

Hope is the Thing with Feathers

Poem

<p>✧ Explain and discuss the question in class. How does one cope with sad moments? What does one hope for at these times? Encourage the students to speak freely. Assess them gently.</p>	<p>Get Going!</p>
<p>✧ Emily Dickinson's poem 'Hope is the Thing with Feathers' is perceived to have been published in 1891. It was published posthumously as 'Poems by Emily Dickinson' in her second collection by her sister. In the poem, Emily Dickinson has successfully rendered an abstract subject, i.e., hope in concrete terms. Hope is personified as a feathered bird which resides in man's soul. It sufficiently equips a person to courageously face the challenges of life.</p> <p>✧ Stanza 1: The poem opens with a metaphorical comparison between hope and a bird. The word 'thing' is deliberately vague, implying that hope is something that is difficult to define or grasp, much like a bird. The use of the word 'feathers' suggests a sense of lightness, freedom, and grace.</p> <p>✧ The image of the bird perching in the soul creates a vivid picture of hope as something that dwells within us. This line also suggests that hope is a permanent fixture, something that remains with us even in difficult times.</p> <p>✧ The bird (hope) sings a tune, but it is a tune without words. This implies that hope is a feeling that cannot be put into words. It is something that we feel deep within us, but cannot necessarily express or articulate.</p> <p>✧ The bird's song is constant; it never stops. This suggests that hope is something that remains with us, even in times of darkness and despair. The use of the word 'never' reinforces the idea of hope as a permanent fixture, something that endures even when everything else may crumble.</p> <p>✧ Stanza 2: The line 'And sweetest - in the Gale is heard' implies that hope is strongest in the midst of turmoil and chaos. The word 'gale' suggests a powerful storm or tempest, and yet it is in these moments that the bird's song (hope) is sweetest. This reinforces the idea that hope is something that remains with us even in difficult times.</p>	<p>Read and Enjoy</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ The use of the word 'sore' suggests that the storm is painful or difficult to endure. This line acknowledges that the storm exists, but also implies that hope can help us weather it. The word 'abash' means to embarrass or disconcert, and suggests that there are things in life that could cause the bird to stop singing. However, the use of the word 'little' also implies that hope is delicate and vulnerable, yet resilient. ✧ The bird's song (hope) has the power to comfort and sustain many people. The line 'That kept so many warm -' suggests that hope is something that is shared among people, and has the power to bring warmth and comfort to many. ✧ Stanza 3: The speaker has personally experienced the bird's song (hope) in the coldest and bleakest of places. The line 'I've heard it in the chilliest land -' reinforces the idea that hope can be found even in the most difficult of circumstances. ✧ The bird's song (hope) can also be heard on the strangest of seas, suggesting that hope can be found in even the most unfamiliar or unsettling of places. ✧ The use of the word 'never' reinforces the idea that hope is a constant presence, even in the most extreme of circumstances. The final line of the poem suggests that hope requires very little from us. It only asks for a 'crumb', or a small offering, implying that hope is something that is freely available to us, if we are willing to seek it out.
<p style="text-align: center;">Read and Understand</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ 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.
<p style="text-align: center;">Appreciating the Poem</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Explain the terms: extended metaphor, anaphora and personification. An extended metaphor is a figure of speech that compares two things at length and in detail. It is an extended version of a metaphor and creates a sustained comparison in which several elements of a comparison are used to represent the same idea. For example, in Langston Hughes' 'Dream Deferred', the metaphor of a 'raisin in the sun' is used to describe a deferred dream. The speaker asks if a dream deferred 'dries up like a raisin in the sun', suggesting that the dream may wither and become unfulfilled if it is not pursued.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Anaphora is a rhetorical device in which a word or phrase is repeated at the beginning of successive clauses or sentences for emphasis. This technique is often used to create a sense of rhythm or to emphasise a particular idea or emotion. For example, in Maya Angelou's 'Still I Rise', the repeated phrase 'I rise' emphasises the speaker's resilience in the face of adversity. 'I rise / I rise / I rise' creates a sense of momentum and strength. ✧ Personification is a figure of speech in which an object or animal is given human qualities or characteristics. This technique is often used to make an idea or object more vivid or relatable. For example, in William Wordsworth's 'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud', the speaker personifies the daffodils, describing them as 'fluttering and dancing in the breeze' and 'tossing their heads in sprightly dance'. This personification makes the daffodils seem more alive and vibrant. ✧ Exercises A-C: Let the students do the exercises on their own. Then, announce the answers or write them on the blackboard so that they can check their own work. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Discuss the question in class. Then let the students write the paragraph on their own. Check and assess their work individually. 	Write Well
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Exercise A: Help and guide the students in performing this activity. Provide the students chart paper from school or tell them to bring their own. Then let them do the exercise on their own. Check and assess their work individually. 	AIL Activity (Experiential Learning)