

## W23 Thoreau and Kilmer

In this assignment you will read and analyze the **ideas** and **word pictures** of two poems. Read each poem and then complete the tables. Use the [“I Notice”](#) doc to help you as you analyze each poem.

### Poem #1: Pray to What Earth by Henry David Thoreau

Pray to what earth does this **sweet cold** belong,  
 Which asks no duties and no conscience?  
 The moon goes up by **leaps, her cheerful path**  
 In some far **summer stratum of the sky**,  
 While **stars with their cold shine bedot** her way.  
 The fields **gleam mildly** back upon the sky,  
 And far and near upon the **leafless shrubs**  
 The **snow dust** still **emits a silver light**.  
 Under the hedge, where **drift banks are their screen**,  
 The titmice now pursue their **downy dreams**,  
 As often in the **sweltering summer nights**  
 The bee doth **drop asleep in the flower cup**,  
 When **evening overtakes him with his load**.  
 By the brooksides, in the **still, genial night**,  
 The more adventurous wanderer may hear  
 The **crystals shoot and form**, and **winter slow**  
**Increase his rule** by gentlest summer means.

Violet - personification  
 Red - unexpected word pictures  
 Blue - unexpected words for action

<p><b>Ideas:</b>                      What the ideas are and how they evolve/shift/turn throughout the poem. Use the “I Notice” form to help you answer this question. Write your answer in the box below.</p>	<p><b>Word Pictures:</b>                      What are the word pictures, descriptions, and non-literal language throughout the poem? Use the “I Notice” form to help you answer this question. Write your answer in the box below.</p>
<p>The poem changes the idea about winter. In the beginning, it talks about a “sweet cold” that asks no duties. At the end, it personifies winter as a king that “increase(s) his rule.”</p>	<p>I FEEL COLD because the poet talks about sweet cold, the cold shine of the stars, and the growth of ice crystals.</p> <p>I SEE SHINING because the poet describes stars bedotting the sky, fields gleaming, and the silver light of snow dust.</p> <p>I FEEL COZY because the author talks about cold, but then describes how a bee falls asleep</p>

in its cozy little flower cup. The idea of titmice having downy dreams is also very cozy.

## Poem #2: Trees by Joyce Kilmer

(For Mrs. Henry Mills Alden)

I think that I shall never see

A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest

Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,

And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in Summer wear

A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;

Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,

But only God can make a tree.

### Ideas:

What the ideas are and how they evolve/shift/turn throughout the poem. Use the "I Notice" form to help you answer this question. Write your answer in the box below.

The idea of admiring nature, trees, and God stays the same in the poem.

I notice many personifications. Trees are described with actions and body parts of people. For instance, the tree lifts its leafy arms to pray.

I notice lots of rhyme, for instance the couplet:

Poems are made by fools like me,  
But only God can make a tree.

### Word Pictures:

What are the word pictures, descriptions, and non-literal language throughout the poem? Use the "I Notice" form to help you answer this question. Write your answer in the box below.

The author has a unique and memorable way of describing things.

She calls a tree a poem, and likens a nest of robins to a hat or hair decoration.

She personifies the tree with an unexpected idea that trees look up at God all day.

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**Final question:**

How do these two poets view nature?

Both poets love nature and give us new ways to think about it. Thoreau gives us a peek inside the secret burrows of the titmouse as they have cozy dreams. He makes us see crystals growing like suddenly drawn swords, shooting out. Joyce Kilmer goes over the top, making trees seem like people, but my grand-mother, who was born in 1920, used to like and recite this poem.