

The Alchemist

Poem

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| <p>✧ Let the students sit in groups and discuss. Encourage them to be creative and think how the magic tricks might have been done. The Internet can be used to find the solutions of those tricks that seem to be too difficult.</p> | <p>Get Going!</p> |
| <p>✧ This poem by Gareth Owen is about an alchemist. An alchemist was a person who turned metal into gold. Often, he was perceived as a magician, a sorcerer or a wizard. Therefore, many superstitions about a wizard or wicked sorcerer were attached to him too. In the five stanzas comprising the poem, the poet tells us about what everyone believes about the alchemist.</p> <p>✧ Stanza 1: The poet says that people see a light burning in a house all through the night. Therefore, some of them believe an alchemist lives there. He has books full of magic spells and, like a wizard, he has a cat too.</p> <p>✧ Stanza 2: Other people imagine he has claws and a beak like a bird of prey and keeps rats, vampire bats and a talking raven for company.</p> <p>✧ Stanza 3: Children are afraid to go to his house or even to peep in. They dare each other to go up to his house and knock on the door as a prank. A superstition has grown around his house that whoever has gone there has never come back.</p> <p>✧ Stanza 4: So many strange and scary rumours have sprung up around the alchemist and his house. His furnace turns iron and bronze into gold ingots; he makes a powder which, if consumed, will make you immortal and keep you young always!</p> <p>✧ Stanza 5: No one is sure if he is a wizard or a saint, but they say that he 'eats toads for his tea'. The poet is, therefore, so terrified that he doesn't wish to visit the alchemist for fear that he too will be eaten up by him!</p> <p>✧ Explain the poem clearly to the students so that they understand when the poet says how separating the truth from gossip, rumour and superstition is difficult. This poem also shows how creative a child's imagination can be.</p> | <p>Read and Enjoy</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Exercises A-C: Do the exercises orally first and then ask the students to write the answers in their books/notebooks. Check and assess their work individually. |
| Think and Answer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Exercise A: Do the exercise orally first and then ask the students to write the answer in their notebooks. Check and assess their work individually. |
| Appreciating the Poem | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Exercise A: The students are already familiar with alliteration as it has been covered in the previous poem. Repetition, on the other hand, can be defined as a certain word, sentence, sound or phrase that is repeated to provide clarity and emphasis in the text. For example, take the following lines from Samuel Taylor Coleridge's 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner': Alone, alone, all, all alone,/Alone on a wide, wide sea. ✧ In eleven words, 'alone' is repeated four times, while 'all' and 'wide' are repeated twice each. The words help to emphasise the intensity of the speaker's loneliness and solitude in the vastness of the sea. The repetition here evokes the image of an insignificant dot floating in an endless nothingness - a loneliness without end. Repetition also allows for a sense of rhythm in a literary work, particularly in poetry. ✧ Exercises A and B: Do them orally first. Then ask the students to write the answers in their books/notebooks. Announce the answers aloud and let them check their own work. |
| Write Well | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Exercise A: Explain the question first and then let the students write the paragraph on their own. It is advisable to check each work individually. |
| AIL Activity (Experiential Learning) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Exercise A: Help and guide the students by telling them from where they can get the required information. Then let them paste the pictures and write about the magicians, as required. Display their work in class. |