within the natural world, such as the conflict of the changing of seasons and the destructive side of nature. Frost also presents the natural world as one that inspires deep metaphysical thought in the individuals who are exposed to it. For Frost, Nature is not simply a background for poetry, but rather a central character in his works.

- **Communication**

Communication appears as a significant theme in several of Frost's poems as the only possible escape from isolation and despair. Unfortunately, Frost also makes it clear that communication is extremely difficult to achieve.

- **Everyday Life**

Frost focuses on the activities of everyday life, because this side of humanity is the most "real" to him. He thinks the most basic act in a normal day can have numerous hidden meanings that need only to be explored by a poetic



mind. Moreover, Frost believes that the emphasis on everyday life allows him to communicate with his readers more clearly; they can empathize with the struggles and emotions that are expressed in his poems and come to a greater understanding of "Truth" themselves.

- **Isolation of Individual**

This theme is closely related to the theme of communication the majority of the characters in Frost's poems are isolated in one way or another.

- **Duty**

Duty is a very important value in the rural communities of New England, so Frost employs it as one of the primary themes of his poetry. Frost describes conflicts between desire and duty as if the two must always be mutually exclusive; in order to support his family, a farmer must acknowledge his responsibilities rather than indulge in his personal desires.

- **Rationality versus Imagination**

This theme is similar to the theme of duty, in that the hardworking people whom Frost describes in his poetry are forced to choose between rationality and imagination; the two cannot exist simultaneously. This ability to escape rationality and indulge in the liberation of imagination is limited to the years of childhood. After reaching adulthood, the traditions of New England life require strict rationality and an acceptance of responsibility.





- **Rural Life versus Urban Life**

Frost's interests are related to Nature and everyday life. Frost thinks rural life is less complicated than the life of the city. The farmers whom Frost describes in his poetry have a unique perspective on the world as well as a certain sense of honor and duty in terms of their work and their community. Rural life is more meaningful to Frost than urban life.



### 3.1. ANALISIS OF "RELUCTANCE"



#### ***Reluctance***

Out through the fields and the woods  
And over the walls I have wended;  
I have climbed the hills of view  
And looked at the world, and descended;  
I have come by the highway home,  
And lo, it is ended.

The leaves are all dead on the ground,  
Save those that the oak is keeping  
To ravel them one by one  
And let them go scraping and creeping  
Out over the crusted snow,  
When others are sleeping.

And the dead leaves lie huddled and still,  
No longer blown hither and thither;  
The last lone aster is gone;  
The flowers of the witch hazel wither;  
The heart is still aching to seek,  
But the feet question "Whither?"

Ah, when to the heart of man  
Was it ever less than a treason  
To go with the drift of things,  
To yield with a grace to reason,  
And bow and accept the end  
Of a love or a season?



### **3.1.1. INTRODUCTION**

“Reluctance” is the final poem in the book “A Boy’s Will” published in 1913. It serves as a cap on the theme of exile.

“Reluctance” shows an autobiographical event of Frost’s life that gives us an additional meaning. He wrote this poem in 1894 before he got married to Elinor. He visited her and tried to convince her to marry him, but he was rejected by her. After that Frost contemplated committing suicide and becoming a part of the “last lone aster” and “dead leaves.” However, Frost rallied and decided not to go “with the drift of things.” He accepted Elinor’s rejection. That admittance of failure could have been the “treason” to his heart and his love that he describes in the poem, “Reluctance”.

Frost also begins to explore ideas of development and maturity, the journey from childhood to manhood and he questions the relationship between nature and mankind.

### **3.1.2. SUMMARY**

In “Reluctance,” the man’s travels have led him back home; his journey has ended but he is dismayed because he has found only dead leaves of the winter season. He is unwilling to accept that ending to his adventures and refuses to “yield” or “go with the drift of things” simply because the season proclaims it to be so. He does not agree to such an ending and terminates the poem on a courageous, hopeful note.



### **3.1.3. ANALYSIS**

#### **3.1.3.1. Who is the speaker?**

The Lover, in this case is Frost, who felt rejected by Elinor. Frost compared himself with the “dead leaves” and the “last lone aster.”

#### **3.1.3.2. Where is the speaker situated?**

The speaker is at home.

#### **3.1.3.3. What does the poem mean?**

The poem means life and love don't last. Reluctance ends a journey where the noble oak is abandoned by the leaves in winter like a solitary heart denies its losses of love. The world chosen by the author leads the reader to think that something is wrong and that everything hurts.

In the first stanza, the fourth line shows us love which like sunset descends and is ended. “And looked at the world, and descended; / I have come by the highway home, /And lo, it is ended”.

In the second stanza and part of the third, the autumn presents the sad imagery that comes to reinforce the thoughts of the author through very vivid images: “The leaves are all dead on the ground,” “...over the crusted snow,” “...scraping and creeping” “And the dead leaves lie huddled and still, /No longer blown hither and thither.”



The snow suggests purity and maybe a new beginning. It means that everything is frozen, starting with nature and ending with the flame of love: "The last one aster is gone; / The flowers of the witch-hazel wither."

In the third stanza, in the fifth line, the author speaks of pain of heart that has suffered due to this twilight: "the heart is still aching to seek," is emphasized by the fact that there is no purpose left, no tomorrow, no shores to be looking for. The poet's question is "Whither?" It seems that with this loss there comes lack of purpose and desire to find a meaningful answer to all this sorrow.

The message is simple. Frost creates a labyrinth within a few short verses which leaves the reader in a paradoxical reality. Neither the time nor the place will always stay the same. He will always look for an answer and fight against all probabilities in order to preserve this feeling of love that makes him happy. So seasons may come and go, and so may love, but the heart of man will always consider it a treason to "...bow and accept the end of a love or a season."

In the final verse he asks if we can ever be satisfied or happy by accepting the reason rather than the emotion for making a decision to end a relationship. There is a contrast between the end of summer with all its joys, replaced by the cold desolation of winter, the emptiness of the landscape and the death of flowers.

The poem ends with a rhetorical question which is a general truth not yet found because the heart of a person will see this acceptance of defeat as treason even though the facts cannot change.



In the last stanza, when the desperate feelings and the lost love fail to lead to anything good, the poet is proud to say that at least we will not “go with the drift of things.”

#### **3.1.3.4. What elements has the poet used?**

This poem has four stanzas of six lines each one. It has meter, rhyme, and metaphor.

##### **a. Meter**

The meter is varied.

##### **b. Rhyme**

The rhyme in *Reluctance* is in the second, fourth and sixth lines of each stanza. The rhyme scheme for each stanza is ABCBDB.

##### **c. Metaphor**

“Reluctance” is an environmental metaphor. The loss of love is compared to the end of autumn and it helps the author to create a vivid imagery of loss, lament and grief. A person refuses to accept that love is gone. Melancholy is evidenced by the images of dead leaves, flowers and plants of autumn. Here everything ends.



### 3.2. ANALISIS OF “PASTURE”



#### ***“The Pasture”***

I'm going out to clean the pasture spring;  
I'll only stop to rake the leaves away  
(And wait to watch the clear water, I may):  
I shan't be gone long - You come too.

I'm going out to fetch the little calf  
That's standing by the mother. It's too young,  
It totters when she licks it with her tongue.  
I shan't be gone long – You come too.



### **3.2.1. INTRODUCTION**

*The Pasture* is a lovely poem that shows the Frost's ability to capture the transition from a rural to an urban society. In this short poem, he shows nature and the connection between animals and humans. It indicates the great detail of a cow's life out in a field with its calf being very happy, living peacefully.

Robert Frost's poem is taught in kindergarten and elementary schools and it is called ROBERT FROST Banguet.

*The Pasture* is the first poem in the book, Collected Poems published in 1930 by Henry Holt. This poem has two stanzas of four lines each. It is a monologue, and appears to be perfectly simple.

### **3.2.2. SUMMARY**

Someone is going to a pasture to see water and cows. This person cleans the pasture and looks for the little calf, at which time he / she sees that the mother cow likes her calf as a demonstration of love. He or she asks someone else to come along.

### **3.2.3. ANALYSIS**

#### **3.2.3.1. Who is the speaker?**

The speaker is the author. He is someone who cares for cows and cleans water; a farmer.





### **3.2.3.2. Where is the speaker situated?**

The speaker is near a pasture. The setting helps us to see as a child would see. A pasture is open enough to be beautiful and comforting, but also so massive that it may be intimidating to a little child.

### **3.2.3.3. Who is the speaker talking to?**

The speaker wants to be with someone while they do quiet things together.

### **3.2.3.4. What does the speaker want?**

The speaker wants someone to come.

### **3.2.3.5. What kinds of images is the poet using?**

New, fragile, clear images: images of birth, of spring, of giving care to allow something to grow.

### **3.2.3.6. What does the poem mean?**

This poem means the interaction of people with animals in the field while having a quiet life.

In the first stanza, the speaker says someone is on a farm preparing to clean the pasture spring of dead leaves, and waiting for the water to clear. He says he won't be long, and invites the reader to come.

The second stanza presents a similar invitation, this time to look for a little calf.



The Robert Frost's purpose is to comfort a child. A child is frightened to be left by an adult. The adult helps the child to get over his / her fears by saying, "You come too. You come too." We think that these words are said by a mother because a mother always protects her child. In this case, the mother-cow relationship with her calf is one of protection when she licks him with her tongue. The mother brings the attention of the child to the mother-cow in order to reiterate the love and protection she has for her own child. "The Pasture" is a poem for children.

### **3.2.3.7. What elements has the poet used?**

The poem has meter, rhyme, tone, verbal parallelism, imagery, metaphor, and anthimeria.

#### **a. Meter**

The meter of the poem in the first three lines is Iambic Pentameter in the first and second stanzas. But the fourth line, repeated in the second stanza, is Iambic Tetrameter. The Iambic pattern is broken in the last two feet (spondaic variant feet) of the Tetrameter line. **I sha'n't |be gone |long. You |come too.**

#### **b. Rhyme**

The rhyme in *The Pasture* is in the second and third lines of each stanza. The rhyme scheme for the first stanza is XAAX and for the second stanza XBBX.



**c. Tone**

The tone is friendly, inviting, and lighthearted. Frost is recommending the simple pleasures, of life such as nature and human friendship. The tone of the poem is calm and gentle.

**d. Verbal Parallelism**

Verbal Parallelism is the repetition of an independent clause at the end of each stanza. It has an effect that extends a friendly invitation to the reader. (You come too.)

**e. Imagery**

Imagery appeals to the senses: nature imagery, season imagery, water imagery – all symbolizing new birth.

**f. Metaphor**

“The Pasture” is a metaphor of love and protection, the love of a cow for its calf is compared to the love of a mother for her child. The mother gives up protection to her child and guides her child during his / her childhood.

**g. Anaphora**

Frost always keenly remembered the speech habits of New Englanders and used them in his own poetry with the patterns he heard. Techniques like anaphora, the substitution of a noun for an adjective, gave his poetry a dialectal and colloquial feel. In “The Pasture,” instead of saying “I’m going out to clean the spring in the pasture”, he says “pasture spring”. Pasture, normally a



noun, becomes an adjective modifying spring. In a similar way, the contraction sha'n't, for shall not, adds to the colloquial informality and intimacy of the poem. "I sha'n't be gone long" is a style of speech that's almost gone. Probably more typical of what was heard among an older generation of New Englanders if only because the region is where American English is the oldest.

#### **h. Contractions**

The poem has four contractions: "I'm, I'll, it's, and sha'n't.

#### **i. Direct Speech**

Robert Frost uses direct speech because he is talking directly to someone else who is there with him.

#### **j. Structure**

The sentence structure in this piece is quite difficult; In *The Pasture* the sentences are short and clear, but Robert Frost uses compound sentences to describe what he is going to do.

#### **k. Personal Pronoun "I"**

The poem is in the first person. But then Frost does something magical. He invites to "you". "You come too", this shortened tetrameter line has same effect as an aside in a play or drama – an effect of immediacy and personableness. Suddenly we find ourselves in the poem!



### 3.3. ANALYSIS OF "ROAD NOT TAKEN"



#### ***The Road not Taken***

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -  
I took the one less traveled by  
And that has made all the difference.



### **3.3.1. INTRODUCTION**

“The Road not Taken” was published on November 27, 1916, in the book Mountain Interval. It is the first poem in the volume and it is printed in Italics. This poem is also known as “The Road Less Travelled” for the penultimate line, “I took the one less traveled by”.

“The Road Not Taken,” the most famous and beloved of Frost’s poem, has been one of the most analyzed, quoted, and anthologized poems in American poetry. Since its publication, many readers have analyzed the poem as a nostalgic commentary on life’s choices. It is frequently studied in high school literature classes since it is extremely popular. The poem promotes individualism and non-conformity.

“The Road Not Taken” is a description of a man’s choice between two paths in a yellow wood. The narrator in the first three stanzas can be seen as directly linked to Frost's own voice, but the final stanza, in which Frost ironically mocks the narrator's sudden nostalgia for the past, has Frost swiftly pulling out of the poem's character in order to emphasize his hypocrisy to the reader. Frost said his poem was tricky.

### **3.3.2. SUMMARY**

The narrator finds a fork in the road while walking through a yellow wood. He looks at both paths and concludes that each one is equally well-traveled. After choosing one of the roads, the speaker tells himself that he will come back to this fork one day in order to try the other road. However, he thinks that it is improbable that he will ever have the opportunity to come back to this specific



point in time because his choice of path will simply lead to other forks in the road. The narrator ends on a nostalgic note, wondering how different things would have been had he chosen the other path.

### **3.3.3. ANALYSIS**

#### **3.3.3.1. Who is the speaker?**

The speaker is the traveler.

#### **3.3.3.2. Where is the speaker situated?**

He is situated in a yellow wood.

#### **3.3.3.3. Why is the poem tricky?**

Frost said his poem "The Road Not Taken" was tricky. Three things make his poem tricky: the time frame, and the words "sigh" and "difference."

#### **a. A Tricky Poem**

Frost wrote this poem about his friend Edward Thomas, with whom he had walked many times in the woods near London. Frost has said that while walking they would come to different paths and after choosing one, Thomas would always worry wondering what they might have missed by not taking the other path.

But a close reading of the poem proves otherwise. It does not moralize about choice; it simply says that choice is inevitable but you never know what your choice will mean until you have lived it.



In the first three stanzas of the poem, the narrator states that the two paths are fundamentally identical in every way. He chose one path and thought about returning one day to try the other path, without lamenting his decision. In the fourth stanza, however, when the narrator is an old man, he analyzes the truth of what happened and describes his path as the one "less traveled by." This truth allows the old man to justify many of his life's choices.

In the fourth stanza lies the key to the trickiness of the poem. This poem suggests non-conformity and takes the word "difference" as a positive difference. However, nothing in the poem suggests that this difference signals a positive result.

The word "sigh" implies nostalgic relief; however, a sigh can also mean regret. If it is the relief sigh it means the speaker is glad he took the road he did; if it is the regret sigh, then the difference would not be good. But we do not know what that sigh is.

In this poem, it is important to be careful with the time frame. When the speaker says he will be reporting sometime in the future how his choice of road turned out, we have to realize that we cannot give meaning to "sigh" and "difference," because the speaker himself cannot know how his choice will affect his future, until after he has lived it.

#### **3.3.3.4. What does the poem mean?**

"The Road Not Taken" is a poem about decisions. Two paths represent choices; the author looks far down both paths to see what each one will bring. The first of the two paths is the more commonly traveled one, while the other is





the 'less traveled' path. Frost presents the conflict - the decision between the common easy path and the uncommon but more difficult one. Choosing the easy path in life will ensure success, but won't necessarily be fulfilling. Choosing the "less traveled" road means a more difficult path in life, but more satisfying results that are not like anyone else's.

