

ENGLISH

CHAPTER 7: ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET



ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET

~Summary~

-by John Keats

"On the Grasshopper and Cricket" is a **sonnet** written by **John Keats**. The poem uses **two insects**, namely **grasshopper** and **cricket**, to explain how nature's music is **eternal**.

During the **hot summer**, even when the **birds** known for their songs are worn out and hide among the **cooling trees**, nature's music is kept alive through a **grasshopper's** song. As the grasshopper sings, he moves through the **meadows**, pouncing from a hedge to another. As a result, his songs get carried around, and "**the poetry of earth**" survives through the blistering summer. Later, when the grasshopper is tired after all the fun he had, he goes to get some rest beneath some pleasant grass.

Soon, as the **winter** comes, nature's music is faced with another **existential** crisis. However, the frozen **silence** is broken through the song of a **cricket**. The cricket, whose song and appearance **resembles** that of a grasshopper, keeps the "poetry of earth" alive and reminds people of the warm summer evenings, which ignites **warmth** and **hope** in them.

Hence, the true **poetry of earth** is **life** in itself, and the **two** otherwise insignificant **insects** keep that poetry **alive**.



A grasshopper (top); and a cricket (bottom)

~Conclusion~

The poem teaches us that we shall be joyful and pleasant no matter what are the situations in our life.

NCERT SOLUTIONS**Questions (Page No. 119)**
(Working with the poem)

Question 1. Discuss with your partner the following definition of a poem.

A poem is made of words arranged in a beautiful order. These words, when read aloud with feeling, have a music and meaning of their own.

Answer: A poem is an artistic piece of speech or a few lines which are expressed by the poet like a song with rhythms and metaphors. There is a musical element in the arrangement of words in a poem. The beautifully arranged words in a poem enhance the essence and meaning of the poem. The rhythmic expressions in it carry several ideas and reflect the imaginative power of the poet. An interesting and musical poem has a lasting impact in the minds of the readers as it gives an opportunity to appreciate the beauty of the lines in the poem.

Question 2. 'The poetry of earth' is not made of words. What is it made of, as suggested in the poem?

Answer: The poetry of earth is not just made of words, rather it is composed of the rhythmic songs produced by nature's beautiful creatures. The musical element of nature never ceases to mesmerize us with its ever changing seasons. Summer and winter are considered to be the most difficult seasons for many creatures such as the grasshopper and cricket. These seasons bring with them a lot of joy, sorrow and excitement to such creatures. During summer, the grasshopper excitedly hops around tirelessly in joy and when he is tired, he rests beneath a pleasant weed. On the other hand, a cricket sings with a shrill voice during the dark and lonely nights of the winter season.

Question 3. Find in the poem lines that match the following.

- a. The grasshopper's happiness never comes to an end.
- b. The cricket's song has a warmth that never decreases.

Answer:

a. In summer luxury — he has never done

With his delights,

b. The cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever

Question 4. Which word in stanza 2 is opposite in meaning to 'the frost'?

Answer: In stanza 2, the word that is opposite in meaning to 'the frost' is 'warmth'. The word frost indicates a cold or chill experience. On the other hand, warmth in the poem refers to the cricket's song which brings in warm feelings and can make one feel drowsy and sleepy.

Question 5. The poetry of earth continues round the year through a cycle of two seasons. Mention each with its representative voice.

Answer: The poetry of earth continues round the year through summer and winter. During summer season, the grasshopper hops with joy tirelessly depicting the beautiful poetry of earth. While in the winter season, the cricket's song is like a mesmerizing poetry of earth. Hence, in the poem two different creatures are used as a reference to wisely explain the difference of the two seasons.