

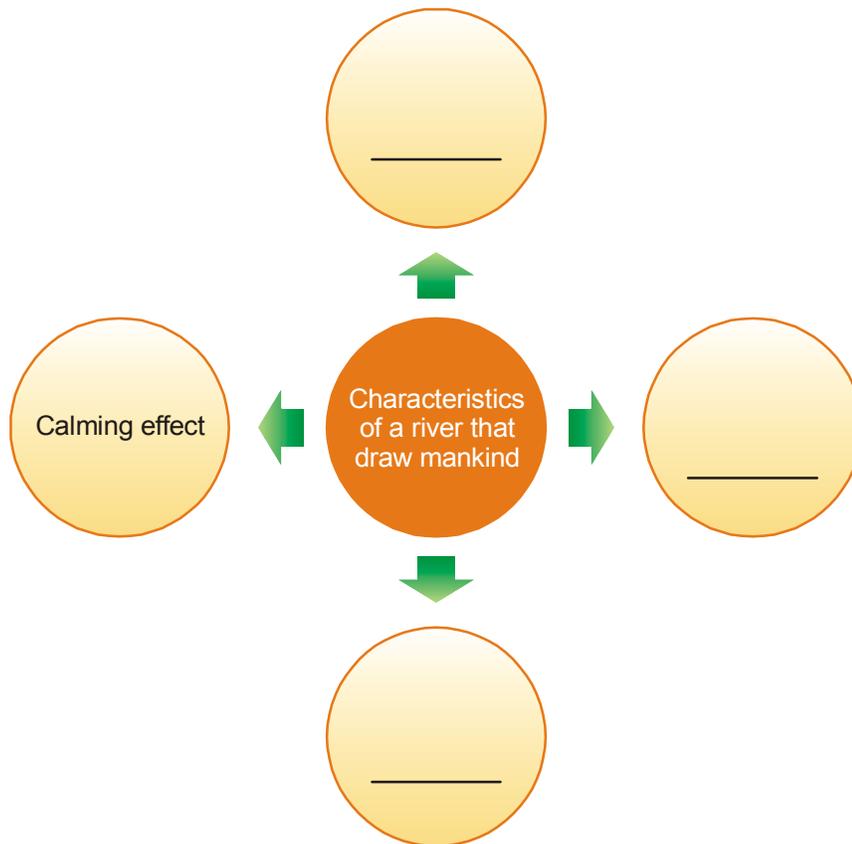
**POETRY**



## P.1 The Brook

by Lord Alfred Tennyson

1. *Since centuries, human beings have always been drawn to rivers, streams and other natural sources of water. Can you think of some characteristics of a river that make it fascinating to mankind?*



2. *Here is a list of a few things. Can you tell how long each of them can live /exist?*

- |                   |                 |            |
|-------------------|-----------------|------------|
| (a) a dog         | (b) an elephant | (c) a tree |
| (d) a human being | (e) a star      |            |
| (f) a mountain    | (g) a river     |            |

3. *The poem is about a brook. A dictionary would define a brook, as a stream or a small river. Read the poem silently first. After the first reading, the teacher will make you listen to a recording of the poem. What do you think the poem is all about?*

I come from **haunts** of **coot** and **hern**;

I make a sudden **sally**

And sparkle out among the fern,

To **bicker** down a valley.

- 5 By thirty hills I hurry down,  
Or slip between the ridges,  
By twenty **thorpes**, a little town,  
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow

- 10 To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

I chatter over stony ways,  
In little sharps and **trebles**,

- 15 I bubble into **eddy**ing bays,  
I **babble** on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret  
By many a field and **fallow**,

- And many a fairy **foreland** set  
20 With willow-weed and **mallow**.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow  
To join the brimming river,



**haunts:** places frequently visited by

**coot:** a type of water bird with a white spot on the forehead

**hern:** heron, (another kind of water bird)

**sally:** emerge suddenly

**bicker:** (here) flow down with a lot of noise

**thorpes:** a village

**trebles:** high pitched tune

**eddy**ing: spiral movement of water

**babble:** sound made when one talks gaily

**fallow:** land left uncultivated to regain fertility

**foreland:** piece of land that extends into a river etc.

**mallow:** plant with hairy stems and leaves and pink, white or purple flowers

For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

25 I wind about, and in and out,  
With here a blossom sailing,  
And here and there a **lusty trout**,  
And here and there a **grayling**,

And here and there a foamy flake  
30 Upon me, as I travel  
With many a silvery waterbreak  
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow  
To join the brimming river  
35 For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,  
I slide by **hazel** covers

I move the sweet **forget-me-nots**  
40 That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,  
Among my skimming swallows;  
I make the netted sunbeam dance  
Against my sandy shallows.

45 I murmur under moon and stars  
In brambly wildernesses;  
I linger by my **shingly** bars;  
I loiter round my **cresses**;

And out again I curve and flow  
50 To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.