The poem has four stanzas. In the first stanza, the speaker describes his position. He has been walking in the yellow woods and found two roads, and he has looked at them carefully for a long time. He did not know what road to take, but he continued doubting and trying to make a decision about which road to choose.

In the second stanza, he decided to take the second road, the less traveled, because it seemed to have less traffic than the first. Although then, he thought that both roads were very similar.

In the third stanza he continues the description of the roads with the meditation about the possible differences between the two roads. He had realized that the leaves were fresh fallen on the two roads and that they had not been walked on, but maybe he would come back and also walk on the first one sometime, but he doubted if he would be able to, because in life one thing leads to another and time is short. In the three stanzas, the narrator does not feel remorse for his decision.

In the fourth stanza the narrator ends the poem with a sigh indicating nostalgia and says that he took the less traveled road and that his choice made a difference.



### **3.3.3.5. Interpretation**

The poem has two recognized interpretations: literal and ironic. Readers often see the poem literally, as an expression of individualism. Critics typically view the poem as ironic because for them "The Road not Taken" is the most famous example of Frost's own claims to conscious irony.

#### **a. Literal interpretation**

According to the literal interpretation, the poem is inspirational, a paean to individualism, to non-conformism.

The poem's last lines, in which the narrator declares that taking the road "less traveled by" has "made all the difference," can be seen as a declaration of the importance of independence and personal freedom. "The Road Not Taken" shows that once one takes a certain road, there is no turning back, and the past cannot be changed.

#### **b. Ironic interpretation**

The ironic interpretation held by critics is that the poem is instead about regret and personal myth-making; rationalizing our decisions.

The final two lines are ironic – the choice made little or no difference at all, and the speaker's protestations to the contrary.

The sigh is interpreted as a sigh of regret, but it might also be interpreted ironically: in a 1925 letter to Crystine Yates of Dickson, Tennessee, asking



about the sigh, Frost replied: "It was my rather private jest at the expense of those who might think I would yet live to be sorry for the way I had taken in life."

Robert Frost finds himself in a yellow wood, on a path which forks in two and goes in different directions. The word "yellow" presents some ambiguity: readers may interpret this as a beautiful springtime wood full of sunshine and daffodils, suggesting the speaker's youth, or as an autumnal scene suggesting quite the opposite. Or perhaps the yellow connotes cowardice, as the speaker procrastinates over his decision.

### **3.3.3.6. The Three Different Ages**

Frost describes three different ages of the narrator of the poem. These three different speakers all have to make a decision. The middle-aged is the most objective speaker, and he ridicules the younger and older as they are given to emotion, deception, and congratulation. While the middle-aged narrator is able to maintain his objectivity, the younger and older are given to delusion and cannot maintain any objectivity.

### **3.3.3.7. Nature**

Frost uses nature as a major theme in his poetry. He tends to use nature to symbolize something that has to do with human life or situations that humans face. However, there is usually a deeper meaning buried in his work.

In this poem, Frost presents the reader to two separate paths in the woods. The speaker is faced with the decision of which path he will choose to



travel. He has to choose only one path. Decisions that people make, large or small, have an impact on their future and "made all the difference."

### **3.3.3.8. What elements has the poet used?**

This poem has four stanzas of five lines each one; all lines are capitalized. It has meter, rhythm, rhyme, tone, diction, imagery, metaphor, symbolism, religious symbolism, personification, irony, verbal irony, individualism, and humor.

#### **a. Meter and Rhythm**

The poem has a roughly iambic rhythm. There are four stressed syllables per line, varying on an iambic tetrameter base with interesting use of anapests.

#### **b. Rhyme**

Its rhyme scheme is ABAAB. The rhymes are strict and masculine, with the notable exception of the last line.

#### **c. Tone**

The tone has an insecure attitude due to the fact that the theme relates to a dilemma in one's life.

#### **d. Diction**

In the poem Frost chooses and uses clear words in writing. The clarity of the pronunciation is what gives importance to the poem.



### **e. Imagery**

Imagery is significant and allows readers to construct a description in their minds, permitting them to relate more to the poem and interpret it in their own way and to improve their understanding of the theme.

### **f. Metaphor**

The poet uses the well known metaphor of a "road" being compared with life, and it represents a choice. The speaker must choose between diverging paths in the woods, and he sees that choice as a metaphor for different directions in life. Frost's achievement in "The Road Not Taken" was to bring different metaphor uses into play in a delightfully ironic balance.

In the first line, Frost introduces the elements of his primary metaphor, the diverging roads. First, the color of the trees being yellow, meaning that it is fall, represents a time of change.

In the second and third lines, the speaker expresses his regret at his human limitations and he must make a choice. Yet, the choice is not easy.

In the fourth and fifth lines, he examines the path as best he can, but his vision is limited because the path bends and is covered over. These lines indicate that although the speaker would like to acquire more information, he is prevented from doing so because of the nature of his environment.

From the sixth to the eighth lines, the speaker seems to indicate that the second path is a more attractive choice because no one has taken it lately.



However, he seems to feel ambivalent, since he also describes the path as "just as fair" as the first, rather than more fair.

From the ninth to the twelfth lines, although the poet breaks the stanza after line ten, the central idea continues into the third stanza, creating a structural link between these parts of the poem. Here, the speaker states that the paths are "really about the same." Neither path has been traveled lately. Although he is searching for a clear logical reason to decide on one path over another, that reason is unavailable.

In the last lines, the speaker makes his decision, trying to persuade himself that it will turn out someday to be so dire as to make him "sigh" at "all the difference" this choice has made. The poet's subtle humor is most likely what he was referring to when he described it as "tricky." The poem was meant to be taken as a joke on the speaker and as a parody of his attitudes.

### **g. Symbolism**

Symbolism is the most powerfully used technique in this poem related to our life or to today's world. Frost tells of a situation where the speaker comes across a fork in the road, to two paths which are similar, and he has to decide which road he is going to take. The two roads symbolize hard decisions in life. However, he realizes that he cannot take the two roads at the same time or come back some day. The speaker in this poem decides to take the road "less traveled by," and then announces that this choice "has made all the difference" in his life.



Frost successfully utilizes the word "road" because he interlaces it with a realistic and picturesque environment. His roads "bend in the undergrowth," are "grassy," and are covered with fall leaves. His symbols become a world where the abstract notions of life and choice find concrete form.

#### **h. Religious Symbolism**

There are many religious analogies. Everyone is a traveler on roads of life. In the poem there two roads, but the traveler only takes one. Religion could be implied in this poem by the decision the speaker must make. The road he chose, and the road not taken. This decision could be to follow God or not to follow God.

#### **i. Personification**

In the line "Because it was grassy and wanted wear;" there is a description of the road wanting wear like a person. However: some believe this is incorrect and that it is not a personification.

#### **j. Irony**

This poem is the most famous example of Frost's conscious irony. Thompson documents the ironic impulse that produced the poem was Frost's gently joking response to his good friend, Edward Thomas, who walked with Frost. They take one path and then regret not having taken a different direction. According to Thomas, Frost tried to bring audiences to the ironic point, warning one group, "You have to be careful of that one; it's a tricky poem - very tricky".



According to Thomas this poem is a too exact parody of a mediocre poetic voice, which becomes among the sentimental masses, ironically, one of the most popularly beloved of Frost's "wise" poems. This is the easiest but the only or best way, in this critical case, the road less traveled may indeed be more productive. The last line is ambiguous: is he rationalizing or is he being ironic?

### **k. Verbal Irony**

The speaker knows he will tell the old story "with a sigh" over a choice that "made all the difference."

### **l. Individualism**

In this poem, the central situation is that one has to choose and to make a choice. The poem's speaker is only the one who chooses the path to take. This speaker does not celebrate individualism, but accepts it.

### **m. Humor**

"The Road Not Taken" has a sophisticated style. Frost has the ability to create ironic interplay between external seriousness and internal humor. However, the humor also has its serious side. More than the ridicule found in the parody, the parody also expresses an implied corrective to the condition that it mocks. The condition is that the speaker sees the course and tone of his life as determined by forces beyond his range of vision and control. Frost implies that if the speaker were able to see himself with humor, and if he were able to take more responsibility for his choices and attitudes, he might find that he could make "all the difference" in his own life.





The only difference between the two is that one is grassy, implying comfort and ease, and the other contains undergrowth, connotative of roughness and discomfort.

#### **n. Antithesis**

When the traveler comes to the fork in the road, he wishes he could travel both but this is not a possibility. The traveler realizes this and immediately rejects the idea. Another contradiction is two comments in the second stanza about the road less traveled. First it's described as grassy and wanting wear, after which he turns to say the roads are actually worn about the same.



### 3.4. ANALYSIS OF “FIRE AND ICE”



#### ***Fire and Ice***

Some say the world will end in fire,

Some say in ice.

From what I've tasted of desire

I hold with those who favor fire.

But if it had to perish twice,

I think I know enough of hate

To say that for destruction ice

Is also great

And would suffice.



### **3.4.1 INTRODUCTION**

*Fire and Ice* is one of Robert Frost's most popular poems, published in 1923 in his book, New Hampshire. It is a brilliant example of Frost's skill with form, line structure, and concisely ironic literary style; in only nine lines.

It discusses the end of the world, comparing the elemental force of fire with the emotion of desire, and hate with ice. He says he has had personal experience with both, in the form of desire and hate. He summarizes the central debate about the fate of the world.

This poem shows the two sides of the debate on the world's fate. The narrator clarifies the strict dichotomy between the elements while also revealing that this is not an expression of an individual opinion, but rather a universal understanding. The world must end in one of these two contradictory ways. The narrator gives his own opinion and recognizes that the world could easily end both ways; thus, *fire* and ice are inherently similar.

Frost empathizes on the themes of passion/consumption, knowledge/experience and death/destruction. The simplicity that Frost writes the poem with supplies a simple truth about feelings in a relationship.

### **3.4.2. SUMMARY**

"Fire and Ice" begins with the opinion of that the world must end in fire after considering in ice, however, the desire and passion of the author is in favor of the emotions of fire because he hates ice, but he deduces that ice would be equally destructive than fire.



### **3.4.3. ANALYSIS**

#### **3.4.3.1. Who is the speaker?**

The speaker is the author.

#### **3.4.3.2. Where is the speaker situated?**

The speaker is in the world.

#### **3.4.3.3. What do fire and ice represent?**

The fire represents love, desire and lust, and the ice represents hate.

#### **3.4.3.4. What does the poem mean?**

In the first two lines of the poem, Frost summarizes and creates a clear dichotomy between fire and ice, and the two groups of people that believe in each element. He uses the term “some” instead of “I” or “an individual,” asserting that the difference between the two elements is a universal truth, and the world will end as a direct result of one of these elements. We do not know which element will destroy the world, but fire and ice are the only options.

Although the first two lines of the poem insist that there can only be a single choice between fire and ice, the narrator thinks that both elements could successfully destroy the world. First, the narrator concludes that the world will end in fire, and then he admits that the world could end in ice; at the end, he believes that fire and ice are similar.



*Fire and Ice* is NOT about death. It is about making a choice during a struggle. He compares fire with ice to contrast the two elements. Fire is destructive, chaotic, and fast; unlike fire, ice is slow.

#### **3.4.3.5. What elements has the poet used?**

The poem has only nine lines. The poet uses the following poetic devices: meter, musical devices, rhyme, rhythm, tone, alliteration, imagery, metaphor, symbolism, denotation, connotation, paradox, antonym, understatement, and synecdoche.

##### **a. Meter**

The poem is written in iambic tetrameter and dimeter; the meter changes three times to emphasize the meaning of the poem. In the second, eighth and ninth line the tetrameter meter is replaced by the dimeter meter.

##### **b. Musical Devices**

Musical devices help to reinforce the meaning of this poem. The use of the long “i” sound in “fire” and “ice” and the euphonies with the use of the long “a” sound in “hate” and “great” produce an effect similar to that of a nursery rhyme; it is a feeling that a simple truth is being presented.

##### **c. Rhyme**

Although the poem does not contain end rhyme, the last word in every other line has the repetition of an accented vowel sound. The first rhyme scheme is the long “i” sound in “fire,” “desire,” and “fire.” Another rhyme scheme



is the harsher long “i” sound used in “ice,” “twice,” “ice” and “suffice.” Finally, the long “a” sound is repeated in “hate” and “great.” The rhyme scheme is ABAABCBCB. In addition, this rhyme scheme is similar to that of nursery rhymes.

#### **d. Rhythm**

The rhythm is unchanged. The regular beat is simple and similar to that of a nursery rhyme. The rhythm is only interrupted by the change of meter in order to place importance on certain parts of the poem.

#### **e. Tone**

Frost also uses satire in this poem. His tone is satirical for the subject he is writing about. The end of the world is a serious subject to most people, but Frost almost always turns it into a joke with his satirical tone.

#### **f. Alliteration**

Alliteration exists it in the first and second lines with the repetition of the “s” sound, emphasizing the simple form of the poem. Alliteration is also used in the fourth line in the phrase “favor fire.” The repetition of the “f” sound places importance upon fire, and suggests the great harm that desire can cause. The use of alliteration in Fire and Ice creates a sing-song effect that helps to establish the mood of the poem.



### **g. Imagery**

In the poem the images, fire and ice, help emphasize the feelings of a relationship. The first image, fire, consumes all around it. In a relationship, fire can be desire or jealousy and these can consume a relationship or an individual. The second image, ice, freezes all; in a relationship ice can be the hate that destroys a relationship.

### **h. Metaphor**

When Frost wrote this poem there was a common scientific debate about the world's destruction. Some scientists believed that the world would be incinerated from its fiery core, while others were convinced that a coming ice age would destroy all living things on the earth's surface. On the other hand, Frost introduces a more emotional side, associating passionate desire with fire and hate with ice. This poem has a metaphor in which the "world" and the two elements, fire and ice, have a relationship. Too much fire and passion can quickly consume a relationship, while cold indifference and hate can be equally destructive.

### **i. Symbolism**

Fire and ice are symbols of desire and hate. Fire is a symbol for desire because fire is capable of consuming and destroying everything, and passion consumes people, making them irrational even to commit murder. However, Frost is really saying that desire and passion could cause the end of the world.



Ice is a symbol for hate. People full of hate tend to be rigid and cold, consumed by their feelings and lives.

Frost is not saying that the world will freeze over or burn literally; the poem has a deeper meaning concerning the true forces at work destroying our world. Forces of nature will not destroy us, but rather, humans themselves will cause their own destruction.

### **j. Denotations and Connotations**

The poet uses words that mean or suggest passion/consumption, knowledge/experience and death/destruction. Passion and consumption are suggested by the words “fire,” “desire,” and “taste.” The words “some say” represent knowledge of a group of people; while the first person “I know” suggests personal experience. “End,” “fire,” “ice,” “perish” and “destruction” all denote death and destruction.

### **k. Paradox**

It is used in the line: “But if I had to perish twice”. While a person is unable to die two times, the line is used figuratively to demonstrate that desire is equally as harmful as hate.

### **l. Antonym**

Frost uses the antonyms, fire and ice; these words are complete opposites and they both represent complete opposites: love and hate. People





always see love of in a positive way and hate as destructive, but love, just as hate, can result in destruction.

### **m. Understatement**

Frost presents things with understatement in order to achieve a greater effect. Frost uses this device extensively, often as a means of irony. Fire and Ice: Ice, which for destruction is great, "will suffice."

### **n. Synecdoche**

Frost said, "I started calling myself a Synecdochist when others called themselves Imagists or Vorticists." In "Fire and Ice": The heat of love and the cold of hate are seen as having cataclysmic power.



### 3.5. ANALISIS OF “ACQUAINTED WITH THE NIGHT”



#### ***Acquainted with the Night***

I have been one acquainted with the night.  
I have walked out in rain -- and back in rain.  
I have outwalked the furthest city light.

