



BAL BHARATI PUBLIC SCHOOL, PITAMPURA, DELHI - 110034

SUBJECT:-ENGLISH LANGUAUGE AND LITERATURE

Class- X

Topic : Fire and Ice



"**Fire and Ice**" is one of Robert Frost's most popular poems. It was published in December 1920 in Harper's Magazine and in 1923 in his Pulitzer Prize-winning book New Hampshire. It discusses the end of the world, likening the elemental force of fire with the emotion of desire, and ice with hate.

Fire and Ice

By Robert Frost

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.

Link for reference videos :

https://www.diksha.gov.in/cbse/play/collection/do_312796455301447680117634?contentId=do_312795699615449088110324

https://www.diksha.gov.in/cbse/play/collection/do_312796455301447680117634?contentType=TextBook&contentId=do_312795723459166208111907

Learning Objectives :

- Assess the theme of the poem.
- Identify the poetic devices.
- Justify the role of human emotions.

Summary :

'Fire and Ice' is a short poem by Robert Frost. In this poem, the poet refers to two predictions of how the world will end. Some say it will end in fire whereas others say it will end in ice. According to the poet 'fire' stands for desire, greed, avarice or lust. The more you try to satisfy them, the more they grow. There is no end to it.

They spread rapidly like fire and engulf your whole life. One becomes selfish and sometimes cruel also. On the other hand, 'ice' according to the poet, stands for hatred, coldness and rigidity. One becomes insensitive and indifferent towards the feelings of others. The poet says that both fire and ice are growing with such a rapid speed that the world would soon perish either way, in fire or in ice.

Poetic Devices :

Symbolism runs through the whole poem as 'fire' is a symbol of human passions, unsatiated desires whereas 'ice' is a symbol of cruelty, coldness, hatred.

Alliteration - It's a repetition of consonant sound in the same line like in some say, the sound **s** is repeated, favour fire- the sound **f** is repeated.

Anaphora - It refers to the deliberate repetition of a word or expression in the first part of some verses to produce an artistic effect. For example,

"Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice."

Enjambment - It is defined as thought or clause that does not come

to an end at a [line break](#); rather, it moves over the next line. For example,
“From what I’ve tasted of desire
I hold with those who favor fire.”

Assignment Questions :

I. Short Answer Questions:

- a) Why does the poet hold good with those who favour fire?
- b) How do you infer the meaning of the line ‘know enough of hate’?
- c) Bring out the central idea of the poem.
- d) What is ‘ice’ symbolic of? How will it bring destruction?
- e) Identify the rhyme scheme of the poem.

II. Long Answer Questions:

a) There are many ideas about how the world will ‘end’. Do you think the world will end some day? Have you ever thought what would happen if the sun gets so hot that it ‘bursts’ or grows colder and colder? Describe briefly in a paragraph.

b) In what way are ‘fire’ and ‘ice’ metaphors? Do they represent two extremes of human behaviour that can lead to destruction of this world? Comment.

Activity :

III. Identify which of the words given below stand for ‘Fire’ and which for ‘Ice’ and put them under suitable headings:

- greed avarice cruelty lust
- conflict fury intolerance rigidity
- insensitivity coldness indifference hatred

Fire	Ice

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