

Nothing Gold Can Stay by Robert Frost

Imagery, rhyme, alliteration, assonance

Before you read...

As he does in many of his poems, Frost keeps his language simple. However, there are a few words and references in “Nothing Good Can Stay” that might need explanation.

TRICKY WORDS (write definition):

Hue:

Subsides:

PARALLEL STORY:

The Biblical story of the Garden of Eden:

Explore the link on your website—“Garden of Eden: Simplified Version”

Write below, in 2+ sentences, a summary of the biblical account of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Then, in 2+ additional sentences, explain how the loss of beauty and innocence relates to *The Outsiders*.

LITERARY TERMS: (The following literary devices are used in “Nothing Gold Can Stay” by Robert Frost. Write the definition down, from your glossary of literary terms, on Unit Resources)

Rhyme:

Alliteration:

Imagery:

Assonance:

figurative language:

As you read...

POEM TITLE:

“NOTHING GOLD CAN STAY”

1. What do they think it means? In reality, actual gold *does* stay forever. So why this statement in the title?

2. Complete the “Change” worksheet (attachment on my website). Then, answer the following question:

What kind of things do people do to avoid change? Answer with 4-5 ideas in a complete sentence.

Noticing Figurative Language...

We can understand the theme of this short poem by examining its metaphors, especially in the first stanza, where Frost lays out one of his beliefs about life. These are tricky questions. Discuss them in your group in order to answer. I’ve provided a few lines for analysis (no need to do more).

- *Nature’s first green is gold.* How can green be gold? Why this particular green?
- *Her hardest hue to hold.* Explain:
- *Her early leaf’s a flower;/But only so an hour.* Explain. Additionally, is this “hour” meant to be literal?
- *Then leaf subsides to leaf/ So Eden sank to grief:* Explain. You may need to find definitions to words.

- *So dawn goes down to day/ Nothing gold can stay* : Explain. Also, is this always true?

Text as a whole...

Nature's first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf's a flower;
But only so an hour.
Then leaf subsides to leaf.
So Eden sank to grief,
So dawn goes down to day.
Nothing gold can stay.

Theme...

Theme is one of the more elusive (vague) literary terms to define. Consequently, many young readers have difficulty understanding it and knowing its role in a poem. In elementary school, you may have been taught that theme is the “meaning” of a poem, “what the poet is trying to say.” How then should we define theme? Most reference works call it the abstract idea made concrete in a poem or work of prose fiction. (Yuk!!!!) I like to think of it as a larger truth that an author conveys in a particular work, something we can learn that can be written in one sentence. Look at the metaphors Robert Frost uses in his poem “Nothing Gold Can Stay.” What do you think the theme of this poem is? Do you think this might correlate to the theme of *The Outsiders*? Why or why not?

After Reading—Illustrate!

What do you think this poem is about? Is it about the world? Sadness and darkness and mistakes we make that have horrible effects? A sunset? Illustrate the poem on a blank sheet of paper, with color. Use your interpretation of the poem to guide your illustration, and make it neat and nice.