I have looked down the saddest city lane.  
I have passed by the watchman on his beat  
And dropped my eyes, unwilling to explain.

I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet  
When far away an interrupted cry  
Came over houses from another street,

But not to call me back or say good-bye;  
And further still at an unearthly height,  
A luminary clock against the sky

Proclaimed the time was neither wrong nor right.  
I have been one acquainted with the night.



### **3.5.1. INTRODUCTION**

“Acquainted with the Night” appeared first in The Virginia Quarterly Review and was published in 1928 from Robert Frost’s collection, West-Running Brook.

“Acquainted with the Night” shows a preoccupation for the themes of isolation and it describes an individual fight against depression.

### **3.5.2. SUMMARY**

The narrator describes his loneliness when he walks at night on the streets of the city. He has walked to the limits of the city, but he has never found anything to comfort himself in his depression. Even when he makes contact with another person, such as the watchman, the narrator is reluctant to express his feelings because he knows that no one will understand him. Although he hears a cry from another street, he realizes that it does not mean anything to him; no one is waiting for him. He looks at the moon in the sky and confesses that time has no meaning for him because his isolation is eternal.

### **3.5.3. ANALYSIS**

#### **3.5.3.1. Who is the speaker?**

The speaker is the author, Robert Frost.

#### **3.5.3.2. Where is the speaker situated?**

The speaker is in a city.



### **3.5.3.3. What does the poem mean?**

In this poem the narrator shows a deep depression and a sense of isolation. Nothing in his surroundings is able to pull him out of his depression: neither walking in bad weather, nor walking in good weather; neither walking around the city, nor walking beyond its limits. No matter what he does, the narrator is a lonely, isolated "I." Significantly, even the narrator's relationship with the night is distant; the night is not his friend or his lover, but only a distant acquaintance.

This poem is a description of the narrator's experiences with the depression. He shows his depression in his complete isolation. Frost emphasizes this by using the first - person "I" at the beginning of seven of the lines. The physical presence of the watchman does not play a mental or emotional role: the narrator, the sole "I," remains solitary. Similarly, when the narrator hears the "interrupted cry" from another street, he clarifies that the cry is not meant for him. Besides, there is no one waiting for him at home.

The narrator's inability to make eye contact with the people that he meets suggests that his depression has made him incapable of interacting in normal society. While normal people are associated with the day, happiness, sunlight, optimism; the narrator is solely acquainted with the night, and thus he can find nothing in common with those around him. The narrator is even unable to use the same sense of time as the other people in the city; however, the narrator relies solely on "one luminary clock" in the sky.



Ironically, since night is the only time in which he emerges from his solitude, the narrator has even less opportunity to meet someone who can pull him out of his depression. His acquaintance with the night constructs a cycle of depression from which he cannot escape.

#### **3.5.3.4. Darkness and Isolation**

In the first stanza the poet shows feelings of loneliness and isolation through the imagery of the setting. In the darkness of the night he walks through the streets in the rain and cold. He walks away from the farthest light of the city. "The night" is the depression itself, and the narrator describes how he views the world around him in this state of mind.

#### **3.5.3.5. Urban and Rural Life**

Frost is not averse to examining urban life in his poetry; in "Acquainted with the Night," the narrator is described as being someone who lives in a large city. However, Frost has more opportunities to find metaphysical meaning in everyday tasks and explore the relationship between mankind and nature through the sights of rural life and farming communities that he reveals in his poetry. Urban life is "real," but it lacks the quality and clarity of life that is so fascinating to Frost in his work. The surroundings of the speaker are used to reflect the speaker's feelings. Although this poem is not about nature, it does have a philosophical tone.



### **3.5.3.6. Present Perfect Tense**

In the poem, Frost uses the present perfect tense, which is used to describe something from the recent past, as well as something from the past that is still continuing in the present. It seems as if the narrator's depression could be from the recent past because of the phrase: "I have been..." However, the verb tense also suggests that his depression could still be a constant factor. With that in mind, it is not clear whether the narrator will truly be able to come back to society or if his depression will appear and force him to be, once again, acquainted with the night.

### **3.5.3.7. What elements has the poet used?**

This poem has five stanzas of three lines each, but the last one has only two lines; all lines are capitalized. It has meter, rhyme, metaphor, symbolism repetition, couplets, enjambment, communication, and caesura.

#### **a. Meter**

This poem is written in strict iambic pentameter, with the fourteen lines just as a traditional sonnet.

#### **b. Rhyme**

Frost also uses rhyme, which is a pattern of words that contains similar sounds, but the pattern breaks near the end of the poem.

In terms of rhyme scheme, Frost uses the "terza rima" or "third rhyme" which follows the complex pattern of ABA BCB CDC DAD AA, which is



exceptionally difficult to write in English. However, Frost was a master of many forms, and "Acquainted with the Night" is one of the most famous examples of an American poem written in terza rima.

### **c. Metaphor**

The night is a metaphor with a profound symbolic meaning of loneliness, sadness, silence, death and depression. The depression is seen in several lines of the poem.

In the third stanza the speaker hears a "far away interrupted cry." Here the physical distance can be seen as a metaphor, for the speaker's emotional distance from others shows his isolation.

The moon becomes more meaningful; it is a metaphoric image of the luminary clock that shows the time.

### **d. Symbolism**

While Frost tends to write about individuals in nature, in the middle of a forest, perhaps, here he has placed his speaker in a city, a place that is populated by many people. Here people do not comfort him; he feels solitude. In fact, he feels alienated from the society in which he lives while walking out past the city limits.

The speaker's despair is intensified in the second stanza. He feels alone, even around others. The city has brought a melancholy feeling to him. Then, he crosses paths with a watchman, but he avoids his look in order to not



communicate with him, and, he would prefer to remain silent, isolated from others. The word “unwilling” suggests the speaker’s choice to avoid interaction.

In the third stanza, the speaker hears a “cry” from a distant street, someone calling out to someone, but not to him. There is a distant image.

In the fourth stanza, the speaker explains that it “was not to call me back or say goodbye.” He also introduces the image of the “moon”, which is extremely far away. The moon is a reminder of the time. He uses the metaphor of a clock to describe it, “one luminary clock against the sky.” It represents the night when he walks alone on the streets.

In this poem, the night represents more than just the night. It is a dominating, oppressive night.

#### **i. Repetition**

You can see this by the fact that half of the lines begin with "I have...."

#### **f. The Couplet**

Sonnets are written in couplets; Frost's poem is sad. The moon image continues in the first line of the couplet, and it leads to the final line of the poem: “I have been one acquainted with the night,” a word-for-word repetition of the poem’s first line.

#### **g. Enjambment**

He also uses enjambment, which is a continuation of thought in several lines of poetry. During the entire poem, he uses these regular every day





objects, but writes with deep, sincere meaning that we are supposed to recognize.

#### **h. Communication**

The narrator is unable to pull himself out of his depression because he cannot relate to anybody around him.

#### **i. Caesura**

He also uses caesura, which is a natural pause or break, in line two of the poem.



### 3.6. ANALYSIS OF “MENDING WALL”



#### ***Mending Wall***

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,  
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,  
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;  
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.

The work of hunters is another thing:  
I have come after them and made repair  
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,  
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,  
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,  
No one has seen them made or heard them made,  
But at spring mending-time we find them there.

I let my neighbour know beyond the hill;  
And on a day we meet to walk the line



And set the wall between us once again.  
We keep the wall between us as we go.  
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.  
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls  
We have to use a spell to make them balance:  
"Stay where you are until our backs are turned!"  
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.  
Oh, just another kind of out-door game,  
One on a side. It comes to little more:  
There where it is we do not need the wall:  
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.  
My apple trees will never get across  
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.  
He only says, "Good fences make good neighbours."  
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder  
If I could put a notion in his head:  
"Why do they make good neighbours? Isn't it  
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.  
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know  
What I was walling in or walling out,  
And to whom I was like to give offence.  
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,  
That wants it down." I could say "Elves" to him,  
But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather  
He said it for himself. I see him there  
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top  
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.  
He moves in darkness as it seems to me,  
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.  
He will not go behind his father's saying,  
And he likes having thought of it so well  
He says again, "Good fences make good neighbours."



### 3.6.1. INTRODUCTION

“Mending Wall” is the first poem in the second collection, North of Boston, and it was published in 1914. “Mending Wall” is a narrative poem that presents an encounter between two neighbors whose property line is marked by a stone fence. Each spring, they cooperate in repairing the damage the winter has caused to it. Although the speaker of the poem says he believes the wall is unnecessary, he is clearly ambivalent about its presence, since he also initiates the repair. His neighbor, on the other hand, strongly asserts his desire to maintain the wall, repeating the line, “Good fences make good neighbors.”

“Mending Wall” is an autobiographical poem and it implies a certain amount of homesickness. A French-Canadian named Napoleon Guay had been Frost's neighbor in New Hampshire, and the two had often walked along their property line and repaired the wall that separated their land. Ironically, the most famous line of the poem, “Good fences make good neighbors,” was not invented by Frost, but it was a phrase that Guay frequently declared to Frost during their walks. This particular adage was a popular colonial proverb in the middle of the 17th century.

Frost was considered to be a narrative poet and his capacity was to maintain debates between people about the nature of the homes which they very often occupied together. *Mending Wall* is an ideal manifestation of that genius. The poem was written as a debate between two separate voices. Robert Frost is truly unique in this respect.



### **3.6.2. SUMMARY**

Every year, two neighbors meet to repair the stone wall that divides their property the speaker questions this tradition; he is unable to understand the need for a wall when there are no animals on the property, only apple and pine trees. He does not believe that a wall should exist simply to exist. He cannot help but notice that the natural world seems to dislike the wall as much as he does: mysterious gaps appear, boulders fall for no reason. The neighbor, on the other hand, thinks that the wall is crucial to maintain their relationship, asserting, "Good fences make good neighbors." The speaker wants to convince his neighbor not to mend the wall, and accuses him of being old-fashioned for maintaining the tradition so strictly. No matter what the speaker says the neighbor stands his ground, repeating only: "Good fences make good neighbors."

### **3.6.3. ANALISYS**

#### **3.6.3.1. Who is the speaker?**

The speaker is the author, Robert Frost.

#### **3.6.3.2. Where is the speaker situated?**

He is on a farm in New Hampshire.

#### **3.6.3.3. What does the wall in "Mending Wall" symbolize?**

It symbolizes the political, social, physical, and emotional walls that we face in our lives.



#### **3.6.3.4. What is “Mending Wall” by Robert Frost about?**

It is about Frost and his neighbour; every spring they meet to discuss how to mend the wall that is being broken, yet Frost does not like the idea of having a wall. He suggests to his neighbour that they really do not need a wall, but his neighbour just says, “good fences make good neighbours.”

#### **3.6.3.5. What does the poem mean?**

From the first to the fourth line, the wall is introduced as a primary symbol in the poem. This wall is powerful, but the weather damages it, creating gaps. Apparently, the two neighbors could step together from each side of their fence, but they don't consider doing that.

From the fifth to the ninth line, the narrator says the hunters destroy the wall by making gaps intentionally while looking for rabbits. The speaker recognizes and understands their motive.

In the tenth and eleventh lines, the speaker reinforces the idea that breaks created by nature are more mysterious than those made by the hunters. This action cannot be observed, though the effects are consistent year after year.

From the twelfth to the sixteenth line, the speaker's ambivalence becomes apparent. Although he thinks that the wall is there solely because of his neighbor, he is the one who organizes the work to repair the wall. The separation between the two is emphasized in these lines, as they walk on



opposite sides of the wall and as they are responsible for putting the stones that have fallen on each one's side in their original places on the wall.

From the seventeenth to the nineteenth line, the tone becomes a bit more humorous, as the speaker puts a "spell" on the stones.

From the twentieth to the twenty-second line, although the speaker wants to present this activity as insignificant, he also reveals that the task is hard.

From the twenty-third to the twenty-sixth line, the poem presents the central idea that the speaker desires a closer relationship with his neighbor. He says with a joke that farmers often use fences to keep their animals separated, but this fence should be unnecessary because pine trees and apple trees will not cross over to each other's space, nor will one eat the fruit or seeds of the other.

In the twenty-seventh line, the neighbor speaks for himself; he presents his case directly, and his personality is transmitted in this one line, which is the only thought we receive from the neighbor, responding abstractly with a metaphor to the speaker. It implies that a separation is essential.

From the twenty-eighth to the thirty-first lines, the speaker tries to provoke his neighbor again with practical objections, but he never makes this statement outloud.

From the thirty-second to the thirty-fifth lines, the speaker also begins to speculate abstractly, and the symbolic significance of the wall becomes apparent as he uses the phrase "walling in" and "walling out." The double



function of a wall for outsiders is to prevent them from entry, but insiders are trapped inside.

From the thirty-sixth to the thirty-eighth lines, the speaker again reveals his ambivalent attitude. He is playful in suggesting that “Elves” have destroyed their wall, but he also wants his neighbor to be playful; however he knows “it’s not elves, exactly.”

From the thirty-ninth to the forty-second lines, the speaker presents his neighbor as a savage. He implies that the neighbor is also using the stones as weapons, and the fence as a defense.

From the forty-third to the forty-fifth lines, the speaker indicates that the neighbor will not take a risk or reveal the reasons for his attitude; besides, it reflects his neighbor’s father’s attitude. The line “Good fences make good neighbors” has been repeated and becomes highly significant.

#### **3.6.3.6. The Neighbor**

The neighbor is old-fashioned; he has kept the traditional habit of maintaining the property line simply for tradition. Whenever the narrator asks him to justify his habit, the neighbor just says: "Good fences make good neighbors." In the poem, it is clear that the neighbor is not an unreasonable traditionalist, but is actually wise in his repeated adage.

#### **3.6.3.7. “Good fences make good neighbors”**

This quotation is perhaps one of the most frequently quoted lines from Frost's poetry. The neighbor repeats the adage three times over the course of





the poem and, though the narrator is initially unconvinced of his neighbor's appreciation of an old-fashioned tradition, he eventually begins to agree with the adage as well. This line emphasizes the importance of property and individuality in the United States. Although the wall is not necessary in a practical sense, the narrator's apple trees will not cross the property line to bother his neighbor's pine trees; it maintains each man's individual identity in the farm community and allows each to have a sense of pride in his ownership of the land. Even on a more basic level, the act of mending the wall allows the neighbors to develop their relationship through interpersonal communication.

### **3.6.3.8. Nature**

The narrator says that the act of mending the wall seems to be in opposition to nature. Every year, stones are removed and gaps suddenly appear, all without explanation. Every year, the two neighbors fill the gaps and replace the fallen boulders. It seems as if nature is attempting to destroy the barriers that man has created on the land, even as man continues to repair the barriers, simply out of habit and tradition.

### **3.6.3.9. The American Dream**

The neighbour is, of course, following the idea of the American Dream: his own area of land, carefully defined and delineated, upon which he may work hard to ensure his own future. For the speaker of the poem, however, the possibility of human interaction and co-operation is more important.



### **3.6.3.10. What elements has the poet used?**

“Mending Wall” is not structured with stanzas; it is a simple poem of forty-five lines of first person narrative. The poem has meter, rhyme, tone, assonance, metaphor, symbolism, personification, irony, connotation, simile, and color-coded scansion.

#### **a. Meter**

“Mending Wall” is written in unrhymed iambic pentameter, or blank verse, a popular form in English. Frost maintains iambic stresses, but he is flexible in the form in order to maintain the conversational feel of the poem.

#### **b. Rhyme and Assonance**

Frost has obvious rhyme patterns and an occasional internal rhyme and the use of assonance in certain ending terms, such as “wall,” “hill,” “balls,” “well.” “Mending Wall” is extremely conservative in its use of variant feet. As is the habit with most poets, when young they will try to use the rules strictly.

