

Poem - Fire and Ice

Robert Frost

Glossary

tasted - experienced

perish - die

twice - two times

suffice - be sufficient

destruction - the state or fact of being destroyed

desire - wish

Explanations with Reference to Context

stanza - 1. Some say the world will end in fire  
Some say in ice.  
From what I've tasted of desire  
I hold with those who favour fire.

Reference - These lines have been taken from the poem "Fire and Ice" composed by Robert Frost.

Context - In these lines the poet tells his idea how the world will end.

Explanation - The poet says that one day the world will end. But different people have different opinions. Some people say

that the world will end in fire while some other say that the world will end in ice. Here the poet is referring to his own life and feeling of desires. Fire is compared to desire. The poet agrees that desire can also cause end of the world.

**Stanzas-2** But if it had to perish twice,  
I think I know enough of hate  
To say that for destruction ice  
Is also great  
And would suffice.

**Reference-** These lines have been taken from the poem 'Fire and Ice' composed by Robert Frost.

**Context -** The poet says that world will end in fire or in ice. He presents his views in these lines.

**Explanation-** Here the poet presents a satire because the world cannot end twice. For if it is gone, it is gone. Here ice is compared to hatred. He says that he has felt enough hatred in his life. He lets us know that this form of destruction is also a great way to cause end to the world. He tells us that no matter which course we take, the last result will be

the same. He says that if once the world ends with fire (desire) it will be destroyed by hate the next time.

### Thinking about the Poem

Q 1. There are many ideas about how the world will 'end'. Do you think the world will end some day? Have you ever thought what would happen if the sun got so hot that it 'burst', or grew colder and colder?

Ans. Yes, I think that the world will end some day. One of the ideas is 'Global Warming'. If the sun gets so hot that it 'burst', it will burn everything on the earth. On the other hand, if it grows colder and colder, it will freeze everything and the world will perish.

Q 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.

Ans. For Frost, 'fire' stands for greed, avarice and lust. The more one tries to satisfy them, the more they grow. The 'ice'

stands for insensitivity, hatred, coldness, rigidity, cruelty, conflict, fury, intolerance and indifference.

Q 3. What is the rhyme scheme of the poem? How does it help in bringing out the contrasting ideas in the poem?

Ans. The rhyme scheme of the poem is ~~abab~~ abaa, ababa. The whole poem presents two contrasting ideas: 'fire' that is symbolical for desire; and 'ice' that is symbolical for hatred. Lines with 'a' stand for 'fire', and with 'b' for 'Ice'.