

Note: The transactional processes suggested in CISCE curriculum are highlighted in grey.

### Learning Outcomes

- To consider Nature as a companion
- To recognise the stylistic devices in the poem
- To recognise the tone and expression in the poem

**Summary:** In the poem, 'Daffodils', the poet William Wordsworth says that Nature is the greatest gift or blessing to mankind. It has the power to heal our miseries and make us lively again. The arrival of the daffodils implies beginning or rebirth for human beings. The poet imagined that the daffodils were dancing and invoking him to join and enjoy the breezy nature of the fields. He compares them to the innumerable stars in the night sky. He also compares the movement of the sparkling lake to the 'sprightly dance' of the daffodils. Merely watching these flowers, changed his lonely sad mood to one of joy. The mesmerizing effect of these flowers gained a place in his heart which he would recollect even years later when he could see them no more.

### Pre-reading

Talk to students about Wordsworth and his love for nature. You may refer to the author-note in the Reader.

Zoom the image on the screen and let students describe the flowers they see. / Let students look at the image in the Reader and describe the flowers.

### READING

*Students comprehend, analyse, make note of literary devices.*

Play the audio track and let students listen to the poem. Pause after each stanza and discuss/conduct comprehension checks.

**Stanza 1:** Setting – Magnificence of the scene (thousands of golden daffodils)

Ask students:

*How does the speaker contrast his position with that of the daffodils? (The speaker is alone and therefore sad whereas the daffodils are countless in number and happy to sway in the breeze together.) Why does the speaker compare himself to a cloud? (He is probably trying to explain his sense of loneliness and*

*perhaps a sadness that may come with being lonely like a cloud that is all alone.) Why does the poet use the word 'golden'? (The picture of the yellow daffodils reflecting bright sunshine gives them a stunning golden hue.) What does the poet compare the daffodils to here? (Stars that twinkle and shine on the Milky Way)*

Explain / Reinforce the concept of similes.

*Discuss the tone in this stanza? (Sad and forlorn)*

**Stanza 2:** Description of the flowers through personification and comparison.

*How has the poet compared the flowers in the second stanza? (With the innumerable stars*

that twinkle continuously along the Milky Way) *How is personification dealt with in this stanza?* (They looked like people dancing in gay abandon.)

Discuss the tone: a positive tone with a touch of cheer

**Stanza 3:** Relationship between nature (daffodils) and the poet.

*What did the daffodils out perform? How?* (The waves that shone and sparkled in the sun were overshadowed by the golden and radiant daffodils that moved in rhythmic beauty in the breeze.) *What change does the poet feel within?* (He does not feel lonely any more as the captivating scene has filled his heart and mind with immense joy. He is able to get over his gloominess and feel happy when he identifies himself with the dancing daffodils.)

Discuss the tone: joyous and happy

**Stanza 4:** Recollection; consequences of the experience

*How is this stanza different from the others?* (In the last stanza, he is no more with the daffodils. Instead, he is in his home recollecting the lovely scene that fills him with a sense of joy.)

The tone here is one of tranquillity, peace and pleasure

Theme: Man need never feel alone when he is one with Nature.

### Poetic devices

*Simile:* Comparison (using *as*) *as a cloud; as the stars... milky way.*

By comparing himself to a cloud and the daffodils to the Milky Way, Wordsworth connects Man with Nature in cosmic harmony.

*Personification:* Comparison of the cloud to a lonely human.

*Personification/Metaphor:* Comparison of daffodils to a crowd of people; Comparison of daffodils to dancing people

*Alliteration:* lonely as a cloud, high o'er vales and Hills, When all at once (*Note: w and o* have the same consonant sound.), beside the Lake, beneath the trees

*Hyperbole:* Ten thousand saw I (to give a sense of profusion)

### Rhyme scheme

The poem contains four stanzas of six lines each. In each stanza, the first line rhymes with the third and the second with the fourth. The stanza then ends with a rhyming couplet.

*Rhyme scheme:* a b a b c c

### Structure

The first three stanzas talk about the poet's experience beside the lake and the fourth stanza is all about the memory of that experience.

### Post-reading

Work in pairs and explain how the poet has dealt with the three elements of nature— Land, water and air.

(*Suggested answer:* The poet has used all the three elements in the poem to compare and portray the daffodils.

*Land:* Vales and hills contrast his lonely state with the joyous stretch of flowers. The word *bay* is used to describe their very existence along the stretch.

*Water:* Lake and waves

*Air:* breeze

These words are used to portray the daffodils as lovely, joyous flowers.)