#### **c. Tone**

This poem has a sarcastic tone.

#### **d. Metaphor**

In the poem, the wall functions as a metaphor, indicating the necessity of simultaneous connection and separation between human beings. Although individuals try to connect, a too close connection can be indistinct and dangerous. The neighbors can only maintain their relationship through



conscious attention to the wall that separates them. The wall is a rich image which serves to transmit notions of true and false in the minds of the people. The strength of the poem transmits the resistance many people feel concerning a separation.

Frost is suggesting that we should examine these barriers and decide if they are really beneficial and applicable to our lives today.

#### **e. Symbolism**

The speaker thinks about the Stone Age. He has thoughts about the Dark Ages, where darkness functions as a symbol for a lack of insight that is understood as progress.

#### **f. Personification**

Technically, there is no personification giving non-human things human qualities in "Mending Wall". However, it may be argued that there is one occasion where the narrator of the poem is insinuating that the stones being replaced have the ability to hear and understand like humans. These lines are funny in tone, and it is improbable that the narrator really believes the stones are listening to him.

#### **g. Irony**

There is great irony in the way the two men are brought together by a task that will keep them apart. Each one completes the work on his side of the wall, never meeting or co-operating.



The speaker is clearly aware of this irony, and of the essentially useless nature of the task: to mend the wall again, emphasizing that all the work they do every year will be destroyed until the following spring, but the speaker seems to question whether they really need the wall at all.

In other words, both men only have trees there are no animals which need a boundary to stop them from crossing over into the neighbor's property, and the speaker's sarcastic tone indicates his impatience with the whole situation.

#### **h. Simile and Connotation**

This poem has the following simile: "like an old-stone savage armed." This simile is appropriate because the farmers use stones as their tools, but stone tools have the connotation of "savage." It implies that the neighbor is also using the stones as weapons; he is "armed." The fence becomes a weapon, even if its purpose is primarily defense.

#### **i. Color Coded Scansion**

The meter does little in terms of acting as counterpoint to the line. The scansion is based on Frost's own reading of the poem. One might conjecture that the regularity of the meter, if it wasn't simply for the writing of Iambic Pentameter, was meant to echo the stepwise, regular, stone by stone mending of the wall. The work of mending the wall is slow, methodical work. This fact explains the careful regularity of the meter.



### 3.7. ANALISYS OF “STOPPING BY THE WOODS ON THE SNOWY EVENING”



#### ***Stopping by Woods on the Snowy Evening***

Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village, though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.  
The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.



### **3.7.1. INTRODUCTION**

Robert Frost wrote *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* in 1922, in just a few minutes at his house in Shaftsbury, Vermont, that is now home to the "Robert Frost Stone House Museum," and it was published in 1923 in the New Hampshire collection.

*Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* is Robert Frost's most well-known poem, and its simple, unforgettable beauty is incomparable. It is an example of Frost's genius.

"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" is a poem about a speaker's desire to be alone in the forest. It combines an autobiographical experience with a discussion of the conflict between desire and responsibility in a classic New England setting. The poem was inspired by an economical problem that Frost had in a winter in New Hampshire when Frost was returning home after an unsuccessful trip at the market. He did not have enough money to buy Christmas presents for his children; Frost was depressed and stopped his horse on the road in order to cry. After a few minutes, the horse shook the bells on its harness, and Frost was cheered enough to continue home.

### **3.7.2. SUMMARY**

On a dark cold winter evening, the speaker stops his horse to watch the snow falling in the woods. At first he worries that the owner of the property will be perturbed by his presence, but then he remembers that the owner lives in town, and he is free to enjoy the beauty of the snow falling for a little more time.



The horse is confused by his owner's behavior and shakes his harness bells in impatience. After that, the speaker continues his way at home.

### **3.7.3. ANALYSIS**

#### **3.7.3.1. Who is the speaker?**

The speaker is the author, Robert Frost.

#### **3.7.3.2. Where is the speaker situated?**

He is in the snowy forest.

#### **3.7.3.3. What does the poem mean?**

In "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," Frost uses particular words and rhythmic structure, which create a special feeling.

The narrator in the poem does not seem to suffer from the same financial problems and melancholy feelings as Frost did, but there is still a strong sense of the narrator's unavoidable responsibilities. He would prefer to watch the snow falling in the woods, but because of his horse's impatience, he remembers "promises to keep," obligations that he cannot ignore even if he wants to. It is not clear what these specific obligations are, but Frost suggests that the narrator is particularly attracted to the woods because there is "not a farmhouse near." He is able to enjoy complete isolation.

The first four lines are the key to the meaning of this poem; there are two important words, "though" and "his." The speaker knows who is the property owner and he knows that man won't be around tonight on a snowy, cold



evening. The word "though" transmits the idea that someone in the village would never be out there to go into a snowy forest in that weather. The line, "to watch HIS woods fill up with snow," shows resentment because nobody has permission to stop on private property; it produces melancholy in the reader.

In the line thirteen the speaker is being seduced by the woods; in spite of the danger he wishes to lie down and forget all his troubles there. It is sleep the speaker wants, but not the kind of temporary rest he can find in a farmhouse. It is the eternal sleep of the woods that he tempts him. The speaker would like to stay in the snowy woods and sleep. Sleep under such conditions can only bring death. The idea of death is seen through a combination of several images in the poem.

At the beginning of the line fourteen, Frost indicates a change with the word "But;" he realizes that he has "promises to keep," and it does refer to some kind of responsibility he has towards, his family and community.

The repetition of "And miles to go before I sleep" at the end of the poem indicates that the speaker is now ready to continue his journey, both through the woods to reach his destination, and through the rest of his life.

#### **3.7.3.4. The Speaker**

The last stanza shows the speaker's desire to remain in the woods. Clearly, the speaker has obligations that he must comply with.

The loveliness of the woods and unspoiled nature is extremely attractive, but the speaker pulls himself together to continue through the repetition of the last two lines. On the other hand, the last two lines may be seen as a lament for the long trip that the speaker has to make.





### **3.7.3.5. Theme**

The theme of the poem may be understood as self-imposed isolation from society bringing peace and tranquility to the speaker. Normally, darkness, cold, and loneliness are not seen in a positive light, but to this speaker these are "lovely." It is the obligations and miles to be traveled that are not desirable, and being in society is not what the speaker wishes.

### **3.7.3.6. Duty**

In this poem, the narrator expresses his wish to stay in the woods and watch the snow falling. However, he is unable to deny his obligation to his family and his community; he cannot remain in the woods for a long time because of his "promises to keep," and so he continues on his way. Besides, there were traditional American duties for farmers in New England that he could not forget. In a time and a place where hard work is valued above all things, the act of watching snow fall in the woods may be viewed as a trivial indulgence.

### **3.7.3.7. Nature and Seclusion**

The first stanza begins by describing the speaker in a wood. Here, the speaker likes the seclusion of being hidden away in the wilderness, alone. He knows that he is on someone's property, but the owner will probably not be looking at the forest.

### **3.7.3.8. Nature and Imagery**

Robert Frost loves nature as he proves by incorporating nature and imagery in the title and throughout the poem. The poem evokes many images



that help the reader to understand the peacefulness of nature. Frost explains the setting so descriptively that the reader feels he is in the woods. These woods are like a "personal paradise" to the speaker. The peacefulness, tranquility, darkness, and silence are all important parts of this "paradise". The second and third stanzas describe the setting, explaining that the speaker and his horse are in the snowy woods with a frozen lake on the darkest evening of the year. The winter is the loneliest time of the year. All the plants and trees in nature are dead or hibernating. Not only is the man alone in the woods without another human being, but also he is alone because the woods are still in the dead of winter. The horse shakes his bells and questions for what reason the man has stopped. Anyone can perceive this image instantly. The last stanza creates a different feeling and picture than the rest of the poem. The man seems comfortable with the world and nature. There is a picture of a man brought back from his sad state to the real world where he has things to do and miles to walk.

#### **3.7.3.9. Seduced by the Beauty of Nature**

The horse protests by shaking his harness bells to tell his companion that they must continue on their way, but the speaker seems to find himself drawn into, and seduced by, the beauty of the woods with trees and ground covered with snow, by a frozen lake, by a soft wind and by the night.

#### **3.7.3.10. Danger in the Woods**

A sense of danger is also established, most notably in the second stanza. . In the last stanza the repeated line could be a signal that the narrator



is slowly falling asleep and it could end with the speaker's death, perhaps as a result of hypothermia from staying in the frozen woods too long.

### **3.7.3.11. What elements has the poet used?**

In terms of text, this poem is simple; it has four stanzas of four lines each. The poem has monosyllabic words, meter, rhyme, tone, assonance, alliteration, contractions, sibilance, sounds, metaphor, symbolism, repetition, personification, connotation, and contraction.

#### **a. Monosyllabic Words**

This poem has 108 words and only 20 have more than one syllable. The rest of words are monosyllabic words.

#### **b. Meter**

The poem is written in iambic tetrameter. Each line has four stressed syllables.

#### **c. Rhyme**

The rhyme scheme and form of the poem is surprisingly complex: aaba bbcb, ccdd, dddd. In the first stanza, the first, second, and fourth lines rhyme: "know," "though," and "snow", while the third line rhymes with the first, second, and fourth lines of the second stanza: "here" with "queer," "near," and "year;" while the third line of the second stanza rhymes with the first, second, and fourth lines of the third stanza: "lake" with "shake" "mistake," and "flake" it is a chain rhyme. And the third line of the third stanza rhymes with all lines of the



last stanza: “sweep” with “deep,” “keep,” “sleep,” and “sleep.” It is written in the Rubaiyat stanza created by Edward Fitzgerald. "Rubaiyat" is a beautiful Persian word for "quatrain," which means a stanza composed of four lines. The Rubaiyat Stanza has a rhyme scheme of AABA.

#### **d. Tone and Assonance**

The tone of the poem changes at the end of the third stanza due to the assonance in lines eleven and twelve. “The only other sound’s the sweep” and “of easy wind and downy flake.”

The heavy tone at the end, created by the repetition of the last two lines expresses the speaker’s reluctance to leave and to return to daily life. But he decides to leave because he is not ready to die yet.

#### **e. Alliteration**

In the eleventh line, the alliteration in “the only other sound’s the sweep” recreates the sound of the wind.

#### **f. Contraction and Sibilance**

The use of contraction to emphasize the sibilance of “sound’s the sweep” recreates the noise of the breeze moving through the snow-laden trees, and shows the peaceful calm of nature.

#### **g. Sounds**

The “s” and “h” sounds are repeated throughout the poem; someone can imagine the sound of the bells or perhaps the “easy wind and downy flake”



through the trees. Or perhaps the “s” sound could signify that the speaker is shivering, for it is the “darkest evening of the year”, and presumably the coldest.

The speaker can only hear the sounds of nature in the woods.

The hard sound in the words “shake”, “mistake” and “flake” serves to break the softer, slower sound that came before.

#### **h. Metaphor**

This is a time where the speaker enjoys the quiet and beauty of nature compared with mortality and his life. "Sleep" is a solitary activity. In these lines, "sleep" could be interpreted as a metaphor for death.

#### **i. Symbolism**

In this poem, the woods do not seem wild, but they are an attraction for the speaker. They are restful, seductive, lovely, dark, and deep, like deep sleep, like abandonment. The woods help the speaker to escape from reality. They are someone's woods, someone's in particular; the owner lives in a village. The village and farmhouse symbolize “society,” “civilization,” “duty,” “sensitivity,” and “responsibility.”

The darkest evening of the year symbolizes a feeling of doom and sadness. This line can also be interpreted as a moment of great depression in a person's life.

The horse could be a symbol of the pressures of the "civilized" world.



The snow is a white blanket that covers everything living. The white symbolizes open and empty spaces; or, the purity, peace, and death that the speaker feels while stopping in the woods. Snow falls in downy flakes, like a blanket to rest under, but it can cause the loss of the path, and death by freezing. The blank environment symbolizes the emptiness that the speaker feels.

The frozen lake is cold and hard just like death. No life can be detected in the lake.

The darkness can symbolize many different things; in this case, darkness symbolizes the atmosphere and the mystery of the woods.

The silence makes the speaker feel secluded from all other aspects of reality and it may also be associated with death.

Sleep symbolizes death as an eternal sleep. It is tempting as it offers the individual rest from worries and obligations. For some, sleep is a short escape from life, while death is the final escape.

#### **j. Repetition**

The last two lines make a strong claim to being the most celebrated case of repetition in English poetry. The basic conflict in the poem is between an attraction toward the woods and emphasis on the importance of the promise the man has made.



### **k. Personification**

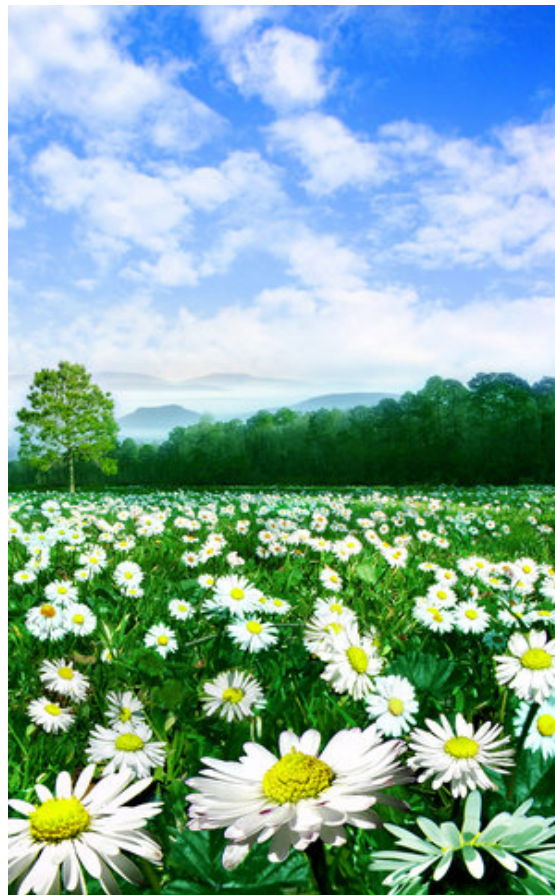
Personification is prominent in the work. The personification of the horse is an important technique because the little horse is an extension of the speaker; it's his conscience. The animal may also symbolize the practical sense of people who can't see the logic in stopping at a place without warmth, refuge, and food, especially on a winter evening.

### **l. Connotation**

The positive connotations of "snowy" are picturesque, clean, and pure which are replaced by words, which are loaded with danger; for example, the lake is "frozen." Then the speaker comments that this is the "darkest evening of the year" indicating that the poem is set just before Christmas; or it may also suggest that the speaker is sad. The poem has gentle connotations; the wind is "easy", and the snow is "downy." These words suggest that the speaker is becoming sleepy, and sees the snow as a comfortable blanket rather than something that could kill him if he spent the night there.



### 3.8. ANALYSIS OF “NOTHING GOLD CAN STAY”



#### ***Nothing Gold Can Stay***

Nature's first green is gold,  
Her hardest hue to hold.  
Her early leaf's a flower;  
But only so an hour.  
Then leaf subsides to leaf,  
So Eden sank to grief,  
So dawn goes down to day  
Nothing gold can stay.





### **3.8.1. INTRODUCTION**

“Nothing Gold Can Stay” is one of Robert Frost's most famous poems. It was written in 1923, and published in the Yale Review in October of that year. Then it was published in the collection New Hampshire in the same year, it was his first book to win a Pulitzer Prize. Only eight lines long, this poem is still considered one of the best poems of Frost. This poem is also featured in the novel, The Outsiders, by S.E. Hinton and its film adaptation.

