

Wander - Thirst

A. Lead-in :

Travelling gives us great pleasure. After our day's work we wish to relax and enjoy life. Some people have thirst for going out to distant lands. Do you like to travel like them ?

- Tell your partner about three of the most exciting places you have visited recently.
- Ask your partner to share his experiences in travelling with you and the class.
- Now, listen to your teacher reading the text of the poem. Whose calls does the wanderer hear ?

B. The Text :

Beyond the east the sunrise; Beyond the west the sea
 And East and West the Wander-Thirst that will not let me be;
 It works in me like madness to bid me say goodbye,
 For the seas call, and the stars call, and oh! The call of the sky!
 I know not where the white road runs, nor what the blue hills are,
 But a man can have the sun for friend, and for his guide, a star;
 And there is no end to voyaging when once the voice is heard,
 For the rivers call, and the road calls, and oh! The call of a bird!
 Yonder the long horizon lies, and there by night and day
 The old ships draw to home again, the young ships sail away
 And come I may, but go I must, and if men ask you why,
 You may put the blame on the stars and the sun,
 And the white road and the sky.

C. About the poet :

Gerald Gould (1885-1936) was an English poet and a journalist of repute. His poems have the sweetness, strength and vision that belong only to poetry of high order. For the poet, the urge to travel is stronger than the ties at home. He is a lover of nature and wants to keep roaming to find more about the beautiful places, leaving his friends and relatives behind. This poem is composed in the tradition of British romantic poetry of the 19th century. Poets like Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats loved the rocks, the trees, the sky, the seas and the mountains.

D. Notes and glossary :

- wander-thirst : (here) a strong desire to travel.
- madness : strange behaviour, excessive attraction for something
- voyaging : travelling
- yonder : (old use) that you can see over there.
- horizon : the furthest you can see, where the sky seems to meet the land or the sea.
- draw : to move something / somebody by pulling it gently.
- blame : responsibility for doing something badly or wrongly.

E. Let's understand the poem :

- Read the poem silently. While reading find out the answers to the following.
 - Discuss your answer with a friend.
1. What does the wanderer see beyond the east and the west ?
 2. What do you take when you are thirsty? How is wandering a kind of thirst ?
 3. Why does he/she want to say good-bye to his/her family ?
 4. The traveller asserts that he/she will not feel lonely even if the roads and hills are unknown to him/her. How ?
 5. Why can't he/she stop travelling? (Clue: L 7&8)
 6. Whether the traveller has compared himself / herself with the old ships or young ships ?

7. Who is to blame for the wander-thirst?
8. Choose the correct meaning of voyaging in the context, visiting / travelling / seeing beautiful things

F. Let's appreciate the poem :

- A.
 1. Which natural objects attract the speaker's attention?
 2. Why does a traveller need a friend or a guide?
- B. Read the last five lines of the poem and choose the most appropriate answers :
 1. 'Come I may, but go I must' means.
 - (a) wants to continue his / her journey
 - (b) there is no rest in travelling
 - (c) does not want to travel again
 - (d) he / she can't stop from travelling.
 2. Who is to blame for his wander-thirst?
 - (a) objects of Nature (b) the ships (c) he himself (d) other travellers
 3. He / she can't stop from travelling because.
 - (a) the old ships return (b) the young ships sail away
 - (c) the sun calls him / her (d) his / her friends are travelling.

G. Let's do the activities :

- (a) Read the poem aloud with your friends to enjoy its musical rhythm.
- (b) If your parents allow you to go on an adventure all alone, what will be your feeling? Discuss in pairs.
- (c) Rearrange the following lines of the poem in order of their sequence :

And the white road and the sky
 Yonder the long horizon lies,
 And come I may, but go I must, and if men ask you why,
 You may put the blame on the stars and the sun.
 The old ships draw to home again, the youngest – ships sail away