



READING 3 Evaluate the changes in sound and form in poetry across literary time periods. **RC-12(B)** Make complex inferences about text and use textual evidence to support understanding.

Pied Beauty Spring and Fall: To a Young Child

Poetry by Gerard Manley Hopkins

Meet the Author

Gerard Manley Hopkins 1844–1889

Gerard Manley Hopkins was unknown as a poet during his lifetime. He had been dead for more than 25 years before a friend arranged the publication of his work, believing that the public was finally ready for Hopkins's daring innovations with language and rhythm. Not until the 1930s would Hopkins's unique verse achieve widespread acclaim.

Budding Talent Hopkins grew up in a family of writers and artists. Even as a youth, he demonstrated a talent for writing poetry. At the age of 15, he won his grammar school's poetry prize, and two years later, he was awarded the Governor's Medal for Latin Verse. At Oxford University, he continued to devote his energies to writing.

Religious Conversion At Oxford, Hopkins fell under the spell of the poet Christina Rossetti. Profoundly affected by her mystical verse, he experienced a growing interest in religious matters. In July of 1866, he "saw the impossibility of staying in the Church of England," and in October of that year, he converted to Catholicism. This action alienated him from his parents, who could never understand his decision. The rift widened in 1868 when Hopkins joined the Jesuit order.

Conflicting Commitments Preparing to enter the Society of Jesus, Hopkins burned his early poems, resolving "to write no more, as not belonging to my profession." For the next seven years, he composed no verse, although he did continue to write in his journal. In 1875, he finally broke his poetic silence after reading a newspaper article about a shipwreck involving five nuns. Deeply moved by their deaths, Hopkins wrote his most ambitious poem, "The Wreck of the Deutschland." From that moment on, he never stopped writing, though he continued to feel guilty about pursuing his art.

Bitter Ending While studying for his ordination in 1877, Hopkins produced a series of exquisite sonnets, including "Pied Beauty," which reflect his joy in God's creations. After being ordained a priest, Hopkins served in several parishes before becoming, in 1884, a professor of Greek at University College in Dublin. Hopkins did not care for Dublin, finding it a "joyless place." Isolated from friends and family and often in poor health, he fell into a deep depression. This psychological turmoil gave rise to his so-called "sonnets of desolation," which Hopkins composed up until his death in 1889.

Author Online

Go to thinkcentral.com. KEYWORD: HML12-962



DID YOU KNOW?

Gerard Manley Hopkins ...

- considered becoming a professional artist.
- produced musical compositions.
- profoundly influenced T. S. Eliot, Dylan Thomas, W. H. Auden, and other 20th-century poets.

(background)
Jesus College, Oxford



● **LITERARY ANALYSIS: SPRUNG RHYTHM**

In order to approximate the rhythms of natural speech in his poetry, Hopkins ignored traditional patterns of rhythm, instead using what he called **sprung rhythm**. The lines of a poem written in sprung rhythm have fixed numbers of stressed syllables but varying numbers of unstressed syllables. As in the following example, a line may contain several consecutive stressed syllables, or a stressed syllable may be followed by one, two, or even three unstressed syllables:

*Lándscape plóttēd ānd piécēd—fóld, fállōw, ānd plóugh;
 Ānd álł trádes, thēir géar ānd tácklē ānd trím.*

Hopkins often included stress marks in his poems to indicate the rhythm he intended.

As you read the two poems, think about which lines come closest to reproducing the rhythms of natural speech.

● **READING SKILL: INFER MEANING**

Hopkins's poems include difficult syntax and vocabulary words that may be unfamiliar to you. Even after slowly rereading the poems, you may still need to **infer**, or make an educated guess about, the meaning of difficult words and phrases. Your inferences should be based on **context clues**, or the nearby words and phrases that may shed some light on a difficult word or an obscure passage.

As you read and reread the poems, fill out a chart like the one below to help you interpret the meaning of any difficult phrases or complex **imagery**—words that appeal to one or more of the five senses.

| Phrases or Imagery | Inferences |
|---|---|
| "rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim" (line 3) | The poet describes the fish as beautiful and vibrant. |



Complete the activities in your **Reader/Writer Notebook**.

How does nature affect your MOOD?

Think about a time when you closely examined a single leaf or a flower. What unique details do you recall observing? What mood did this natural object create for you? In the poems that follow, you will read about the mood-changing experiences of two individuals who encounter nature's rhythms and beauty.

QUICKWRITE Write a description of an object in nature without naming what it is. Include as much detail as possible, and try to capture the mood that the object conveys for you. Then, in a small group, take turns reading your descriptions aloud. Try to guess the identity of each other's object.