It is difficult to write a short poem, but Frost was able to evoke in only eight lines the depth of meaning.

“Nothing Gold Can Stay” combines Frost’s attraction for nature with his tendency to make direct statements. The poem speaks to the temporary nature of beauty and innocence. The poem seems to say not only that change is inevitable but also that all change involves degeneration.

### **3.8.2. SUMMARY**

The speaker shows nature in springtime where everything is green, like gold; where the flowers grow beautifully, but they do not last and in a short time flowers die and leaves fall. Eden, as nature, comes to grief, because nothing gold can stay.

### **3.8.3. ANALYSIS**

#### **3.8.3.1. Who is the speaker?**

The speaker is the author.



### **3.8.3.2. Where is the speaker situated?**

The speaker is in the field in springtime.

### **3.8.3.3. What does the poem mean?**

Critics think that Frost's poems are among the most perfect ever written. The things Frost sees are various, but the way he sees them remains the same. Frost's interpretation of the world is consistent in choosing different natural elements to function as symbols; his essential philosophy remains unaltered.

"Nothing Gold Can Stay" begins with a statement: "Nature's first green is gold". It means that green is like childhood, referring to the golden age.

The second line means it is hard to stay young. The third line remains us of an innocent teenager.

The fourth and fifth lines present old age and death.

The sixth line is related to the biblical story of the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve lived in a beautiful garden paradise, but such perfection could not last, just as the beauty of spring is soon gone.

In the seventh line, dawn rises to start a new day full of promise, but not for the speaker; that dawn "goes down", for Frost the dawn is the peak of the day, a few moments of untouched brilliance before the rest of the day heads downhill. Frost thinks the peak of the year seems to be spring. In other words, spring may be brief, but nature will renew itself and come around again.



In the last line, Frost repeats the title; the speaker seems to believe nothing of value will remain. Dawn is more valuable than day, for example, because dawn is brief. In other words the old age come because no one is young forever.

#### **3.8.3.4. Nature**

It is viewed as a nature poem. “Nothing Gold Can Stay” presents the moment in early spring when the vegetable world is first breaking into blossom. In the first four lines, Frost’s imagery literally describes how new leaves emerge as yellow or golden blossoms before they develop into green leaves. This period of blossom, however, is very brief. In the first three lines, the poem describes a world of beauty.

The second half of the poem reveals the consequences of nature’s fall from gold. Frost’s exact terminology is significant; his unusual repetition of the word “leaf” within the same short line. The line suggests that the leaf would be always green, not a golden flower, because the flower lasts only an hour, and the leaf survives for a longer time. As a description of the natural world, this observation appears eminently reasonable. A branch might blossom for only a week, but the resulting leaves last for months.

In the sixth line, the poem offers a mythical or theological simile to describe the leaf’s change from gold to green. Then the poem changes focus again from the mythical to the temporal, coming back to the natural world, but in this place the words point to the daily cycle of night and day rather than to the annual cycle of the seasons.



### **3.8.3.5. Natural, mythical and theological levels**

This poem can be interpreted on natural, mythical, and theological levels. Robert Frost wrote it when he was a middle-aged man who had lost his two children, both his parents, and his closest friend, Edward Thomas. This short work evokes a point in life when the golden illusions of youth have gone. The poem is not autobiographical, and the poem concerns a broader subject. Frost has a universal vision of the human condition, and beauty, and the grief of mortality.

### **3.8.3.6. Sin**

Eden “sank to grief” according to Genesis in the Bible, Adam and Eve, the first humans, were expelled from the garden of Eden because they chose to do what God had told them not to do. The grief suffered by them, and therefore by the entire human race, was a consequence of their action. In the context of the poem, the line, “So Eden sank to grief,” is tied into those lines by a depiction of natural transformation and growth. The poem eliminates the possibility that they might have stayed in Eden and removes the implication that Adam and Eve were ultimately responsible for their sin when they chose to disobey God’s law. At first glance, Frost’s version seems to be gentle to humans, portraying them as no more prone to sin than plants or the rising sun.

### **3.8.3.7. What elements has the poet used?**

"Nothing Gold Can Stay" becomes a memorable poem for its deceiving simplicity and rich poetic composition. The poem has one short stanza of eight



lines. It has meter, rhyme, internal rhyme, tone, alliteration, imagery, symbolism, personification, connotation, simile, and paradox.

#### **a. A short poem**

Short poems are difficult to write. Every line, every image, must meaningfully contribute to the whole. The balance must be perfect. "Nothing Gold Can Stay" is very short poem. Only eight lines long, it consists of just forty words. The diction is extremely simple. No word is longer than two syllables. Most are monosyllabic. The meter is unusual for Frost; it is iambic trimeter.

#### **b. Meter**

This meter is unusual for Frost, it is iambic trimeter. Such metrical patterns can make poetry sound more musical. When a line varies from this pattern, as the final line does, the variation will emphasize that line.

#### **c. Rhyme**

It has four sets of rhyming couplets which may represent the four seasons and it represents one calendar year. Its rhyme scheme is aabbccdd. This means that in line one, "gold" rhymes with line two, "hold;" line three with line four, and so on.

#### **d. Tone**

The tone of the poem is negative and depressing. The fifth, sixth and seventh lines build upon this negative tone. The speaker has used three



different verbs in these lines which all mean the same thing – “subsides”, “sank” and “goes down” all combine to produce an idea of inevitable decline.

#### **e. Alliteration**

The use of alliteration in the second line of the poem where four of the five words begin with the letter “h” produces a harsh sound when read aloud, perhaps suggesting the ineffectiveness of the task of attempting to hold onto the beauty of spring, and the lexical choice “only” emphasises the brevity of the first delicate growth.

The alliteration of the “g” sound in “green” and “gold” link these two words through sound. Not only does the poem assert that the first green is gold in meaning, but it does so also in sound by echoing the sound of green with gold. Also, the alliteration of the “d” sound in “dawn,” “down,” and “day” makes these words stand out in the reader's ear. The emphasis in sound and in meaning is that the light of dawn goes down or is lost to the harsh light of day.

#### **f. Imagery**

Imagery is the representation of sensory experience through language.

The visual image of a tiny gold flower and the first signs of a leaf is an advertisement of spring. Its beauty lasts a short time. The image of dawn becoming day evokes the sight of early morning rays sifting through pink tinted clouds becoming harsher rays overhead. The loss of delicate light is lamented in the entrance to daytime. Both images give concrete illustrations of the ephemeral nature of the world's beauty.



### **g. Symbolism**

“Nothing Gold Can Stay” describes identical moments in three temporal cycles: the daily, the yearly, and the mythical. In each case the poem describes the moment. Gold becomes a symbol, something of great value and most radiant beauty. Yet, nature cannot keep this gold. Spring, dawn, and Eden are each one a sort of Golden Age, an impermanent paradise. Day is inevitably followed by night. Summer is succeeded by fall and winter. The green leaf eventually turns brown and decays. The loss of Eden gave Adam and Eve mortality. Human youth is followed by maturity, old age, and death. The golden moment is the more precious because it is transitory. By focusing on a single moment, Frost evokes an entire day, year, lifetime, and human history.

### **h. Personification**

In the first line, Frost introduces nature as his subject, nearly personifying nature with the pronoun “her.”

### **i. Connotation**

The season here is spring: “first green” with its connotations of youth and freshness. The “gold” could have a literal meaning, referring to a type of tree such as the Aureum, which has gold coloured leaves in spring, but it could also connote the precious nature of spring’s first blooms.

In the fifth line, the leaf returns to be a leaf rather than a flower, but the connotation of “subsides” is that the leaf doesn’t simply change, but becomes less than it once was. A leaf is something less than a flower. This idea is



repeated in the sixth line, where “Eden sank.” The word “sank” again indicates that the place declines. “Eden” is an allusion to the Garden of Eden mentioned in the Bible, a paradise where Adam and Eve could live without work or pain. But that situation changed quickly, and Eden feels “grief.” In the seventh line, dawn is similar to the “first green” of the first line indicating newness and hope. Yet dawn doesn’t remain but becomes day. Frost has chosen a verb with negative connotations, “goes down,” to describe this change.

### **j. Paradox**

In the first line, “First green” indicates innovation, the beginning of spring. Frost creates a paradox, an internal contradiction, however, because he claims that “green is gold.” Gold, of course, can be simply a color or the reflection of the sun on new growth. In the third and fourth line, again, Frost creates a paradox; the first leaf is really a flower, although that flower has a short life.





### 3.9. ANALISIS OF "THE SOUND OF THE TREES"



#### ***The Sound of Trees***

I wonder about the trees.  
Why do we wish to bear  
Forever the noise of these  
More than another noise  
So close to our dwelling place?  
We suffer them by the day  
Till we lose all measure of pace,  
And fixity in our joys,  
And acquire a listening air.  
They are that that talks of going  
But never gets away;  
And that talks no less for knowing,  
As it grows wiser and older,  
That now it means to stay.  
My feet tug at the floor  
And my head sways to my shoulder  
Sometimes when I watch trees sway,  
From the window or the door  
I shall set forth for somewhere,  
I shall make the reckless choice  
Some day when they are in voice  
And tossing so as to scare  
The white clouds over them on.  
I shall have less to say,  
But I shall be gone.



### **3.9.1. INTRODUCTION**

“The Sound of the Trees” was published in The Mountain Interval collection in 1916. Later, Frost made several alterations in the sequencing of the collection and released the new edition in 1920.

“The Sound of the Trees” is a narrative in blank verse. In this poem Frost captured moments which were very important in his life in a field surrounded by trees. There is a close connection between the trees and the speaker. Frost loves the nature, but he shows in this poem that the sounds of the trees disturb him in that moment. The speaker wants to get away from this reality but he does not know when. On the other hand, the trees want to go away, too, but they can not because of their roots.

### **3.9.2. SUMMARY**

The speaker is talking about trees and the way that people accept the noise of trees in their lives. Trees make a constant noise as if they want to get away, but they are always in the same place. They are forced to remain there because of their deep roots. Also, people know that trees will stay around them all the time, so they are resigned to live with the noise; the speaker begins to compare his situation with that of the trees and he considers the possibility of going away. But he does not like the fact that trees talk loudly but take no action. The narrator affirms that he will someday have less to say and never come back.



### **3.9.3. ANALYSIS**

#### **3.9.3.1. Who is the speaker?**

The speaker is the author, Robert Frost.

#### **3.9.3.2. Where is the speaker situated?**

The speaker is in his home surrounded by trees.

#### **3.9.3.3. What does the poem mean?**

The narrator recognizes the tragedy of the trees. A tree becomes wise by staying in one place its whole life and observing action around it. Although the trees learn much and have much to talk about, they are trapped by their roots. The narrator resolves to disregard wisdom and go bravely through his own choice to seek knowledge and life experiences, thus leaving the conventional life exemplified by the trees which surround his home.

Lines twelve and thirteen refer to the tree: "that talks no less for knowing;" "as it grows wiser and older;" As the trees grow "wiser" they must learn that they are rooted to the spot and thus cannot go anywhere according to the natural order of things; but they keep making noise despite this knowledge, although, now, this noise signifies that they "mean to stay". Perhaps the speaker refers to his own end his death, when he will no longer be able to talk.

In the seventeenth line, the movement of the narrator's head swaying seems to confirm the link between Frost and the trees, since the trees also "sway".



In lines nineteen and twenty, the trees seem to have made the man evaluate his own life; he writes: "I shall set forth for somewhere;" "I shall make the reckless choice." If you put a stress on the "I" it sounds like he is trying to make himself out as more active than the trees.

In line twenty-two, the storm at the end of the poem seems more decisive than the rest of the poem. The storm causes the trees to make a greater noise as if they are "tossing." Here the poem takes on a more assured tone, although it speaks of a future time, where the "somewhere" and the "reckless choice" will have been decided.

In twenty-four, "I shall have less to say;" "But I shall be gone;" Frost seems to say that he won't stop wondering about death until he is dead.

#### **3.9.3.4. Imagination and Duty**

The noise of the trees is particularly dangerous because it affects people around them and gives people the same restless desire to go away. As the speaker listens to the noise of the trees, he imitates their movement, swaying and pulling on his "roots," his feet on the ground. However, the speaker does not have any real roots to force him to stay. He only has the knowledge of his duty and responsibility to his community, and this knowledge is hardly sufficient to calm his desire to go.

This conflict between imagination and duty is one that Frost brings to us frequently in his poems. In the rural communities of New England, duty was a primary factor in every action; In "The Sound of the Trees," however, this duty is obscured by the interminable noise and influence of the trees.



The speaker does not choose his imagination over his duty to his community, although he would wish to do so by planning to go away in the future. The speaker promises that his departure would only take place in a way that would not influence other people to make the same selfish choice.

### **3.9.3.5. Individualism**

In this poem, the speaker is the one who wants to go away, leaving his home and his community.

### **3.9.3.6. Nature**

Nature plays a main role in “The Sound of the Trees.” This poem shows a rural landscape full of trees, where the wind blows very strong and the trees produce a whispering noise. These trees surround a dwelling place where the speaker lives. Every day, the speaker can see the trees, and observe nature around him through his window. The speaker likes trees but he does not like the sound of the trees because it produces in him a feeling of anger, despair and impotence.

### **3.9.3.7. What elements has the poet used?**

“The Sound of the Trees” is not structured with stanzas. It has twenty-five lines. The poem has meter, rhyme, alliteration, consonance, assonance, imagery, metaphor, symbolism, personification, irony and repetition.



### **a. Meter**

Frost almost never wrote one meter throughout a given poem. This is what makes Frost's poetry memorable. The meter of this poem is iambic tetrameter predominantly, but it also has anapestic and trochaic variations.

### **b. Rhyme**

This poem has end rhyme; the last word of each line later has the repetition of an accented vowel sound such as in "trees," and "these;" "bear," and "air;" "noise," and "joys;" "place," and "pace;" "day," "away," "stay," "sway," and "say;" "going," and "knowing;" "older," "shoulder," and "somewhere;" "floor," and "door;" "on," and "gone". The rhyme scheme is ABACDEDCBFEFGEHGEHGCCIJEJ.

### **c. Alliteration**

Alliteration exists in the second line with the repetition of the "w" sound "Why do we wish..." In the tenth line in the phrase "They are that that..." with the repetition of "th" sound. In the nineteenth line with the repetition of "f" with the phrase "...forth for..." Finally, alliteration is used in the twentieth line with the repetition of the "s" sound.

### **d. Consonance**

This poem has consonance in the following lines: "talks no less," "that now it," and "feet tug at."



### **e. Assonance**

Assonance is found in the following phrases: "that that" and "or... door."

### **f. Imagery**

This poem describes the everyday event of the wind blowing through the trees. The wind forces the trees to sway from side to side and moves their leaves to create the "sound of the trees."

### **g. Metaphor**

Frost uses the naturalistic imagery that is so common in many of his poems by employing a metaphor: "My feet tug at the floor;" "And my head sways to my shoulder;" thus the speaker imitates a tree's movement. Which could implies his need for happiness. Perhaps he needs a change, and the roots which 'tug at the floor' may represent the limitations and barriers to that end, caused by family, circumstances, etc.

"So close to our dwelling place," could have a double meaning. The noise of the trees seems to be too close to his home.

### **h. Symbolism**

The speaker thinks about trees as symbols. The trees represent wise people and old age. They wonder about people, but the wind moves them and they produce sounds constantly the speaker does not like. The speaker listens to these noises, and they cause him suffering and despair. For this reason, he wants to go away.



Also, the speaker compares himself with trees as if they were people. He imitates their movement of swaying. Here trees symbolize human beings.

