

UNIT 6

The Echoing Green by William Blake

Synonyms

Stanza 1:

Sun: Star, daylight source

Arise: Rise, emerge

Happy: Joyful, pleased, content

Skies: Heavens,

Merry: Cheerful, joyful, bright

Bells Chimes, gongs, tolls

Ring: Sound, peal, toll

Welcome: Greet, receive

Stanza 2:

Sky-lark: Songbird, bird

Thrush Songbird, bird

Birds Avian creatures

Bush: Shrub, thicket

Sing Chant, vocalize

Cheerful: Happy, pleasant

Sports Games, play, activities

Echoing: Resounding, reverberating

Green: Meadow, lawn

Stanza 3:

Old: Aged, elderly

White Pale, grey

Laugh Giggle, chuckle

Care: Worry, concern

Oak: Type of tree

Folk: People, community

Play: Amusement, fun

Stanza 4:

Joys: Pleasures, delights

Youth: Childhood

Stanza 5:

Little ones: Children, youngsters

Weary: Tired, exhausted

Descend: Go down, fall

Stanza 6:

Rest: Sleep, relaxation

End: Finish, conclusion

Darkening: Dimming, becoming darker

Nest Shelter, home

Questions :

1. What images or feelings come to your mind when you think of a green field or a park?

Green fields and parks bring to mind images of lush grass, tall trees, and blooming flowers. They evoke peacefulness, the laughter of children playing, and people relaxing or walking. Such places suggest freedom, relaxation, and a strong connection to nature, often filling one with calm, happiness, and a sense of rebirth.

2. How important are green spaces (parks, gardens, countryside) for people's happiness and well-being?

Green spaces are extremely important for people's happiness and well-being. They provide a place to exercise, play, and relax, which helps reduce stress and improve mood. Playing in nature can foster feelings of community, offer a break from busy city life, and contribute to both physical and mental health by offering cleaner air and a chance to connect with the natural environment.

3. What images of nature and community life do you notice in the poem?

In poem, 'The Echoing Green' images of nature include the rising sun, blue skies, singing birds like skylarks and thrushes, and fresh green grass. Community life is depicted through children playing together, and elders watching and reminiscing about the past.

4. How might these scenes be different if the environment is affected by problems like global warming and deforestation?

If global warming and deforestation affected the environment, the scenes would change drastically. The green field might become dry and brown, with fewer trees or flowers. Birdsong might be absent if habitats are lost. The air could feel hotter or more polluted, making it uncomfortable for children and elders to gather outdoors. The strong sense of community and shared joy could diminish the natural beauty and comfort of the green would disappear, affecting both happiness and health.

5. How do the images of the elders reflect the themes of age and the passage of time?

The elders in the poem are shown sitting under the oak tree, watching the children play. Their laughter and memories of their own childhood on the same green emphasize the passage of time and the cyclical nature of life. The image of old people reminiscing about the past while the young enjoy the present links past and present, highlighting how every generation experiences the joy of childhood then grows older and looks back. This reflects the theme of aging.

6. What activities are taking place on the echoing green?

The activities taking place on the echoing green are children playing and Old John, along with other "old folk," watching them. The children continue to play until the sun sets.

7. How does Blake portray the relationship between nature and human life in the poem?

Blake portrays the relationship between nature and human life as cyclical and interconnected. The sun rises and sets, just as human life progresses from childhood innocence to old age. The green field is a constant backdrop for this cycle. The "skylark" and "thrush" sing along with the children, showing a harmony between the natural world and human activity.

8. What role do the 'old folk' play in the scene described? How does their presence add to the poem's meaning?

The "old folk," led by Old John, play the role of nostalgic observers. They sit under the oak tree and watch the children play, reminiscing about their own youth. Their presence adds to the poem's meaning by introducing the theme of memory and the passage of time. They represent the past and memory, contrasting with the children who represent the present and future. Their laughter link the generations, showing that the joy of youth is a shared, continuous experience.

9. What is the significance of the shift from lively activity to quietness as the poem progresses?

The shift from lively activity to quietness is significant as it symbolizes the natural progression from the high energy of childhood to the quiet rest of old age and the end of the day. The setting sun marks the end of play, and the children are weary. This shift reinforces the cyclical nature of life and the inevitability of time passing.

10. How might the 'echoing' of the green symbolise memory or continuity between generations?

The "echoing" of the green symbolizes memory and continuity between generations because it suggests that the joyous sounds of the children's play are not new but rather a repetition of sounds from the past. The echoes are the memories of Old John and the other old folk who once played on the same green. The poem shows that while the individuals change, the scene and the joy remain, creating a continuous link between generations.

11. How does the imagery in the poem contribute to the tone and mood of the scene depicted?

The imagery of , “ The sun does arise”, merry bells ring," and "skylarks and thrushes sing" creates a lively and cheerful tone at the beginning of the poem. The "sports" contribute to a mood of innocent joy. Later, the imagery of the "sun does descend" and the children "all weary" creates a quiet reflective, and melancholic mood, showing the peaceful end of the day and the natural conclusion of youthful energy.

12. In what ways does the poem reflect the themes of innocence and the passage of time?

The poem reflects the theme of innocence through the joyful, unburdened play of the children. They are full of energy and laughter. The theme of the passage of time is shown through the contrast between the children (present/future) and the "old folk" (past). The children play and the old folk remember the time they used to play these games. The progression from the "day" to the "night," and from the morning's activities to the evening's weariness, simultaneously shows the journey from childhood innocence to the end of life.

13. How might the poem be interpreted as a reflection on the cycles of life and the natural world?

The poem can be interpreted as a reflection on the cycles of life and the natural world by directly linking human experience to the daily cycle of the sun. The rising sun marks the beginning of life and play, while the setting sun signifies old age and rest. The unchanging "echoing green" and the continuous succession of children playing on it represent a larger, eternal cycle. This suggests that while individual lives are finite, the cycle of life itself—from birth to old age—is a constant, natural process that mirrors the cycles of the natural world.