

Fire and Ice

Thinking about the Poem (Page 15)

Question 1:

There are many ideas about how the world will 'end'. Do you think the world will end someday? Have you ever thought what would happen if the sun got so hot that it 'burst', or grew colder and colder?

Answer:

There are multiple theories about how the world will 'end'. Yes, I do believe that the world will end someday as we all know that every particular thing which begins also has an end to it. This holds true for the world too, that if the Sun got so hot and it bursts, the entire life on Earth would perish immediately as the planet would not be able to tolerate the intensity of heat. On the contrary, if the Sun grew colder and colder, it is obvious that life will come to an end without sunlight. We are aware of the fact that sunlight is a rich source of energy to all the planets in the solar system.

Question 2:

For Frost, what do 'fire' and 'ice' stand for? Here are some ideas:

greed	avarice	cruelty	lust
conflict	fury	intolerance	rigidity
insensitivity	coldness	indifference	hatred

Answer:

'Fire' stands for greed, avarice, lust, conflict and fury. 'Ice' stands for cruelty, intolerance, rigidity, insensitivity, coldness, indifference and hatred.

Question 3:

What is the rhyme scheme of the poem? How does it help in bringing out the contrasting ideas in the poem?

Answer:

The rhyme scheme of the poem is: a, b, a, a, b, c, b, c, b.

This rhyme scheme helps in projecting the contrasting ideas of 'fire' and 'ice' that are presented in the poem. The poet Frost mentions both fire and ice as the probable ends of the planet Earth. He talks about how 'fire' represents desire and might be a possible cause of the end of the world. The poet also mentions 'ice' in the poem to symbolize the coldness and indifference that people might have towards one another, which will be a reason good enough to end the world. In the second stanza of the poem, the poet says that he knows enough about hate in this world and is sure that even destruction through hatred (ice) would be sufficient and adequate to bring about an end to the planet Earth.