### **i. Personification**

In *The Sound of the Trees*, Frost talks about a usual occurrence and uses the method of personification to transform it into a metaphysical discussion of why the trees talk so loudly about their plans to go away, but they never resolve to do actually go. Frost clarifies the fact that the wind is not moving the trees, but rather the trees are moving of their own will. They sway toward freedom and then return as they speak of their desire to the other trees.

Because of their root trees are unable to fulfill their desire to go away; they are bound to the earth even as their branches reach toward heaven. The speaker is angry that they continue their discussion; their conversation makes an insignificant noise to the people who hear it.

### **j. Simile**

This poem has the following simile: "And tossing so as to scare." It means that trees are moving very rapidly and they produce a loud noise which scares people.

### **k. Irony**

He feels the great irony in this poem is that despite the fact that the author believes that trees are not human beings they always wish to go away, but they cannot, because of their roots. On the other hand, the speaker can go away, but he waits for the time to go or die.





## **I. Repetition**

There is a repetition in the tenth line: "They are *that that* talks of going," giving extra emphasis to what the speaker thinks about trees, and the sound that they produce which disturbs him.



### 3.10. ANALISIS OF "INTO MY OWN"



#### *Into My Own*

One of my wishes is that those dark trees,  
So old and firm they scarcely show the breeze,  
Were not, as 'twere, the merest mask of gloom,  
But stretched away unto the edge of doom.  
I should not be withheld but that some day  
Into their vastness I should steal away,  
Fearless of ever finding open land,  
Or highway where the slow wheel pours the sand.  
I do not see why I should e'er turn back,  
Or those should not set forth upon my track  
To overtake me, who should miss me here  
And long to know if still I held them dear.  
They would not find me changed from him they knew--  
Only more sure of all I thought was true.



### **3.10.1. INTRODUCTION**

“*Into My Own*” is one of Robert Frost’s earliest poems. It appeared in The New England Magazine in May 1909, and became public domain; then it was published in his first collection, A Boy’s Will, in 1913. “*Into My Own*” has all the features for which Frost became famous.

Frost shows the excellence in poetic technique that marks his long career. Each line of this poem is masterful, establishing a pattern of ambiguity in his works. Due to specific word choices made, Frost leaves more questions unanswered than answered.

Robert Frost had mastered many aspects of poetic technique by the time he began writing poetry. Choosing to write in form, he declined to join the imagist and modernist movements. He went back in time and found a way to use formal poetry to his advantage, almost always with modern language. Robert Frost used special technique in form to intensify meaning; this poem is highly metaphorical and filled with images.

Robert Frost was able to communicate a great deal through his poetry, and in this poem, the meaning is a simple and deep experience based on beliefs. Robert Frost says the poem is about a boy leaving home. All those who love this boy are worried about his departure. The anxiety is most pronounced in the line “And long to know if still I held them dear.” The boy questions when he will return home although he loves his family and friends. Yet Frost appropriately concludes that this boy's beliefs will not change. It leads to the conclusion that experiences are based on beliefs.



### **3.10.2. SUMMARY**

The poem tells the story of someone who has a wish to escape present circumstances. There are images of some large trees, so large and dark that the breeze does not move them. The trees are like a shadow; the speaker wishes they were more than a shadow, yet he wants to vanish into their immensity. In other words, the speaker wants to go into darkness to find his fate.

The speaker will not care if he finds open land or a highway within the trees. He will never turn back. He speaks of those he leaves behind as missing him, but not of him missing them. He does not believe that if anybody followed him they would find him unchanged. He would be the same person.

### **3.10.3. ANALYSIS**

#### **3.10.3.1. Who is the speaker?**

The speaker is the author.

#### **3.10.3.2. Where is the speaker situated?**

The speaker is in a field.

#### **3.10.3.3. What does the poem mean?**

In the first stanza, the narrator's meditation is about life beyond where he is at that moment, and how he wants to experience something more than he has experienced.



The second stanza tells how the narrator might achieve his aims. The narrator is fearless of what he may find when he escapes into the dark forest of the world.

The third stanza talks mainly about those loved ones he will leave behind, and how they will react.

The final couplet provides a short summary and tells one last piece of information about the narrator.

#### **3.10.3.4. Rural scenes**

The image of the trees is definitely rural. They are not at the edge of the village green, but rather at the edge of town, or at the edge of the farm.

#### **3.10.3.5. What elements has the poet used?**

At this early stage of his career, Frost mastered numerous poetic devices. Among them are the following: stanzaic structure, meter, rhyme, consonance, alliteration, imagery, metaphor, symbolism, contradiction, and word choices that develop character.

The combination of formal poetic elements, rhyme, meter, and stanzaic pattern, with the meaning the poet wanted to express, is particularly well done by Frost. Nothing is unnatural save what the poet wanted to give and it gives the reader better understanding.



### **a. Stanzaic Structure**

In this poem, Frost chose a sonnet form: fourteen lines of iambic pentameter, divided into four quatrains and a closing couplet. Each quatrain covers a different part of the story.

### **b. Meter**

Frost's meter is impeccable. The poem is a sonnet, with 14 lines of iambic pentameter. The metrical pattern is divided into three quatrains and a closing couplet. It is not so regular and becomes sing-songy like a children's poem. The poem begins with a line in irregular meter:

ONE of/ my WISH/ es is/ that THOSE/ DARK TREES/

Trochee/iamb/iamb/iamb/spondee

In the fifth line, the irregular meter also happens, where "some day" receives extra emphasis due to the irregular meter. In the seventh line the word "fearless" is irregular metrically.

### **c. Rhyme**

The rhymes in *Into My Own* are natural. While they are distinct, the reader believes the words were chosen for meaning, not for their sound. There are seven rhyming couplets.



#### **d. Consonance and Alliteration**

There is consonance in the poem, such as “so... scarcely show” and “merest mask,” which combines with alliteration, such as the frequent “s” sounds, to give the poem a pleasing sound to the ear.

#### **e. Imagery**

The image of the trees is progressively built, line by line. The reader sees a mental image of large trees; first a thin line, then a forest, then a forest with no internal spaces.

Also, Frost uses two images to tell the story: the trees to represent the unknown, and the highway and wheel to represent another's intrusion into the unknown. Words used for these images go far to add to the reader's understanding and enjoyment.

The poem begins with an image that all readers should be able to understand: “...those dark trees,/ so old and firm they scarcely show the breeze.” It can be a row of trees at the edge of a village in a New England town. These are tall elms, or maples, or oaks, maybe even pine trees.

Frost regularly uses trees and forests in his poems. Frequently they are called “dark”. Here, although the trees are not in a large forest, they are still described as dark, thus making them seem like a thought.

“Merest mask;” the trees are described as a mask. Frost shows the image through a metaphor.



“Pours the sand;” the image is similar to that of an agricultural implement turning the soil, except this is sand and is described as a highway. This ambiguity keeps the reader guessing and reinterpreting.

#### **f. Metaphor**

The inexact metaphor allows each reader to interpret the poem in his or her own way.

Frost says the trees are a simple mask of the darkness, but they are not symbolic of doom. Masks hide the true character of what is behind the mask. The trees as metaphor represent a dual image of what they are and are not. They could represent death, or simply the unknown. The speaker would steal away into their immensity. The image mixes with metaphor, alone in the immensity; it is not open land or a highway. The highway is presented as a negative thing, something the speaker does not care to happen upon in his vast forest.

#### **g. Symbolism**

Some large trees, so large and dark that not even the breeze can move them, symbolize the narrator's desire for something different in life.

#### **h. Contradiction**

The trees are a mask of doom, something that is thin. The trees are vast, without highway or open land.





### **i. Word Choices That Develop Character**

The narrator is the main character in this confessional poem. Some others, “those who miss me here,” are the only other characters. Frost begins from the first word to tell us something about the narrator, but waits until the last phrase to complete the characterization.

“One of my wishes...” implies that the speaker has more than one wish. This person has looked at life and decided what to expect from it.

The Word, “Doom,” describes what we would not expect from a person, especially a young man. It shows something dark about the narrator.

“Withheld...steal away;” Nothing will keep the narrator from going away into his dark trees or wherever he decides to go.

“Fearless;” the speaker is fearless of an unknown world.

“Overtake;” The word gives a sense of speed for the followers.

“Only more sure...thought;” at the end of the poem, the narrator expresses the fact that he is sure of certain things that are true. While he is brave enough to steal away into the vast unknown, he is not totally sure of what he will find there.



## CHAPTER IV

### 4. COMPARISON OF ROBERT FROST AND EMILY DICKINSON WITH RESPECT TO NATURE AND PHILOSOPHY



#### 4.1. INTRODUCTION

Emily Dickinson is one of America's greatest poets; she is also well known for her unusual simple life of self imposed social seclusion. She wrote poetry of great power concerning the nature of immortality and death. Her unique lifestyle created an aura about her which was often romantic and a source of interest and speculation. However, Emily Dickinson is primarily remembered for her special poetry.

#### 4.2. BIOGRAPHY OF EMILY DICKINSON

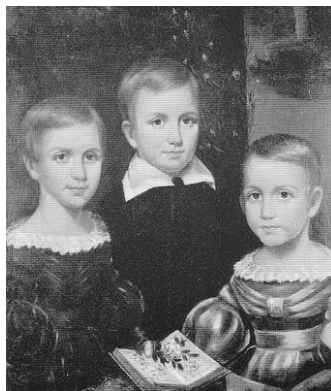
Emily Dickinson was born on December 10, 1830, in the town of Amherst, Massachusetts. Her family was a pillar of the local community. Her



father helped found Amherst College, which Emily later attended between 1840 and 1846.



When Emily was a child she revealed a sharp intelligence as an excellent student. She created many original writings of rhyming stories, while delighting her classmates. Emily's father was strict. In response, Emily was highly respectful of her father and other male figures of authority. She was independently minded, and quite willing to refuse certain orthodox issues. However, her studies were often interrupted by illness; a persistent cough developed; her father decided to remove her from college and bring her back home.



Emily, Austin and Vinnie



*Emily Dickinson*

Emily Dickinson's seclusion from society gives an impression of a life of austerity and simplicity. Emily dressed all in white dresses and was a romantic figure. Besides being a poet, Emily was a musician and singer. She also had a sharp eye for beautiful art; her visual sense and her appreciation of bright colors are evident in many of her poems. Emily was also well-read.

Her brother's friend, Benjamin Newton, introduced the poetry of Emerson to Emily. Newton was one of the first persons to recognize the poetic capacities of Emily, and encouraged her to write poetry. The works of other poets were important for Emily, especially those with spiritual ideas about strict Calvinism. Emily had innovative views and unorthodox beliefs, but she often doubted her own convictions; Emerson and other poets shaped her creative talent to a great extent.

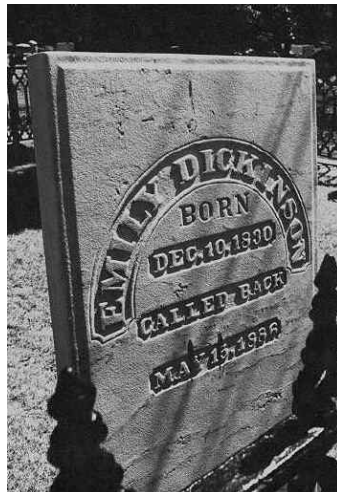
Emily had a good sense of humor, but she was often ill at ease in other people's company. She often thought about herself as a child, even as a



tomboy, and she referred to herself this way in many of her poems. She took care of her ill mother; however, Emily did not work outside her home; she lived on family funds.

For a time, her father served in the House of Representatives, and Emily visited Washington where she met the charismatic preacher, the Reverend Charles Wadsworth, with whom she had apparent differences in theological beliefs but whom she sought for spiritual guidance.

Emily Dickinson died at the age of 55 from Bright's disease, caused by kidney degeneration. Her doctor suggested that the accumulation of stress throughout her life had contributed to her premature death. She never married and died in the house where she was born on May 15, 1886.



After her death, her sister Vinnie, had been instructed to burn her letters containing 1,700 poems. Thankfully Vinnie ignored her request to burn old manuscripts. Vinnie gave the poems to a family friend, Mabel Todd, after two



years. Mabel Todd typed up 200 of the letters and became enthusiastic about the beauty and power of the poems. With the help and encouragement of Terrence Higginson, Emily's close friend, the first edition of poems was published in 1893. Her poems soon received extraordinary praise from leading magazines and newspapers. The New York Times claimed Emily Dickinson would soon be known amongst the immortals of English poets.

#### **4.3. RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE ON THE POETRY OF EMILY DICKINSON**

During Emily's life, religion was a crucial issue and it was very important to Emily. The Calvinist religion was prominent in New England. Calvinist was based on the belief that men are inherently sinful and most humans are doomed to hell. Only a small number of believers would be saved, only those who proclaimed faith in Jesus Christ as the true savior.

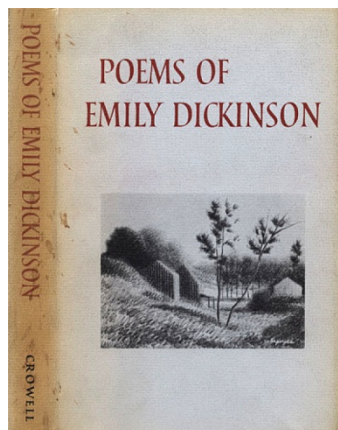
Emily was pressured at school and at college to join the Calvinists; she never did. Emily and her father thought in different ways about religion; later, her father accepted Emily's opinions, but Emily was relatively isolated in her beliefs. She never accepted the doctrine of "original sin." Emily did not have an established religion, but her sentiments are in her poetry which reveals a profound religious temperament. For Emily religious experience was not a simple intellectual statement of belief; it could be more accurately reflected in the beauty of nature. Although her poetry expresses intense inner experiences, her separation from an established religion is a factor in her apparent uncertainty shown through and changes in her sentiments, evident in many of her poems.



#### **4.4. EMILY DICKINSON'S SECLUSION**

Emily Dickinson suffered a polar disorder. It caused her discomfort and shyness in social situations and reduced her social contacts. When she was in her twenties, she was almost a complete recluse, she stayed most of the time in the family house where he met rarely meeting others. Emily grew older and never married. Her sister explained that unmarried state was not the result of a sudden decision, but rather the end of a gradual process that happened over a period of time. However, Emily still maintained contact with a variety of thought-provoking people through letters. Her poetry shows that her seclusion did not close her mind, and in many ways her writing allowed the flow through her mind of new avenues of thought and inner experiences.

#### **4.5. POETRY**



Emily's seclusion and beliefs, made her lonely life lonely and influenced the way she wrote. Within short, compact phrases she expressed far-reaching ideas; between paradox and suspense her poetry has an undeniable capacity to move, provoke and examine the themes of nature and death.



Although Emily Dickinson belonged to a political family she did not pay much attention to politics. At the start of the American Civil War she commented a little on the event; however, as the war years advanced, Emily and her family, were particularly affected when friends of the family were killed in the battles. Death of close friends was a significant feature of Emily's life. It aroused her interest in fascination with and, perhaps fear of death; The theme of death is common in her poetry. The Civil War years were also the most productive for Emily in terms of quantity of poems.

Emily wrote over 1,700 poems. Also, Emily was a prolific letter writer; through her letters she maintained contact with others. Her letters show her love for language, but they do not have the style that her poetry. She mostly expressed her personal sentiments of gratitude and love towards others. Her letters to her sister-in-law, Sue, have been interpreted as love letters, leading to speculation over her sexual bias.

Many of her poems refer to an invisible lover. Biographers have inevitably speculated about who that person was. There is strong evidence toward the end of her life that she had some kind of emotional relationship with Judge Otis Lord. But, on the other hand, the object of her devotion may have been no person in particular, but rather some unknown aspect of the divine.

Her poetry reveals that she experienced moments of great joy through nature and life. She had many doubts but she was able to express them through provoking ideas from a powerful command of language.