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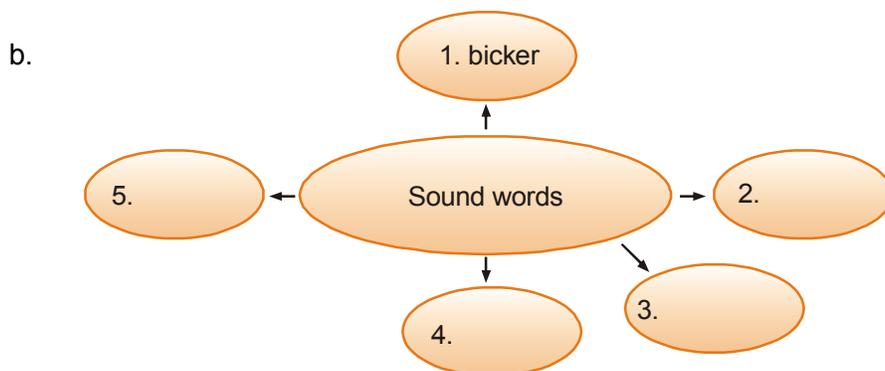
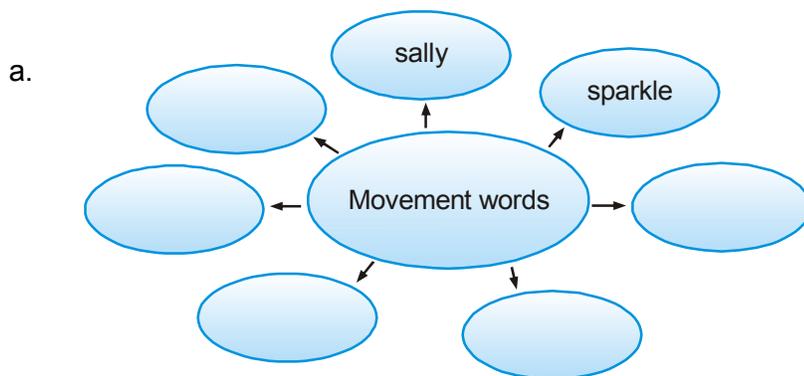
**lusty trout:** a big freshwater fish  
**grayling:** another type of fresh water fish  
**hazel:** a small tree or bush with edible nuts  
**forget-me-nots :** a type of flowers  
**shingly:** covered with small rounded pebbles  
**cresses:** a pungent leaved plant like a cabbage

**About the Poet**

Lord Tennyson (1809-92) was born in Lincolnshire. Poet Laureate for over 40 years, Tennyson is representative of the Victorian age. His skilled craftsmanship and noble ideals retained a large audience for poetry in an age when the novel was engrossing more and more readers. Tennyson's real contribution lies in his shorter poems like **The Lady of Shalot, The Princess, Ulysses, The Palace of Art** etc. His fame rests on his perfect control of sound, the synthesis of sound and meaning, and the union of visual and musical.

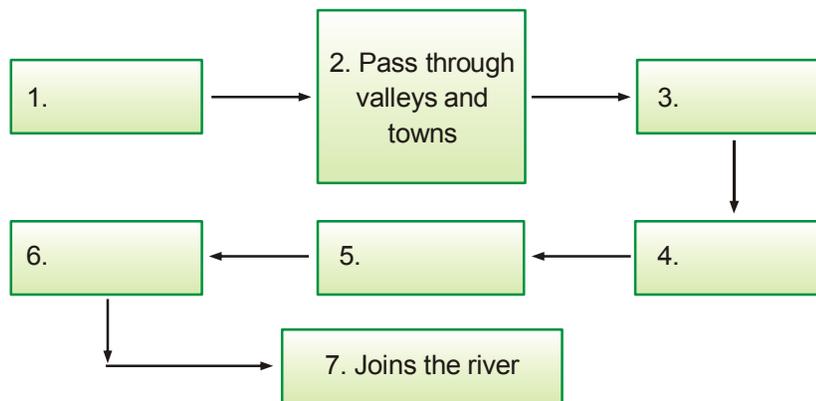
**4. After reading the poem, answer the following questions.**

The poet has used a number of words which indicate 'movement' and 'sound'. Working with your partner make a list of these words from the poem and complete the web chart.



c. A word or a combination of words, whose sound seems to resemble the sound it denotes (for example: "hiss", "buzz", "etc.) is called onomatopoeia. From the words that you have filled in the blurbs above point out these words.