PIED BEAUTY

Gerard Manley Hopkins

Glory be to God for dappled things—
For skies of couple-color as a brindled cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
5 Landscape plotted and pieced—fold, fallow, and plough;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
10 He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change: **A**
Praise him.

1 **dappled**: spotted with color.

2 **brindled**: brindled—streaked or spotted with a darker color.

3 **rose-moles . . . stipple**: spots of pink in flecks or speckles.

4 **fresh-firecoal**: the color of glowing coals.

6 **trim**: equipment.

7 **counter**: opposing.

A INFER MEANING

What is Hopkins's attitude toward nature based on the imagery in this poem?



SPRING AND FALL: TO A YOUNG CHILD

Gerard Manley Hopkins

Márgaré^t, are you grie^ving **B**
Over Goldengrove unleavⁱng?
Léaves, like the things of man, you
With your fresh thoughts care for, can you?
5 Áh! á^s the heart grows older
It will come to such sights colder
By and by, nor spare a sigh
Though worlds of wanwood leafmeal lie;
And yet you *will* weep and know why.
10 Now no matter, child, the name:
Só^rrow's spríngs á^re the same.
Nor mouth had, no nor mind, expressed
What heart heard of, ghost guessed:
It ⁱs the blight man was born for,
15 It is Margaret you mourn for.

B SPRUNG RHYTHM

In line 1, what do the stressed syllables help Hopkins emphasize?

2 **unleaving**: losing its leaves.

3–4 **Leaves . . . can you?**: Do you in your innocence grieve about falling leaves as though they were equal to human loss?

8 **wanwood**: faded woodland;
leafmeal: dry, ground-up leaves.

12 **nor**: neither.

13 **ghost**: spirit; soul.

14 **blight**: a condition that stops growth and brings withering and death.



Comprehension

1. **Paraphrase** Name the dappled things that Hopkins admires.
2. **Clarify** Why, in your opinion, does Hopkins include “all trades” with the details from nature?
3. **Recall** How does Margaret respond to the changing of the seasons?
4. **Clarify** How will she react in the future, according to the speaker?



READING 3 Evaluate the changes in sound and form in poetry across literary time periods. **RC-12(B)** Make complex inferences about text and use textual evidence to support understanding.

Literary Analysis

5. **Make Inferences About Theme** Reread “Pied Beauty,” paying careful attention to the poem’s rich **imagery**. What idea about God and his creations does Hopkins convey through his images of “dappled things”? Cite details.
6. **Interpret Ideas** Think about the meaning of the final line of “Spring and Fall.” What is the real source of Margaret’s grief, according to the speaker?
7. **Analyze Sprung Rhythm** Find instances of **sprung rhythm** in “Spring and Fall.” What ideas does Hopkins emphasize through the use of this rhythmic technique?
8. **Infer Meaning** Review your list of imagery from each poem in your chart. How do these words and phrases help to convey the poet’s view of the natural world in each poem? Cite specific examples to support your points.
9. **Compare Texts** As a schoolboy, Hopkins wrote verse in imitation of John Keats. Compare Hopkins’s two poems with those of Keats on pages 880–888. What similarities and differences can you find in the two writers’ poetic style and treatment of nature?

Literary Criticism

10. **Critical Interpretations** Many poets have praised the beauty of nature. However, some scholars believe Hopkins goes one step further. One critic has observed that for Hopkins, “words are a means of possessing nature.” On the basis of the two poems, decide if you agree. Cite evidence to support your opinion.

How does nature affect your **MOOD?**

What do you think is gained by a close examination of the natural world? What are the advantages and disadvantages of experiencing nature as Hopkins does?

Romantic Influence

The emphasis on the importance of the individual and his or her emotions is one of the most significant legacies of romanticism and was a strong influence on early Victorian writers such as Alfred, Lord Tennyson and Emily Brontë. For the early Victorians, love, for example, often suggests a consuming passion whose joys may be surpassed only by its agonies. Consider the fate of Tennyson's Lady of Shalott once she is struck by the "curse" of love.

*"[She] Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darkened wholly,
Turned to towered Camelot.
For ere she reached upon the tide
The first house by the waterside,
Singing in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott."*

Extension

LISTENING & SPEAKING Find a contemporary love poem and read it aloud to your class. Then discuss with your classmates how this poem's portrayal of love is similar to or different from the notions of love found in the poems in this section.



WRITING 15A Write an analytical essay.

Writing to Compare

Write an essay in which you reflect on the portrayals of love found in the poems by Tennyson, Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and Emily Brontë. Look at the imagery and language of each poem. What do the poems have in common? Which do you find the most—or least—appealing?

Consider

- the imagery and descriptions of feelings about love
- the nature of the relationship between the lovers
- the outcome of the relationship

The Lady of Shalott (1888), John William Waterhouse. © Tate Gallery, London/Art Resource, New York.

