

Class - VIII

Ms Jaswinder

Subject - English Literature

Chapter - 17 Poem 'On Killing a Tree'

Students, today we are going to start with the poem 'On Killing a Tree' written by Gieve Patel in 1940. He ~~is~~ was a general physician in Mumbai who wrote to protect our environment. He wrote about how trees and plants, having covered our planet for millions of years and generously bestowing us with so many gifts are now being cut. The poet is using words kill instead of cut because according to the poet trees and plants are living things and they have feelings like we human beings have. So when we cut a tree it means we try to kill someone with feelings.

Stanzawise Summary of the poem.

* Stanza - 1

It takes much time - - - - -
- - - - - leprous hide Sprouting leaves

Explanation -

In the first stanza, the poet says that it takes long time to kill a tree. A simple hit of the knife cannot kill it. A tree has grown slowly ~~grows~~ grown from the earth by consuming food from it, rising out of it, feeding upon the crust or top layer of the earth, absorbing sunlight, air and water for years. The leaves have sprouted from its

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leprerous hide or poisonous and hard layer. So in this stanza the poet explains why it is difficult to kill a tree. As it has taken years to grow. It has consumed resources from earth and sun. It becomes so strong and cannot be easily killed.

Stanza - 2

So hack and chop - - - - -
- - - - - will expand again to former size.

Explanation -

In the second stanza the poet explains that if we try to cut a tree just by hacking and chopping it is not enough to kill a tree. However it alone cannot kill a tree. Even it will just be a little painful but it will grow again. After getting a cut its bleeding bark will heal again and it will again grow from close to the ground, from bottom, green twigs and small branches will rise again and if we didn't cut it will again expand to the original size. So in this stanza the poet tells that mere cutting the stem and branches of tree won't kill it as after some time, new twigs and branches will grow from the bottom and if we did not cut they they will grow to the

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original size. Hence we would need to find some other and more cruel method of kill a tree.

Alright student we have done first three stanza of the poem. In our next lesson we will continue ~~the~~ with the poem.

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