

Question 1.

Based on the above discussions, prepare a critical appreciation of the poem bearing the tips given on page 147 and 148 of the text.

Answer:

The poem 'To sleep' by William Wordsworth, who is known as the high priest of Nature, is an exquisite poem that presents to us some of the finest sights, sounds and movements of Nature. We can see a flock of sheep leisurely passing by one after one; we can hear the sound of rain and the murmuring of bees. We can hear the fall of rivers, winds and seas. We can see the smooth fields, white sheets of water and pure sky. We also hear the melodies of small birds coming from the orchard trees. We hear the cuckoo's melancholy cry.

The poet can't sleep. Maybe he is worried about the bad things happened during the past. In fact he has not slept for a couple of days and this makes him all the more worried. If he does not sleep he won't be able to enjoy the wonderful sights and sounds of the morning. Sleep brings fresh thoughts and joyous health.

'To Sleep' is a sonnet. In the octave (first 8 lines), the poet describes the alluring sights and sounds of Nature. In the sestet (the last 6 lines) he describes his condition without sleep and requests sleep not to run away from him. He also talks about the blessings sleep brings. The rhyming scheme in the octave is abba, abba, and in the sestet it is cdc, cdc.

The poet has used personification effectively. Sleep is pictured as a mistress who is refusing to come to the poet. There is the Rhetorical Question "Without Thee what is all the mornings wealth?" There is onomatopoeia in 'bees murmuring'. There is fine alliteration in 'blessed barrier between'. There is hyperbole in calling sleep as the 'Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health'. On the whole 'To Sleep' is an enjoyable poem with a fine message for all of us.