5. **The following is a flow chart showing the course of the brook. Can you fill in the blank spaces with help from the phrases given below?**



a) passes under fifty bridges; b) comes from the place where coots and herons live; c) passes lawns filled with flowers; d) crosses both fertile and fallow land; e) goes through wilderness full of thorny bushes

6. **On the basis of your understanding of the poem, answer the following questions by ticking the correct choice.**

- (a) The message of the poem is that the life of a brook is \_\_\_\_\_.
- temporary
  - short-lived
  - eternal
  - momentary
- (b) The poet draws a parallelism between the journey of the brook with \_\_\_\_\_
- the life of a man
  - the death of man
  - the difficulties in a man's life
  - the endless talking of human beings
- (c) In the poem, the below mentioned lines suggest that \_\_\_\_\_.
- "And here and there a lusty trout ,  
And here and there a grayling"*
- the brook is a source of life.
  - people enjoy the brook.
  - fishes survive because of water.
  - the brook witnesses all kinds of scenes.

- (d) Select the option that matches the given words/phrases with the appropriate literary device used by the poet.

Words	Literary Device
i) Chatter; Babble; Murmur	1. Alliteration- the occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words
ii) Men may come and men may go but I go on forever	2. Onomatopoeia-the formation of a word from a sound associated with what is named
iii) fairly foreland; with willow seed; foamy flake; golden gravel	3. Inversion - reversal of the normal order of the words and phrases in a sentence
	4. Refrain - a word, line or phrase that is repeated within the lines or stanzas of the poem itself.

(i) i-2, ii-1, iii-4

(ii) i-4, ii-2, iii-3

(iii) i-2, ii-4, iii-1

(iv) i-1, ii-2, iii-3

- (e) The first-person narration of the brook allows the reader to

- (i) appreciate Tennyson's use of symbols.
- (ii) realize the ultimate goal of the brook.
- (iii) experience the soothing effect of the sound of water.
- (iv) understand the brook's experience as a living organism

**6.B. Read the given extracts and answer the questions that follow by selecting the correct options.**

**A.** *With many a curve my banks I fret  
By many a field and fallow,  
And many a fairy foreland set  
With willow-weed and mallow.*

- (i) Choose the option that best describes the brook's journey in the given stanza.

It is a journey full of \_\_\_\_\_ .

- a) comfort and luxury
- b) trials and tribulations

- c) sorrow and misery  
d) joy and laughter
- (ii) The poet has used the pronoun 'I' to refer to the brook and thus employed a literary device in his depiction. Choose the option that uses the same literary device as used in the first line.
- a) The magnitude of the bottomless ocean was divine.  
b) The angry walls echoed his fury.  
c) A mother is like a lioness protecting her cubs.  
d) I felt the power of the gushing stream.
- (iii) The brook seems to be fretting in the given stanza. This word has been used by the poet to depict the \_\_\_\_\_ of the flowing brook.
- a) force  
b) kindness  
c) silence  
d) beauty

**B.**

*I linger by my shingly bars;  
I loiter round my cresses;  
And out again I curve and flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on forever.*

- (i) Choose the option that includes words that best describe the characteristics of the brook, as revealed in the given extract.
1. perpetual                      2. silent                      3. twisted  
4. unbound                      5. interrupted
- a) 1, 3 and 4  
b) 1, 2, 4 and 5  
c) 1, 2, and 3  
d) 1, 2 and 4
- (ii) The line, 'men may come and men may go'
- a) mocks the shortness of the brook's life as it goes through its journey.  
b) highlights the eternal nature of human life as opposed to its own.  
c) contrasts the eternal nature of brook against short-lived human life-span.  
d) highlights the eternal story of men that the brook comes across during its journey.

- iii) What do the words, 'linger and loiter' show about the brook?
- Its continuity
  - Its slow movement
  - Its powerful force
  - Its ultimate purpose

**7. Answer the following questions.**

- Why does the brook 'sparkle' ?
- 'Bicker' means 'to quarrel'. Why does the poet use this word here?
- Why has the word 'chatter' been repeated in the poem?
- 'I wind about, and in and out'. What kind of a picture does this line create in your mind?
- What does the poet want to convey by using the words 'steal' and 'slide'?
- 'I make the netted sunbeam dance'. What does 'the netted sunbeam' mean? How does it dance?
- What is a 'refrain' in a poem? What effect does it create?
- Why has the poet used the word 'brimming' in the line, 'to join the brimming river'?

**9. Identify the rhyme scheme of the poem, The Brook.**

- 10. The poem is full of images that come alive through skilful use of words. Describe any two images that appeal to you the most, quoting the lines from the poem.**
- 11. The brook appears to be a symbol for life. Pick out examples of parallelism between human life and the brook from the poem.**
- 12. This poem describes the journey of a stream from its place of origin to the river that it joins. The poem has been written in the form of an autobiography where the brook relates its experiences as it flows towards the river. In Literature, such a device by which an inanimate object is made to appear as a living creature is called Personification. Just as the brook has been personified in this poem, write a poem on any inanimate object making it come alive. You could begin with a poem of 6-8 lines. The poem should have a message. Maintain a rhyme scheme. Try and include similes, metaphors, alliteration etc. to enhance the beauty of the poem. You could write a poem on objects such as a candle/a tree/ a rock/a desert etc.**