

About Ben Adhem

Lesson Plan

This poem is based on old Arabic lore. It focuses on an event in the life of a Sufi saint Abou Ben Adhem. Ben Adhem encounters an angel who is writing a record of those who love God.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- Learning about the rewards of living a life of service to one's fellow-men and God.
- Reading and reciting the poem with the correct rhythm and emphasis.
- Answering questions on the poem.
- Learning words, meanings, spellings, pronunciation, rhymes.

Read and Enjoy

- * This poem is written by Leigh Hunt, who wrote in the 19th century. It is based on old Arabic lore. It is said that once a year, God takes the golden book of mankind and selects those persons who are dear to him and who love him.
- * Read aloud and enjoy the rhythm, rhyme and meaning of the poem.
- * It is written in couplets – two rhyming lines in a set rhythm.
- * Explain the poem so that the students understand how the poet talks about service to and love for one's fellow-men is the highest form of prayer and such persons are very dear to God.
- * Explain the background of the poem clearly to the students. It reflects the divine conversation between an angel from God and a sufi saint, Abou Ben Adhem, who loves his fellow-men and serves them. In God's eyes, this is the greatest form of showing love for God.
- * Explain phrases like: may his tribe increase [a commonly used blessing or greeting]; making it rich [enriched by the angel's presence and the light]; a book of gold [for judging men]; a great wakening light [not only waking Abou, but making him conscious of God's blessing]; and old words like 'writest', 'thou', 'nay', etc.; and simile: like a lily in bloom.

Outcome: Reading reciting and understanding the poem.

Read and Understand

- * Discuss the exercises and ask the students to answer orally, before writing the answers down.

* Ask them to learn the poem and recite it correctly in turns in the class. Correct them where necessary.

Outcome: Answering questions on the poem.