Emily Dickinson uses arbitrary capitalization and strange punctuation with exclamation points and dashes. Dickinson often creates metaphors and comparisons. Her poems have no titles and Dickinson often finished the stanzas or the poems with a dash —.

The people with whom Emily had contact influenced and had a great impact on her thoughts and poetry. The first volume of her work was published posthumously in 1890 and the last in 1955. She died in Amherst in 1886. Emily Dickinson's best poem could be considered, "Because I could not stop for Death." It is a remarkable masterpiece that exercises thought concerning the known and the unknown.

#### **4.6. COMPARING ROBERT FROST AND EMILY DICKINSON AS POETS**



Robert Frost and Emily Dickinson are two American Poets. Both came from prestigious families and attended schools of higher learning. Frost and Dickinson admired and studied many famous poets. Although Dickinson lived two generations before Frost, their poetry is similar in some ways. Both poets



wrote about the power of nature, death and loneliness. However, Dickinson and Frost are not similar in all poetic aspects. In fact, they differ greatly in tone.

Frost's work is principally associated with life and love of the landscape of New England. Frost was a poet of traditional verse forms. His writing is based on experiences with people, as opposed to comments about people. Frost wrote about good fences, obviously because he had seen them in action metaphorically and literally. On the other hand, Dickinson's poetry speaks of the internal, rather than the external, of the nature of the human condition, and insights. Her work was influenced by the Metaphysical poets of seventeenth-century England, as well as by her Puritanical education.

During Frost's life he was a well-known and respected celebrity; on the other hand, although Dickinson was extremely prolific as a poet and regularly enclosed poems in letters to friends, she was not publicly recognized during her lifetime.

Despite the differences and the similarities, the two poets are now considered to be two of the most important of the American poetic voice.

Robert Frost had a productive life. He lived eighty-nine years. Frost married Elinor Miriam White and had six children. His life was full of tragedies; his wife, and four of his children, suffered from depression and died at early ages. He worked to support his family. He moved to England in 1912 but returned to the US where he bought a farm and began his career as a writer, lecturer, and teacher. By the nineteen-twenties, he was the most celebrated poet in America, his fame and honors increased. Frost won four Pulitzer Prizes.



Frost died on January 29, 1963, in Boston. Frost's most famous poem, "The Road Not Taken," clearly demonstrates Frost's belief that it is the road that one chooses that makes him the man who he is.

#### **4.7. NATURE**

Emily Dickinson and Robert Frost both talk about the power of nature in their poetry.

#### **4.8. DEATH**

Robert Frost and Emily Dickinson wrote constantly about the theme of death and loneliness but their writing styles were quite different.



**4.9. A COMPARISON OF “NATURE IS WHAT WE SEE” BY EMILY DICKINSON, WITH “BIRCHES,” BY ROBERT FROST**



"Nature" is what we see—  
The Hill—the Afternoon—  
Squirrel—Eclipse—the Bumble bee—  
Nay—Nature is Heaven—  
Nature is what we hear—  
The Bobolink—the Sea—  
Thunder—the Cricket—  
Nay—Nature is Harmony—  
Nature is what we know—  
Yet have no art to say—  
So impotent Our Wisdom is  
To her Simplicity.



### ***Birches***

When I see birches bend to left and right  
Across the lines of straighter darker trees,  
I like to think some boy's been swinging them.  
But swinging doesn't bend them down to stay.  
Ice-storms do that. Often you must have seen them  
Loaded with ice a sunny winter morning  
After a rain. They click upon themselves  
As the breeze rises, and turn many-colored  
As the stir cracks and crazes their enamel.  
Soon the sun's warmth makes them shed crystal shells  
Shattering and avalanching on the snow-crust--  
Such heaps of broken glass to sweep away



You'd think the inner dome of heaven had fallen.  
They are dragged to the withered bracken by the load,  
And they seem not to break; though once they are bowed  
So low for long, they never right themselves:  
You may see their trunks arching in the woods  
Years afterwards, trailing their leaves on the ground  
Like girls on hands and knees that throw their hair  
Before them over their heads to dry in the sun.  
But I was going to say when Truth broke in  
With all her matter-of-fact about the ice-storm  
(Now am I free to be poetical?)  
I should prefer to have some boy bend them  
As he went out and in to fetch the cows--  
Some boy too far from town to learn baseball,  
Whose only play was what he found himself,  
Summer or winter, and could play alone.  
One by one he subdued his father's trees  
By riding them down over and over again  
Until he took the stiffness out of them,  
And not one but hung limp, not one was left  
For him to conquer. He learned all there was  
To learn about not launching out too soon  
And so not carrying the tree away  
Clear to the ground. He always kept his poise  
To the top branches, climbing carefully



With the same pains you use to fill a cup  
Up to the brim, and even above the brim.  
Then he flung outward, feet first, with a swish,  
Kicking his way down through the air to the ground.  
So was I once myself a swinger of birches.  
And so I dream of going back to be.  
It's when I'm weary of considerations,  
And life is too much like a pathless wood  
Where your face burns and tickles with the cobwebs  
Broken across it, and one eye is weeping  
From a twig's having lashed across it open.  
I'd like to get away from earth awhile  
And then come back to it and begin over.  
May no fate willfully misunderstand me  
And half grant what I wish and snatch me away  
Not to return. Earth's the right place for love:  
I don't know where it's likely to go better.  
I'd like to go by climbing a birch tree,  
And climb black branches up a snow-white trunk  
Toward heaven, till the tree could bear no more,  
But dipped its top and set me down again.  
That would be good both going and coming back.  
One could do worse than be a swinger of birches.



#### **4.9.1. INTRODUCTION**

Emily Dickinson probably wrote “*Nature is what we see*” in 1863. “*Nature is what we see*” is a short poem. This poem talks about nature. The poem is easy to understand, and it presents Dickinson’s extraordinary powers of observation, description and definition.

Robert Frost published “Birches” in 1915 in the collection North of Boston, when World War I broke out. The poem has three sections: a naturalistic description, a fantastic explanation, and a philosophical exploration. Frost was inspired by his childhood experience of swinging on birches, which was a popular game for children in rural areas of New England in that time.

#### **4.9.2. SUMMARY**

Emily Dickinson talks about nature as captured through human senses like sight and hearing. She mentions the hill, the afternoon, the squirrel, the eclipse, the bumble bee, the bobolink, the sea, the thunder and the cricket. In addition, Dickinson says nature is divine, it is heaven, harmony and simplicity. Dickinson considers that people are wise but not enough to understand the simplicity of nature.

In Frost’s poem, the speaker looks at the birch trees in the forest and he imagines that the bends in their branches are the result of a boy “swinging” on them. But he realizes that the bends are caused by ice storms; the weight of the ice on the branches forces them to bend toward the ground; still, he prefers to believe that a boy is swinging on the branches, climbing up the tree trunks and swinging from side to side, from earth up to heaven. The narrator remembers





when he used to swing on the birches and wishes to return to those happy days of childhood.

#### **4.9.3. ANALYSIS**

*"Nature is what we see"* is divided into two parts. The first part has a naturalistic description and the second part has a philosophical explanation.

*"Nature is what we see"* begins with a definition in the first line. There follows a naturalistic description from the second line to the third line; then follows a metaphorical change of the original idea in the fourth line with the words, "Nay- Nature is Heaven." Dickinson uses a minimum amount of words to describe a deeper truth through a very abstract image. The fifth line begins with another definition; "Nature is what we hear;" It is followed by a naturalistic description from the sixth line to the seventh line, which is then followed by a metaphorical change of the original idea in the eighth line, "Nay- Nature is Harmony-."

In the second part there is a philosophical explanation. It goes from the ninth line to the twelfth line. Dickinson believed that nature was also a source of guidance for human beings. Although people think that they are very wise and they do not need nature; human life is impossible without union with nature.

On the other hand, *"Birches"* is divided into three sections: from the first line to the twentieth there is a naturalistic description; from line twenty-one to line forty there is a fantastic explanation of why the birches are bowed. Finally,



the poem concludes with a philosophical exploration of the existence of a person in the world from line forty-one to the line fifty-nine.

The first part of the poem graphically describes the flexible trees and how they may be bent temporarily by some boys, or permanently by ice storms. The poet knows what ice storms do to birches, but he prefers to think the trees were bent by "some boy" and that this boy was himself. Frost was going back to his childhood and swinging on birches in his mind, thus increasing the symbolic meaning of the poem.

In the second part, the act of swinging on birches as a boy represents a way to escape from the adult world only for a moment. The boy is climbing toward heaven, but he also wants to return to the earth. Imagination is wonderful, but the speaker still cannot avoid returning to "Truth" and his responsibilities on the ground; the escape is only temporary. Frost uses his imagination to transcend the limits of the real world.

In the third part, the poet's desire is to begin his life again. Here, there is an association between birches and love. Frost emphasizes the perfect rejuvenating power of love, represented by the birches. The poem ends with an extraordinary example of meiosis: "One could do worse than be a swinger of birches." This line exalts the life of the one who is a swinger on branches of birches.

#### **4.9.4. NATURE**

The main characteristic of the Romanticism that Emily Dickinson shows in her writing is the emphasis on the importance of Nature. Nature was



something that gave Dickinson's inspiration, calmness and peace. Emily expresses that people do not know about nature as they should, although nature knows everything about them.

In comparison, Frost's poem "Birches" also describes the power of nature. Nature represents the simpler things in life. Frost's poem is recalling the childhood of the speaker Frost remembers that. Nature had such power over him as a child that he dreamt of going back to relive the experience of being one with nature while swinging on the tree branches.

#### **4.9.5. STRUCTURE**

The poems of Emily Dickinson are characterized by having no titles. "Nature is what we see" is the first line of the poem. "Nature is what we see" is a short poem of twelve lines written in prose. It has meter, dashes, tone, symbolism, imagery, metaphor, personification, punctuation, capitalization, and the use of the personal pronoun we.

Likewise, "Birches" is a poem of fifty-nine lines written in prose. It has meter, tone, symbolism, metaphor, and imagery.

"Nature is what we see" is not written in traditional iambic pentameter. The line lengths and line breaks vary throughout the poem. The poem has no rhyme. Nowadays, this poem has made into a song. On the other hand, "Birches" is blank verse, or unrhymed iambic pentameter that is very common in English. There is no rhyme scheme.



“Nature is what we see” has a lot of dashes, which are common in Dickinson’s poems giving them an original tone. These marks are called long rhythmic dashes and they are designed to interrupt the meter and to indicate short pauses and subtle emphasis, like biblical psalms and proverbs. Dickinson places the dashes after unexpected words or phrases as a musical device. On the other hand, in “Birches” the tone is simple and conversational.

“Nature is what we see” has metaphors. “Nature is Heaven” means that nature and heaven are the same and that Nature is something divine, pure and intangible. “Nature is Harmony” refers to the fact that nature and harmony are the same; these beautiful, calm, and strong words compound a melody. Frost uses the figure of speech of the simile when he compares the branches of trees, that have been permanently bowed by ice, to the hair of girls who have thrown their hair before them over their heads to dry in the sand.

“Nature is what we” is full of visual and auditory images of nature such as squirrels, bumble bees, bobolinks, hills, eclipses, the sea, the heavens, and thunder. Nature represents joy and beauty. Nature is a regenerative or renewing force in the natural life cycle. Similarly, Frost in “Birches” describes natural images such as an ice storm and birch trees bending. Frost presents the images of a old age through the symbolism of old birch trees. The images contrast his present life with happy childhood. The image of life is the main focal point of the poem. Frost describes the coming of age and death. The second point of the poem a return childhood.



In this poem, Emily Dickinson personifies nature. The vocabulary is simple and easy. Dickinson uses only one period at the end of the poem. All the poems of Emily Dickinson have unconventional capitalization. Dickinson interrupts the rhythm of the poem with original capitalization patterns creating vivid images with few words. Emily Dickinson uses the plural personal pronoun "we". "We" allows Dickinson to write about specific experiences in the world. Her poems transmit distinct, subjective emotions and individual thoughts rather than objective, concrete truths.



**4.10. A COMPARISON OF "WE GROW ACQUAINTED WITH THE DARK" BY  
EMILY DICKINSON, WITH "ACQUAINTED WITH THE NIGHT," BY ROBERT  
FROST**



We grow accustomed to the Dark --  
When light is put away --  
As when the Neighbor holds the Lamp  
To witness her Goodbye --  
A Moment -- We uncertain step  
For newness of the night --  
Then -- fit our Vision to the Dark --  
And meet the Road -- erect --  
And so of larger -- Darkness --  
Those Evenings of the Brain --  
When not a Moon disclose a sign --  
Or Star -- come out -- within --  
The Bravest -- grope a little --  
And sometimes hit a Tree  
Directly in the Forehead --  
But as they learn to see --  
Either the Darkness alters --  
Or something in the sight  
Adjusts itself to Midnight --  
And Life steps almost straight.





### ***Acquainted with the Night***

I have been one acquainted with the night.  
I have walked out in rain --and back in rain.  
I have outwalked the furthest city light.  
I have looked down the saddest city lane.  
I have passed by the watchman on his beat  
And dropped my eyes, unwilling to explain.  
I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet  
When far away an interrupted cry  
Came over houses from another street,  
But not to call me back or say good-bye;  
And further still at an unearthly height  
One luminary clock against the sky

#### **4.10.1. INTRODUCTION**





Emily Dickinson wrote “We grow accustomed to the dark” in 1862. This is poem number 419. Dickinson shows hope and determination in her poem.

Robert Frost published “Acquainted with the Night” in 1928 in his collection West-Running Brook. This poem shows a preoccupation with the themes of isolation and it describes an individual fight against depression.

Both poems are concerned with darkness and night.

#### **4.10.2. SUMMARY**

In “Acquainted with the night” the speaker describes his loneliness when he walks at night on the streets to arrive at the limits of the city in a depressed state of mind. Even when he makes contact with the watchman, the speaker is reluctant to express his feelings because he knows that no one will understand him. He looks at the moon in the sky and confesses that time has no meaning for him because his isolation is eternal.

In “We grow accustomed to the Dark-“ the speakers show we grow with the dark but someone always shows as a light. At first we do not see anything but then of a moment we have a little vision in the dark and find the way. Sometimes the most adventurous people “hit a tree,” but eventually they “learn to see:” At midnight, the night is not so dark. Finally, people learn to see the straight way.

#### **4.10.3. ANALYSIS**



In "Acquainted with the Night," the narrator shows a deep depression and sense of isolation. Nothing in his surroundings is able to pull him out of his depression. The speaker is completely isolated.

The speaker does not have the same sense of time as other people in the city due to his depression; however, the speaker uses "one luminary clock", the moon, in the sky at night to guide him. His acquaintance with the night constructs a cycle of depression from which he cannot escape. The imagery is very powerful when the poet talks about walking further than the furthest city light and hearing cries in the streets. The poet emphasizes the feeling of isolation and depression when he reports the first line at the end of the poem: "I have been acquainted with the night." Frost describes sadness and solitude throughout the poem by focusing on a brutal sense of seclusion and loneliness.

In "We grow accustomed to the Dark," Dickinson mirrors Frost's first line; she also expresses that "we grow accustomed to the Dark," by learning to live in this world and by walking in spite of life's obstacles. Dickinson writes in general that everyone goes down the road on which "Light is put away..." This poem gives individual messages to each person concerning his or her dark times. In the last stanza, Dickinson writes about the light or the sight that changes at the darkest time; however, life goes on.

Emily Dickinson's "We grow accustomed to the Dark" and Robert Frost's "Acquainted with the Night" are both excellent poems. They have similar titles and ideas but they are extremely different in purpose. The two words that sound different are "accustomed" and "acquainted." Accustomed connotes



acceptance and acquaintance only shows a brief meeting and no deep understanding.

