



Class: 11th

Subject: English

Unit 6: The Echoing Green (Poem)

Author: William Blake (1757-1827)

 **About the Poet:**

William Blake (1757–1827) was an English poet and painter, known for his unique and visionary work. He wrote *The Echoing Green*, a poem that reflects themes of innocence, nature, and the cycles of life. In this poem, he expresses the joy and innocence of children's early life experiences and appreciates nature in simple words. Blake often combined his poetry with illustrations, creating a beautiful blend of visual and literary art.

 **Central Idea of The Echoing Green:**

The central idea of *The Echoing Green* is the joy, innocence, and happiness of childhood along with the natural cycle of life. The poem beautifully describes children playing

happily in a green field during the morning, while old people remember their own childhood memories. As the day ends and darkness falls, the children stop playing and return home, symbolizing the journey from youth to old age. Through simple and musical language, William Blake highlights the beauty of nature, childhood innocence, and the passage of time.

William Blake — The Echoing Green

❖ Stanza-wise Explanation

Stanza 1

Poem Lines

- The Sun does arise,
- And make happy the skies.
- The merry bells ring
- To welcome the Spring.
- The skylark and thrush,
- The birds of the bush,
- Sing louder around
- To the bells' cheerful sound.
- While our sports shall be seen
- On the Echoing Green.

Explanation

In this stanza, the poet describes a beautiful spring morning. The sun rises and brightens the sky, creating happiness everywhere. Church bells ring joyfully to welcome the spring season. Birds such as the skylark and thrush sing sweetly along with the sound of the bells. Children are playing happily on the green field called "The Echoing Green." The atmosphere is full of joy, energy, and freshness.

Main Idea

This stanza represents the happiness and energy of childhood and nature in the morning of life.

Stanza 2

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Poem Lines

- Old John, with white hair,
- Does laugh away care,
- Sitting under the oak,
- Among the old folk.
- They laugh at our play,
- And soon they all say:
- "Such, such were the joys
- When we all, girls and boys,
- In our youth-time were seen
- On the Echoing Green."

Explanation

In this stanza, old people are sitting under an oak tree and watching the children play. Old John, who has white hair, laughs happily and forgets his worries. The elderly people remember their own childhood days and say that they too once played joyfully like these children. Watching the young generation brings back sweet memories of their youth.

Main Idea

This stanza shows the connection between youth and old age. It reminds us that everyone passes through childhood.

Stanza 3

Poem Lines

- Till the little ones weary,
- No more can be merry;
- The sun does descend,
- And our sports have an end.
- Round the laps of their mothers,
- Many sisters and brothers,
- Like birds in their nest,
- Are ready for rest;
- And sport no more seen

- On the darkening Green.

Explanation

In the final stanza, evening arrives and the sun begins to set. The children become tired after playing all day and stop their games. They return to their mothers and rest peacefully like birds returning to their nests at night. The once lively and joyful green field becomes dark and quiet.

Main Idea

This stanza symbolizes the ending of childhood and the arrival of old age or the end of life.

Themes of the Poem

1. Joy of childhood
2. Beauty of nature
3. Passage of time
4. Cycle of life
5. Innocence and happiness

Moral Lesson

The poem teaches us to enjoy the happy moments of life because time passes quickly from youth to old age.

❖ Important MCQs from The Echoing Green

1. Who is the poet of The Echoing Green?

- a) John Keats
- b) William Wordsworth
- c) William Blake
- d) Robert Frost

2. The Echoing Green is taken from which collection?

- a) Songs of Experience

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b) Songs of Innocence

c) Paradise Lost

d) Lyrical Ballads

3. What season is welcomed in the poem?

a) Winter

b) Autumn

c) Summer

d) Spring

4. What makes the skies happy?

a) Rain

b) Moon

c) Sun

d) Stars

5. Which birds are mentioned in the poem?

a) Sparrow and dove

b) Skylark and thrush

c) Eagle and hawk

d) Parrot and crow

6. What do the merry bells welcome?

a) Winter

b) Summer

c) Spring

d) Rain

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7. Where do the children play?

