

The Lake Isle of Innisfree

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS



About the poet:

W.B Yeats was an Irish poet, born on June 13, 1865. He was one of the foremost figures of 20th century literature. He was awarded with prestigious Nobel Prize in Literature in 1923. Yeats passed away in 1939.





The Lake Isle of Innisfree, Lough Gill, Co. Sligo, Ireland.





The poet W. B. Yeats who himself is the speaker in “The Lake Isle of Innisfree” gives us a peep into his mind and soul. His desire to return to a peaceful, quiet, and natural place, away from the bustle of urban life, brings forth the positive values that govern his life. In the poem, he emerges as a peace-loving fellow who is sick of the hectic, restless, noisy and materialistic life of the cities.

He emerges as a profound lover of natural beauty and tranquillity. His strong nostalgia for the beautiful sights and sounds on the Lake Isle and his desire to lead a simple life of unbroken solitude and peace on the island reveal the simplicity of his heart and mind.

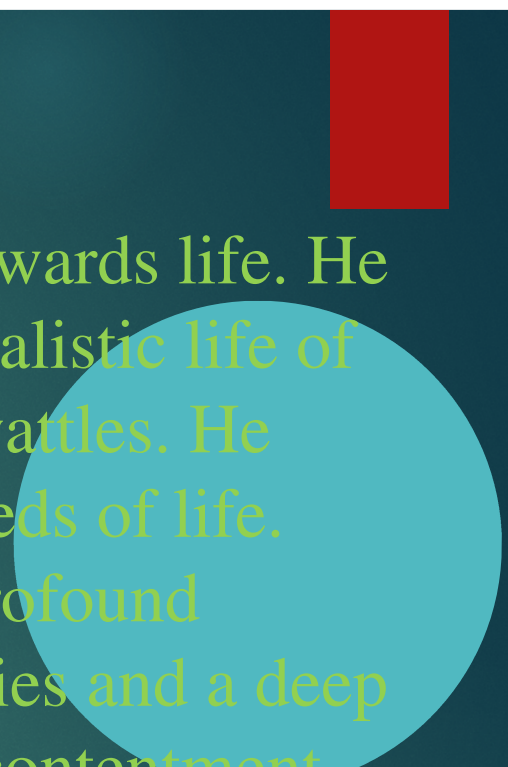


The Lake Isle of Innisfree' is nature versus civilization. What we value in nature is often the exact opposite of what civilization brings. Also, civilization sometimes destroys the peace that nature provides.

It is a musical poem. It explores the poet's longing for the peace and tranquility of Innisfree, a place where he spent a lot of time as a boy. Innisfree is the name of a place. It is a very quiet place and that is the reason the poet wants to go there. He had spent his childhood in this place.



The poet is endowed with profound imagination and sensitive observation. With very keen senses, he sees, observes and presents the beauty of the island in the morning, in the noontime, in the evening, and even in the midnight. He can hear the sounds of the bees, the cricket, the linnet, and the sea-waves. He can visualize the tranquil glade, the glimmering light of the midnight and the purple glow of the afternoon. He can also hear the loud, unpleasant sounds of the traffic in cities and contrast it with the captivating and soothing music of the waves.



Further, the poet lacks a materialistic attitude towards life. He wants to avoid the hectic activities of the materialistic life of the cities and live in a small cabin of clay and wattles. He wants to have only enough to fulfil the basic needs of life. Thus, the poet comes forth as a person with a profound imagination, minute observation, strong memories and a deep love for nature. He is inspired by the values of contentment and harmony.

- ▶ **The Lake Isle of Innisfree** is a three stanza poem, each quatrain made up of three long lines and one short. The rhyme scheme is abab.
- ▶ **Imagery:** There is a fair amount of imagery in this poem. We can behold that small cabin, those nine rows of benches, that buzzing hive of bees, the slowly dawning sky, the peaceful crickets' song, the shimmering glimmer of midnight, the purple sky in the noon and finally the beating of the small linnet birds' wings.
- ▶ **Repetition:** There is slight repetition in the poem. The first line of first stanza and the first line of third stanza start the same way with the sentence, "I will arise and go now".
- ▶ **Alliteration:** There is alliteration, repeating of the same consonant sounds, in line 2 of stanza 3: lake water lapping with low sounds.
- ▶ **Metaphor:** There are a couple of metaphors in this poem. The first one occurs in line 2 of stanza 2. 'Veils of morning' might refer to the fog or dew one often experiences in 'green' places. And the last line of the poem is a metaphor too. It means to say that the speaker of the poem deeply desires it.