

## 2.3 The Worm

### WARMING UP

- (1) **‘Worms play a very important role in maintaining ecological balance. They are friends of farmers.’**

Form groups and discuss the significance of worms in the above two roles.

- (2) **Think and write down how the following creatures can be useful :**

- (a) Dragonfly : .....  
(b) Spider : .....  
(c) Ants : .....  
(d) Honeybees : .....  
(e) Earthworms : .....

- (3) **Little creatures in nature can also be your teachers.**

**Think and write what we can learn from the following.**

- (a) Bees : .....  
(b) Ants : .....  
(c) Spiders : .....  
(d) Caterpillars : .....

- (4) **Breeding worms to use them to convert organic waste into fertilizer is called vermiculture or vermicomposting.**

- Find out more about Vermiculture and how you can carry out the same in your garden / backyard, to fertilize your plants at home.



## The Worm

Turn, turn thy **hasty** foot aside,  
Nor crush that helpless worm!  
The frame thy **scornful** looks **deride**  
Requir'd a God to form.



The common Lord of all that move,  
From whom **thy being** flow'd,  
A portion of His boundless love  
On that poor worm **bestow'd**.



The sun, the moon, the stars He made  
To all His Creatures free :  
And spreads o'er earth the grassy blade,  
For worms as well as thee.



Let them enjoy their little day,  
Their **lowly bliss** received;  
O do not lightly take away  
The life thou canst not give !



– Thomas Gisborne

- **hasty** : hurried and careless
- **scornful** : filled with hate
- **deride** : express hatred
- ◆ *Why should we take care even of small worms?*
- **thy being** : your life, existence
- **bestow'd** : given as a gift

◆ *What other creations of God are mentioned?*

- **lowly** : humble, simple
- **bliss** : joy, pleasure
- ◆ *Explain the thought in the last two lines in simple words.*

### ENGLISH WORKSHOP

1. Read the poem aloud and you will find some old outdated words that we do not use in everyday language now.

However, some writers / poets use them to impart an old-fashioned flavour to suit the background of their write-up. Such words are called **Archaic words**.

Give the modern words for the archaic words from the poem.

thy .....

being .....

bestow'd .....  
thee .....  
thou .....  
cans't .....

**Read any poem / sonnet by William Shakespeare. Pick out archaic words and guess what they mean.**

**2. The poet uses a device where he directly addresses someone absent or abstract. Such a device is the Figure of Speech called 'Apostrophe'.**

For example : Turn, turn thy hasty foot aside.

- **Pick out any two other lines from the poem that contain an Apostrophe.**

**3. Think and answer in your own words in your notebook.**

- (a) Why does the poet appeal to us, to respect the life of a worm?
- (b) Why do you think God created worms? What is their ecological importance?
- (c) 'Live and let live' is a famous proverb. Which lines from the poem support this proverb?
- (d) Does the poem urge us to protect only worms?

What is the general message conveyed through this poem?

**4. Find from the library or internet other poems composed on tiny living creatures.**

**Try to understand the message in each of them.**

**5. 'Even small things in nature play a big role. So protect nature!'**

**Frame some slogans based on the above topic.**

- **Draft a short speech on the above topic, which you could give at your school assembly.**

- **Use the following steps while drafting.**

- Greeting
- Salutation
- Self - introduction
- Introduction of the topic
- Body of the speech
- Conclusion
- Expression of gratitude to the audience

**6. Paraphrase the poem in your own simple language. Write it down in your notebook.**

**7. Frame a pointwise analysis of the poem 'The Worm'. Use the following points.**

- (a) Poem and poet :
- (b) Theme :
- (c) Tone :
- (d) Structure and stanzas :
- (e) Rhyme and Rhythm :
- (f) Language and Imagery :
- (g) Figures of Speech :