The poems have a different point of view on the subject of darkness. Darkness is usually associated with fear of the unknown. It symbolizes some kind of fear of an unknown thing or place, or a sad state. In both poems "darkness" or "night," are used as a subtle metaphors with a deeper meaning describing the human state when we go through dark times in own lives and desperately try to find our way. Both authors accept the fact that darkness is a part of living, but show that attitude is a governing factor in how one chooses to walk through it.

Dickinson introduces "Dark" as a proper noun showing the readers that "Dark" is not simply a dark color. Dickinson also talks about steps at night bringing to mind an image of a place of uncertainty where a person has to acquire night vision. This kind of sight is described in the fourth stanza, and symbolizes the life journey to gain knowledge and illumination. The poet says that the "Bravest" fall but learn to see in completing the difficult journey of life through the dark areas towards wisdom, while gaining a sense of hope and achievement. At the end of the poem, a state of comfort is reached whereby the speaker has gained enough sight or knowledge to bring himself/herself to the point where "Life steps out almost straight," referring to immediate illumination with respect to life's meaning..

In Frost's poem, night seems not to be his friend or his lover, but only a distant acquaintance. Frost's "night" is caused by his depression due to the loss of his family members. In the darkness of the night he walks through the streets



in the rain and cold. He walks away to the farthest light of the city to remain in darkness. "The night" is depression itself, and the speaker describes how he views the world around him in this state of mind. Frost uses the metaphor of a clock to describe it; "one luminary clock against the sky." The speaker talks about the night when he walks alone on the streets. Here, night is a metaphor with profound symbolic meaning of loneliness, sadness, silence, death and depression. The speaker's depression is seen in several lines of the poem.

In "Acquainted with the Night," Frost says the speaker lives in a city. This poem is not about nature. In "We grow accustomed to the Dark," Dickinson is not talking about nature either.

#### **4.10.4. STRUCTURE**

The poems are structurally quite different, and focus on their topics with distinct tones and styles.

"Acquainted with the Night" has five stanzas of three lines each; the last line has only two lines; all the lines are capitalized. The poem has meter, rhyme, metaphor, the personal pronoun "I," and images.

"We grow accustomed to the dark" has five stanzas of four lines each, all written in verse. It has meter but no rhyme; capitalization, dashes, the personal pronoun "We," and images.

"Acquainted with the Night" is written in strict iambic pentameter, with fourteen lines, just as traditional sonnet. Frost also uses rhyme, but breaks this rhyme scheme near the end of his poem. The rhyme scheme is the "terza rima"



or "third rhyme" which follows the complex pattern of ABA BCB CDC DAD AA, which is exceptionally difficult to write in English. In contrast, "We grow accustomed to the dark" is written in iambic tetrameter intercalating with trimeter. This poem has no rhyme. Dickinson capitalizes odd words, which is her personal style rather than the structure of the poem.

In "Acquainted with the Dark", the night is a metaphor symbolizing loneliness, sadness, silence, death and depression. Depression is seen in several lines of the poem. On the other hand, like many of Dickinson's poems, the "Dark" of the first line works as an extended metaphor. "Dark" is the darkness of the spirit, and this poem uses the metaphor of night descending to represent our psychic journey from life to death. The darkness is not death, exactly, but rather the process of dying. We are all dying all the time.

Dickinson's poem is full of dashes. Fifteen lines of the poem of twenty lines end with a dash. These dashes serve to transmit to the reader the sense of uncertainty that the speaker feels. The dashes accompany words such as "Dark," "Goodbye," and "Midnight," signifying that the speaker stops to make a point. The dashes never appear after words such as "Lamp" or "Vision" because they do not represent darkness. An example of the preponderance of dashes and their symbolism is seen in the line "Or Star—come out—within—. " This line is about mental darkness with no solution or "light" and the number of dashes emphasizes the hopelessness in the search for light. In comparison, Frost's poem, "Acquainted with the Night," has no interruption; it means that the narrator cannot escape his solitude. Frost uses a very regular rhyme scheme in



the poem using sentences that flow from one to another. This gives the poem an effect of movement. It is read like a story.

Frost uses the personal pronoun "I" marking a feeling of isolation. Dickinson, on the other hand, employs the personal pronoun "we" referring to a group of people or humanity in general.

Frost has auditory and visual images such as "...sound of feet," "...interrupted cry," or the image of the "city;" "rain," "night," "moon," and "streets." In "We grow accustomed to the dark," Dickinson uses visual images such as "Light," "Dark," "Neighbor," "Lamp," "Night," "Road," "Brain," "Moon," "Star," "Bravest," "Tree," "Forehead," and "Midnight." Dickinson writes all these images with capital letters to stress their importance in the poem.



## CHAPTER V

### 5. CONCLUSION

#### 5.1. SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR IDEAS

Robert Frost was the most admired and highly honoured American poet of the 20th century. Robert Frost was born in 1874 and died in 1963. In his childhood, Frost lost his father at the age of eleven, and he, with his mother and sister, went to live in New England. When Frost became an adult he had several jobs. With the help of his grandfather, Frost studied in Harvard College. Frost got married to Elinor Miriam White and had six children, two boys and four girls. Frost's life was full of tragedies: his father, mother, sister, grandfather, wife and four of his children died. All these tragedies caused the depression in Frost which influenced his writing.

When Robert Frost was twenty years old, he published his first poem, "My Butterfly." Frost wanted to publish his poems but critics in the United States did not value his work. Frost went to England where the poet, Ezra Pound, helped him to publish his first collection of poems, A Boys Will. Since then, Robert Frost has been recognized in the United States and he has had a fruitful career in writing poetry. Frost wrote seven collections of poetry, A Boy's Will, North of Boston, Mountain Interval, New Hampshire, West-Running Brook, A Witness Tree, and Come In and Other Poems. During his long life, Frost won four Pulitzer Prizes, the Nobel Prize and several Honorary Degrees.



Robert Frost was not affected by wartime or political changes. Robert Frost said, "Political freedom is nothing to me. I bestow it right and left." He does not mention any historical event in his poems. His main themes are about his great love of nature and his philosophy. For this reason, Frost is considered a pastoral poet.

The selected poems demonstrate different aspects of Frost's style. Some are long narrative works that are more like short stories than poems, and others speak from his sharp sense of irony and literary brilliance. His poetic language is the language of the common man. His poems show the deeper meanings of everyday activities, the rural landscapes of New England, and the "truth" of real people and real struggles. Also, his poems are related to Frost's personal life.

Robert Frost and Emily Dickinson are similar in their themes of nature, death and loneliness but they differ in their philosophy. Their poems are different in their structure, too. Dickinson's poems are original because of her dashes and punctuation, giving them a special tone. Frost is a prolific writer who has universal themes which give his poems deeper meaning through metaphors, figures of speech, and technical brilliance.

## **5.2. OPINIONS OF CRITICS**

Robert Frost became a public figure, and in the years before his death some critics gave strong opinions about Frost's poetry and life. Frost was described as a misanthropic, anti-intellectual, cruel, and angry man. Some critics said that Frost was separated from the modern realities of industrialization, and urbanization, or from familiar items such as radios,





automobiles, factories, or skyscrapers. Nevertheless, the poet has been viewed as a singer of sweet nostalgia and a social and political conservative. Nowadays, Frost's poetry is recognized in a good way. While critical opinion concerning the importance of his poetry has varied, most critics agree that Frost's poems can be read and enjoyed on many levels. For his magnificent work Frost received many honorary degrees and numerous awards, including four Pulitzer Prizes, and a Nobel Prize in poetry. He traveled more than any poet of his generation to give lectures and readings, even though he remained terrified of public speaking to the end. His poetry is taught in schools, high schools and universities; his poems are analyzed with respect to the language and extraordinary form. Many critics share the Frost's philosophy. Critical reevaluation has centered on the complex themes and profound philosophic issues of his poems. Frost's best works explore fundamental questions of existence, reflecting the loneliness of the individual in an indifferent universe. President John F. Kennedy delivered a speech for Robert Frost in recognition of his excellent poetry.

### **5.3. PERSONAL OPINIONS**

We think that Robert Frost was a survivor in life because, from his childhood, he suffered many tragedies, but he faced them with great courage. Robert Frost, who had a great love of nature, had as a source of inspiration the beautiful landscapes of New England. His poetry is full of feeling about his personal life, conduct, and philosophy. Also, Frost wrote simple stories about the everyday common man, while using colloquial language. Frost's poetry reflects a complete vision of the universe. He mastered literary techniques in



each one of his. His poems are full of visual and auditory images and metaphors.

At first, Robert Frost was not recognized. Later he had a very successful career and became one of the most loved and landed of the twentieth century poets. Nowadays, his poetry has a great influence on the poets and playwrights. Inclusively, his poems are studied at all educational levels. At the end of our work we feel we have learned something about Frost's poetry and life, about everything he experienced, everything he suffered, everything he did, everything he wrote, and each success of Frost has caused several feelings in us because Frost is an example of a person who survived through perseverance and love.



## 6. LITERARY CONCEPTS

- **Abstract language** refers to things that are intangible, that is, which are perceived not through the senses but by the mind, such as truth, God, education, vice, transportation, poetry, war, love.
- **Alliteration** is the repetition of the same sound at the beginning of a Word. A common use for alliteration is emphasis. It occurs in everyday speech in such phrases as "tittle-tattle," "bag and baggage." Consonance repeats consonants, but not the vowels, as in horror-hearer. Assonance is the repetition of vowel sounds, please-niece-ski-tree.
- **Analysis** means thinking about those words, facts or arguments: not just what they say, but what they mean.
- **Anthimeria** is the substitution of one part of speech for another; typically a noun used as a verb.
- **Antonym** is a word that expresses a meaning opposed to the meaning of another word.
- **Assonance** is relatively close juxtaposition of the same or similar vowel sounds, but with different end consonants in a line or passage, thus a vowel rhyme, as in the words, "same day."
- **Blank Verse** is an Unrhymed iambic pentameter. Frost wrote quite a bit of blank verse, which is not the same as free verse.
- **Caesura** is a strong pause within a line of verse, "Or Star – come out – within –" by Emily Dickinson.
- **Concrete language** identifies things perceived through the senses (touch, smell, sight, hearing, and taste), such as soft, stench, red, loud, or bitter.
- **Connotation** is the emotions, values, or images associated with a word. The intensity of emotions or the power of the values and images



associated with a word varies. Words connected with religion, politics, and sex, tend to have the strongest feelings and images associated with them.

- **Consonance** is the repetition of the same consonant sounds at the end of stressed syllables, but with different vowel sounds, within or at the end of a line, such as "bad and sod."
- **Contraction** is a word, as won't from will not, or phrase, as o'clock from of the clock, formed by omitting or combining some of the sounds of a longer phrase.
- **Couplet** is a pair of rhymed lines that may or may not constitute a separate stanza in a poem.
- **Denotation** is the literal meaning of a word; there are no emotions, values, or images associated with denotative meaning.
- **Diction** is the author's choice of words, taking into account correctness, clearness, and effectiveness. There are typically recognized to be four levels of diction: formal, informal, colloquial, and slang.
- **Direct Speech** is saying exactly what someone has said is called direct speech. Here what a person says appears within quotation marks ("...") and should be word for word.
- **Enjambment** is a continuation of thought in several lines of poetry.
- **Figurative language** changes the literal meaning, to make a meaning fresh or clearer, to express complexity, to capture a physical or sensory effect, or to extend meaning.
- **Imagery** is simply descriptive language that evokes sensory experience. It can appeal to any of the five senses.
- **Images** are pictures that are described and painted through the poem.
- **Internal rhyme** occurs in the middle of a line.



- **Irony** is when a situation occurs which is quite the reverse of what one might have expected.
- **Literal language** means exactly what it says; a rose is the physical flower.
- **Lyric Poetry** is a short poem with one speaker (not necessarily the poet) who expresses thought and feeling.
- **Metaphor** is a comparison or connection between two things not usually put together, which does not use "like" or "as."
- **Meter** is a rhythm of accented and unaccented syllables which are organized into patterns, called feet. Meter is the definitive pattern established for a verse.

iamb — one unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable

trochee — one stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable

dactyl — one stressed syllable followed by two unstressed syllables

anapest — two unstressed syllables followed by one stressed syllable

spondee — two stressed syllables together

pyrrhic - two unstressed syllables together (rare, usually used to end dactylic hexameter).

The number of metrical feet in a line is described in Greek terminology as follows:

- dimeter — two feet
  - trimeter — three feet
  - tetrameter — four feet
  - pentameter — five feet
  - hexameter — six feet
  - heptameter — seven feet
  - octameter — eight feet
- 
- **Narrative** is read through the poem like a story: all poems have a beginning, a middle, and an end.



- **Paradox** is a statement whose two parts seem contradictory yet make sense with more thought.
- **Personal pronouns** are pronouns used as substitutes for proper or common nouns.
- **Personification** treats abstractions or inanimate objects as human, that is, giving them human attributes, powers, or feelings, e.g., "nature wept."
- **Prosody** is the study of the meter, rhythm, and intonation of a poem. Rhythm and meter, although closely related, should be distinguished.
- **Repetition** are words or certain phrases are repeated for a stronger emphasis by the author.
- **Rhyme** is the repetition of similar sounds. In poetry, the most common kind of rhyme is end rhyme, which occurs at the end of two or more lines.
- **Rhythm** is the actual sound that results from a line of poetry. It is the pattern that is created by the author through the arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables.
- **Sibilance** refers to the 'hissing' sound of the oral repetition of the "s" or "z" sound. A minor form of alliteration, it emphasises and draws out the word, which can make a point more memorable.
- **Simile** is also a comparison between things not usually connected, but it uses for glue the little words "like" or "as".
- **Sonnet** is a lyric poem consisting of fourteen lines.
- **Sounds** are three: alliteration, consonance, assonance.
- **Speaker** is the narrative voice in the poem, also, it is called narrator.
- **Stanza** is a group of verse lines forming a section of a poem and sharing the same structure as all or some of the other sections of the same



poem, in terms of the lengths of its lines, its metre, and usually its rhyme scheme. In printed poems, stanzas are separated by spaces.

- **Structure** is the framework of a work of literature; the organization or over-all design of a work.
- **Summary** is what you see at a glance. A summary means telling someone else, in your own words.
- **Symbol**, in general terms, anything that stands for something else. Obvious examples are flags, which symbolize a nation.
- **Symbolism** occurs when a noun which has meaning in itself is used to represent something entirely different. One example of symbolism would be to use an image of the American flag to represent patriotism and a love for one's country.
- **Synecdoche** is a figure of speech which mentions a part of something to suggest the whole.
- **Terza rima or "third rhyme"** was invented by the Italian poet Dante Alighieri for his poem *The Divine Comedy*. Because Italian is a language in which many words have vowel endings, terza rima is much less difficult to write in Italian than it is in English. Because of its difficulty in English, very few American writers have attempted to write in the form.
- **The Title** should not be ignored it. Poets don't always choose a title that states their theme, but they often do.
- **Tone** is the writer's attitude toward the material and/or readers. Tone may be playful, formal, intimate, angry, serious, ironic, outraged, baffled, tender, serene, depressed, etc.
- **Tragedy** is a literary and particularly dramatic presentation of serious actions in which the chief character has a disastrous fate.



- **Tune.** Frost often invited his readers to listen for the tune. This is one of those enigmatic terms he used on the podium. Frost explained that there is a metric beat and a rhythm beat, but the tune is the third thing.
- **Understatement** is the presentation of a thing with underemphasis in order to achieve a greater effect. Frost uses this device extensively, often as a means of irony. His love poems are especially understated.
- **Verbal irony** is a figure of speech when an expression used is the opposite of the thought in the speaker's mind, thus conveying a meaning that contradicts the literal definition.





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