

# The Seven Ages of Man

Poem

<b>Get Going</b>	✧ Explain and discuss the question in class. Guide the discussion by making the students come up with new and creative ideas.
<b>Read and Enjoy</b>	<p>✧ The poem 'Seven Ages of Man' is an extract taken from one of Shakespeare's famous comedies, 'As You Like It.' It narrates the life cycle of a man by comparing it to a play. It describes the different stages of a man's life from infancy to death. The poem is 28 lines long. It does not have a rhyme scheme, but it is written in iambic pentameter. This means that every line has a rhythm of five beats.</p> <p>✧ Lines 1-3: In these opening lines, Shakespeare sets up the metaphor that life is like a play or drama, with people playing different roles on the stage. He describes how people come and go in life, with their 'exits' (deaths) and 'entrances' (births).</p> <p>✧ Lines 4-5: Shakespeare continues the metaphor by saying that each person plays multiple roles throughout his/her life, which can be divided into seven distinct 'ages' or stages'.</p> <p>✧ Lines 5-6: The first stage of life is infancy, where the baby is completely dependent on its caregiver and communicates through crying and vomiting.</p> <p>✧ Lines 7-9: The second stage is childhood, when the child is sent to school and may be resistant to the idea of learning, represented here by the metaphor of a 'whining schoolboy' who moves slowly, like a snail, towards school.</p> <p>✧ Lines 9-11: The third stage is adolescence, where the young person experiences intense emotions and often becomes infatuated with someone he/she is romantically interested in. The metaphor of 'sighing like furnace' represents the passion and intensity of these feelings.</p> <p>✧ Lines 11-15: The fourth stage is young adulthood, where the person may become a soldier and engage in acts of honour and bravery, but also be prone to jealousy and impulsiveness. The metaphor of being 'bearded like the pard' (a leopard) implies that the person is proud and fierce.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✧ Lines 15-19: The fifth stage is middle age, where the person may become a judge or other authority figure, characterised by a full belly and a formal appearance. The phrase ‘wise saws and modern instances’ means wise sayings and current examples, suggesting that the person has a wealth of knowledge and experience.</li> <li>✧ Lines 19-25: The sixth stage is old age, where the person becomes physically weak and their clothing and appearance may seem outdated. The metaphor of the ‘lean and slippered pantaloons’ implies a frail and worn-out body. The person’s voice may also become higher and more childlike.</li> <li>✧ Lines 25-28: The final stage is death, represented here as a return to a second childhood, with the loss of all physical and mental faculties. The poet implies that just before man dies and returns to oblivion or nothingness, he becomes a child again because he has no teeth, no eyes and no taste. He loses everything to become a child again and then face his death.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✧ Exercises A, B and C: Read and explain the questions, clarifying doubts, if any. Ask the students to answer them on their own. Check and assess their work individually.</li> </ul>	<b>Read and Understand</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✧ Exercise A: Discuss the question and then let the students do it on their own. Make sure they give logical reasons for their choice. Check and assess their work individually.</li> </ul>	<b>Think and Answer</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✧ Brush up on simile and metaphor, which we have already covered in the earlier classes. Simile and metaphor are two powerful literary devices used in literature, especially poetry, to create vivid imagery and convey complex emotions and ideas. Simile is a figure of speech that compares two unlike things using the words ‘like’ or ‘as’. For example, ‘Her eyes were like stars in the sky’. Metaphor, on the other hand, is a figure of speech that directly equates two things without using ‘like’ or ‘as’. For example, ‘Her eyes were stars in the sky’.</li> <li>✧ Metaphors and similes are used to make comparisons, highlight similarities or differences, and create a deeper understanding of a concept or idea. They add depth, beauty, and emotion to the text and help readers connect with the characters and the story on a deeper level.</li> <li>✧ Exercise A: Let the students do the exercise on their own. Then, announce the answer or write it on the blackboard so that they can check their own work.</li> </ul>	<b>Appreciating the Poem</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✧ Exercise A: Help and guide the students in performing this activity. Make groups and select the students to enact the conversation or play. Assess the students kindly.</li> </ul>	<b>AIL Activity (Experiential Learning)</b>