## STUDENTS' BOOK ANSWER KEY

### Daffodils

#### Comprehension

- A.**
1. The speaker compares himself to a cloud that floats over valleys and hills.
  2. The word 'wandered' conveys the delicate movement of a floating cloud. The speaker, much like the cloud, is not guided by any sense of direction. The word 'walked' would not convey the same image as 'wandered'. The word 'wandered' creates the impression of a carefree soul. 'Wandered' sounds more poetic than 'walked'.
  3. The speaker sees the daffodils beneath the trees beside the lake.
  4. The daffodils are compared to the stars in the sky because they are countless in number and they stretched in a never-ending line.
  5. The daffodils competed with the waves as they both danced in delight. However, the daffodils danced more gleefully.  
The 'jocund company' of the daffodils made the poet happy and he could not help but gaze at them constantly. The daffodils made a lasting impression on the speaker—a wealth that he would cherish in the future.
  6. The speaker remembered the daffodils later, while lying on his couch. The image of the daffodils suddenly came to the mind of the speaker in his solitude. This memory filled his heart with pleasure and once again, his heart rejoiced, just as it did that day with the daffodils.
- B.**
1.
    - a. The speaker felt light-hearted and happy when he saw the daffodils.
    - b. The phrases 'beside the lake' and 'beneath the trees' convey what the speaker had observed. The reader understands that the speaker's encounter with the daffodils was not imaginary, it happened in real life.
    - c. The speaker conveys the idea that there were lots of them by using the words 'crowd' and 'host'.
  2.
    - a. 'They' refers to the daffodils that the speaker had seen.
    - b. The 'inward eye' or the mind sees them when the speaker thinks of the daffodils in his solitude.  
The speaker's mind brings back the image when he is in a thoughtful mood.
    - c. The image fills the speaker's mind with pleasure and it seems that his heart dances with the daffodils again. The speaker loves nature. He is aware of the wealth of abundance that nature provides. The daffodils, thousands of them dancing in glee, had a strong impact on the speaker's mind. The speaker's mind brings back the image and draws happiness from it whenever he is in a pensive mood.
- C.**
1. The speaker shifts to the present tense in the last stanza after describing the daffodils. This conveys the fact that the observation of the daffodils happened in the past and the speaker is writing or speaking about them in retrospect. It also shows that the speaker's mind recollects the past while in a thoughtful mood.
  2. The 'inward eye' or the mind is the seat of intellect. The human mind brings forward new and revolutionary ideas with its creative abilities. The inward eye is capable of

bringing forth new ideas at a time when the person is relaxed and in deep thought.

3. The words 'lonely', 'sad', 'blissful' and 'pensive' describe the mood of the poem. It is evident from the poem that the speaker is used to wandering amidst nature. Sights from nature add the delightful and peaceful qualities to the poem. While loneliness brings sadness, the speaker can turn to nature and change his loneliness into blissful solitude. The poem paints a thought-provoking picture of a musing individual who feels a deep sense of attachment with nature.

### **Appreciating the Poem**

1. Another simile from the poem is 'Continuous as the stars that shine / And twinkle on the Milky Way'.
2. The similes have contributed to the beauty of the poem. The use of similes allows the poet to bring together bright and colourful images in order to describe the beauty of nature.

### **Vocabulary**

1. wandered
2. crowd
3. margin
4. sparkling
5. bliss
6. solitude

### **Going Further**

*Free response*

## QUESTION BANK

### Daffodils

#### A. Answer in brief.

How does the mood of the poet change in the poem Daffodils?

**Ans:** In the beginning, the poet describes himself as a lonely cloud that floats over the hills and valleys, thus creating a melancholic feeling. This feeling soon gives way to one of joy in the presence of rows of daffodils. The poet, who is a lover of nature, is transmitted from a world of loneliness to one of long-lasting happiness at the sight of these golden-yellow flowers that provide much comfort to his lonely heart.

#### B. Answer in detail.

Describe the lasting impression of the daffodils on the poet.

**Ans:** The poet was captivated by the beauty of the daffodils which he saw near the trees and by the side of the river. The daffodils tossing their heads as if dancing to the tune of the breeze, and sparkling like the stars in the galaxy, in their vibrant golden colour, gave him immense instant pleasure. At that moment, he never realised that this delightful experience would never vanish from his mind, and whenever lonely or sad, the very flash of the golden daffodils in his mind made him happy again.

#### C. Choose the correct answer.

*The waves besides them danced, but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee;*

What effect did this sight have on the poet?

- He was able to make a beautiful comparison between the daffodils and the sparkling waves.
- He felt like dancing along with the daffodils.
- He felt extremely happy and delighted in the cheerful company of the flowers.

**Ans:** c

#### D. Read the lines and answer the questions.

*Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay*

- What does 'they' refer to?
- What does the poet compare them to?
- Why does he do so?

**Ans:** a. 'They' refers to the daffodils.

- The poet compares them to the galaxy of innumerable stars in the sky.
- The glowing daffodils, sparkling in the sunlight, were stretched along the bay. This appeared like twinkling stars in the sky, to the poet.

#### E. Answer in brief. (Think and answer)

How does the poet make use of contrast in the poem 'Daffodils'?

**Ans:** The poet was all alone, while the bright and lively daffodils stretched along the bay and were close together. He appeared to be in a melancholy mood, while in contrast, the daffodils fluttered and danced, tossing their heads displaying exuberance in their movement.