

## Chapter Review

- "Fire and Ice" is a short nine-line poem by Robert Frost. It asks how the world will end: in fire or in ice.
- The poet says some people believe the world will end in fire, and some say in ice.
- From his experience of desire, he agrees with those who favour fire. Desire (greed, lust) burns people up and can destroy everything.
- But if the world had to perish twice, he knows enough of hate to say that ice (cold hatred) would also be great and would suffice to destroy it.
- The poem is not really about the sun or the weather. It is about human nature: burning desire and cold hatred can both destroy the world.
- Frost uses a casual, conversational tone and gives a serious warning in very few words.

## Key Terms

**Fire** – Symbol of desire, greed, lust, anger and conflict.

**Ice** – Symbol of hatred, coldness, cruelty and indifference.

**Perish** – To be destroyed or die.

**Suffice** – To be enough.

**Desire** – A strong wish, often greedy.

**Hate** – Strong dislike and ill will.

**Destruction** – Complete ruin.

**Contrast** – A clear difference between two things.

## Diagrams / Flowcharts

### Fire vs Ice

#### Fire

- Greed, avarice, lust
- Conflict and fury
- Burns and destroys quickly

#### Ice

- Cruelty, intolerance
- Coldness, indifference, hatred
- Freezes feelings, destroys slowly

### Idea of the Poem

Some say world ends in fire

Some say in ice

Poet: desire is fire

Hate is also ice and enough

Both are human weaknesses

## About the Poem

- Poet: Robert Frost (1874-1963), American poet.
- Form: 9 lines, uneven line lengths, conversational tone.
- Rhyme scheme: a b a a b c b c b. Fire, desire and ice, twice, suffice rhyme in a linked pattern.

## Poetic Devices

- Symbolism: fire and ice stand for desire and hate.
- Contrast: hot against cold shows two opposite ways of destruction.
- Personal voice: "I hold with those..." gives the poet's own opinion.

- Understatement: "would suffice" is a calm word for a terrible end.
- Irony: two opposite things have the same result.

### Theme / Message

- Greed and hatred, not nature, may end the world. We should control desire and replace hatred with love and warmth.

### Textbook Exercise Questions

**Q.1** Do you think the world will end someday? What if the sun burst or grew colder and colder?

**Ans.** Many theories say so, because everything that begins has an end. If the sun burst, all life would perish from the heat. If it grew colder, life would end without sunlight, which is the main source of energy for the planets.

**Q.2** For Frost, what do fire and ice stand for?

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

**Q.3** What is the rhyme scheme of the poem? How does it bring out the contrasting ideas?

**Ans.** The rhyme scheme is a, b, a, a, b, c, b, c, b.

The pattern links the two contrasting ideas. Fire (desire) is a possible end, and ice (cold hatred and indifference) is another. In the end the poet says that destruction by hatred (ice) would also be enough to end the world.

### Board Exam Questions (Important)

**Q.1** Which does the poet favour, fire or ice? Why?

**Ans.** He first favours fire because he has tasted desire, which can burn up everything. But he adds that hatred (ice) is just as destructive, so both would serve.

**Q.2** Reference to context: "Some say the world will end in fire, Some say in ice." (a) Who says so? (b) What does the poet mean?

**Ans.** (a) The poet reports what some people say. (b) He means that people have different opinions about how the world will end, but he turns it into a comment on human desire and hatred.

**Q.3** What is the central message of the poem? (Value-based)

**Ans.** Uncontrolled greed and cold hatred can destroy humanity. We should live with love, kindness and moderation, so that the world is saved.

**Q.4** MCQ: In the poem, 'ice' stands for (a) anger (b) hatred and indifference (c) greed (d) lust.

**Ans.** Answer: (b) hatred and indifference.