- a) In a garden
- b) On the Echoing Green
- c) Near a river
- d) In a school

8. Who sits under the oak tree?

- a) Young boys
- b) Old John and old folk
- c) Teachers
- d) Farmers

9. What color is Old John's hair?

- a) Black
- b) Brown
- c) Golden
- d) White

10. What do the old people remember?

- a) Their school days
- b) Their youth and childhood
- c) Their work
- d) Their travels

11. What happens when evening comes?

- a) Children start studying
- b) The games end

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- c) Birds begin singing
 - d) The bells ring loudly

12. What does the setting sun symbolize?

- a) Beginning of life
- b) Happiness
- c) End of life or old age
- d) Spring season

13. To what are the children compared in the last stanza?

- a) Flowers
- b) Butterflies
- c) Birds in a nest
- d) Clouds

14. What is the tone of the poem?

- a) Sad
- b) Angry
- c) Joyful and peaceful
- d) Fearful

15. What is the main theme of the poem?

- a) War
- b) Nature and childhood innocence
- c) Politics
- d) Adventure

16. What does "Echoing Green" symbolize?

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- a) A battlefield
 - b) Joyful life and childhood
 - c) A dark forest
 - d) A village market

17. What literary age did William Blake belong to?

- a) Victorian Age
- b) Modern Age
- c) Romantic Age
- d) Classical Age

18. What happens to the green field at the end?

- a) It becomes brighter
- b) It becomes dark and quiet
- c) It fills with rain
- d) It becomes crowded

19. Which poetic element is strongly shown in the poem?

- a) Humor
- b) Nature imagery
- c) Satire
- d) Tragedy

20. What lesson does the poem teach?

- a) Hard work is important
- b) Childhood should be enjoyed because time passes quickly
- c) Wealth brings happiness

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d) Nature is dangerous

❖ Exercise Short Questions:

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

Ans: Children are playing happily on the Echoing Green. Birds are singing, bells are ringing, and everyone is enjoying the beauty of the spring morning. The atmosphere is full of joy, laughter, and excitement.

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

Ans: Blake shows a close relationship between nature and human life. The happiness of people, especially children, is connected with the beauty of nature. The rising sun, singing birds, green field, and changing time of day reflect the stages of human life from childhood to old age.

3. What role do the “old folk” play in the scene described? How does their presence add to the poem’s meaning?

Ans: The old folk sit under the oak tree and watch the children playing. They remember their own childhood days and feel happy. Their presence adds depth to the poem by showing the cycle of life and reminding readers that youth eventually turns into old age.

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

Ans: The shift from joyful activity to silence symbolizes the passage of time and the journey of life. The bright and cheerful morning represents childhood and youth, while the quiet evening represents old age and the end of life. Blake uses this change to show that happiness and youth do not last forever.

5. How might the “echoing” of the green symbolise memory or continuity between generations?

Ans: The “echoing” of the green symbolizes the continuation of life and memories from one generation to another. The laughter and games of the children remind the old

people of their own childhood days. In this way, the joy of youth echoes through time and connects different generations.

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

Ans: The poem uses beautiful natural imagery such as the rising sun, singing birds, ringing bells, and green fields to create a joyful and peaceful mood. In the final stanza, the darkening green and tired children create a calm and quiet atmosphere. These images help readers clearly feel the changing mood of the poem.

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

Ans: The poem reflects innocence through the joyful games and carefree happiness of the children. The passage of time is shown through the movement from morning to evening and from childhood to old age. Blake shows that life changes with time, and youth does not last forever.

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

Ans: The poem can be seen as a reflection of the natural cycle of life. Morning represents childhood and youth, while evening symbolizes old age and rest. Just as the day begins and ends naturally, human life also passes through different stages. Blake connects human life with nature to show the beauty and reality of life's cycles.

❖ Short Questions From the Poem:

1. What images of nature and community life do you notice?

Ans: The poem shows images of the rising sun, singing birds, green fields, children playing, and old people sitting together happily.

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

Ans: The green fields, trees, and birds would decrease, and the joyful atmosphere of nature would become dull and unhealthy.

3. How do the images of the elders reflect the themes of innocence and the passage of time?

Ans: The elders remember their childhood while watching the children play, showing innocence and the passing of time from youth to old age.

Note:

This Poem is designed to provide a solid foundation of knowledge, with the goal of deepening understanding and encouraging further exploration of the subject. The content has been carefully selected to support effective learning and inspire students to engage with the topic more deeply.

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Purpose: To contribute to education by offering insightful, valuable content that enhances learning and understanding.

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