

POEM



12059. LOUGH GIL CO. SLIGO

THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE

BY: WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

CONTENTS

- + Read the Poem (twice) – [Slide 3](#)
- + About the Author – [Slide 4](#)
- + Analyze the Title of the Poem – [Slide 5](#)
- + Character - [Slide 6](#)
- + Setting – [Slide 7](#)
- + Parts of the Poem – [Slide 8](#)
- + Stanza-wise Explanation – [Slides 9 – 13](#)
- + Themes – [Slide 14](#)
- + Symbols – [Slide 15](#)
- + Poetic Devices – [Slide 16, 17](#)
- + Some More Details- [Slide 18](#)

THE POEM

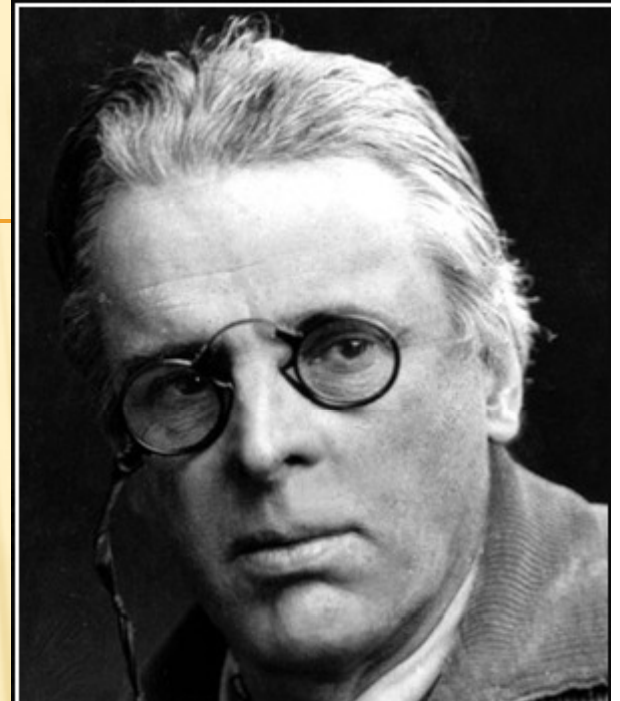
*I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.*

*And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.*

*I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND POEM

- ✘ The poet is the speaker, who was residing in London at the time he wrote this poem. He yearns to return to the peace and serenity of rural life like he experienced in his childhood in Lough Gill near Innisfree.
- ✘ He was reading Henry David Thoreau's book 'Walden or Life in the Woods' (1888) those days. While he was walking through the **busy** street in London, he felt the suffocation of the crowd in busy the city.
- ✘ He was suddenly transported back to his memories of childhood when he used to spend summer time near this uninhabited island near Innisfree.
- ✘ With the sudden 'flash of memory' he felt homesick. Walking on the street, he heard a little tinkle of water and saw a fountain in a shop-window which balanced a little ball upon its jet, and recalled the lake water.
- ✘ Amused by himself, he composed this lyrical poem.



*Do not wait to strike till the
iron is hot; but make it hot
by striking.*

- William Butler Yeats

He was an Irish poet. In 1923, W. B. Yeats was awarded the *Nobel Prize in Literature*. He was the first *Irish Nobel Laureate*.

ANALYZE THE TITLE OF THE POEM

Title- 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree'

'The' - Definite Article referring to something particular or specific

'Lake Isle' - An island or isle is any piece of land that is surrounded by water.
An small island in a river or a lake may be called an islet.



The Lake Isle of Innisfree, Sligo, Ireland

'of' - 'of' a preposition that expresses possession or connection

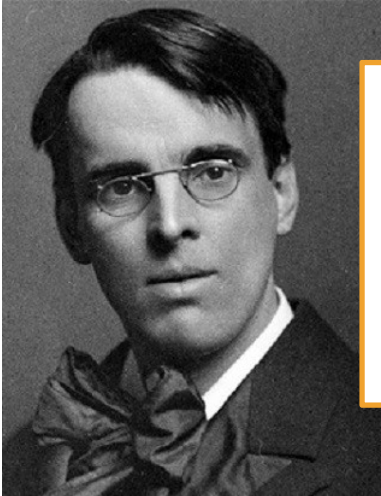
'Innisfree' - The Isle of Innisfree is an uninhabited island within Lough Gill, in Sligo, Ireland.

- Yeats spent his summers as a child in Lough Gill.

- Yeats never actually lived on Innisfree.
- Innisfree is an uninhabited island.
(Nobody lives there). But it does sit as a landmark of 20th Century poetry, nevertheless.

The Title (refers) to 'a particular island of Innisfree' the particular geographical location in Ireland.

CHARACTER



Character: WB Yeats (the poet) has written the poem in first person and he is the narrator.

Yeats had fond and peaceful memories of his childhood days which he spent in the serene Lough Gill.



Source: Snapshots Of The Past - Lough Gill, Ireland (1900)

- He was inspired by Henry David Thoreau's book "**Walden or Life in the Woods**" (1888).
- He imagined building a cabin to live in the peaceful lake and enjoy the authenticity of rural Ireland.
- He has written this poem with the idea of returning to the peaceful life in natural surroundings of Innisfree.

SETTING



Lough Gill (*Irish: Loch Gile meaning ‘bright or white lake’*) is a fresh water Lough (or Lake) at the border between two Counties (or territorial divisions) in Ireland. It provides the setting for this poem. The lake contains about 20 small islands, including the Isle of Innisfree mentioned in this poem. (**Source: wikipedia**)

PARTS OF THE POEM

- ✕ The poem has three (3) stanzas-
 - + Stanza 1
 - + Stanza 2
 - + Stanza 3

This is a short pastoral poem (Pastoral poem means a poem that explores the fantasy of withdrawing from modern life to live in an idyllic rural setting. It is free from corruption and complexities of urban life.)

STANZA 1

- Poem's first line has lyrical or (songlike quality) with a rhythm and music of its own. With the happy memory of childhood, the poem sets the mood of the reader right from the beginning.

- The narrator decides to go to **Innisfree**, the quiet and tranquil (free from disturbance) lake island. He has calming memories of this place. He wants to break free from the hectic life of city.

- He wishes to make a small **cabin** there with of **clay** and **wattles**.

- 'Nine bean-rows' and a 'hive for the honey bees' provide a kind of universality to the poem as they are bare minimum and common and realistic elements in the rural life.

- He wishes to stay alone in the buzzing sound of the bees.

- Your own recollections of childhood might include jumping in rain water puddles, stretching your hand out in the rain to feel cold water drops, etc.

*I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and
wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for
the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.*

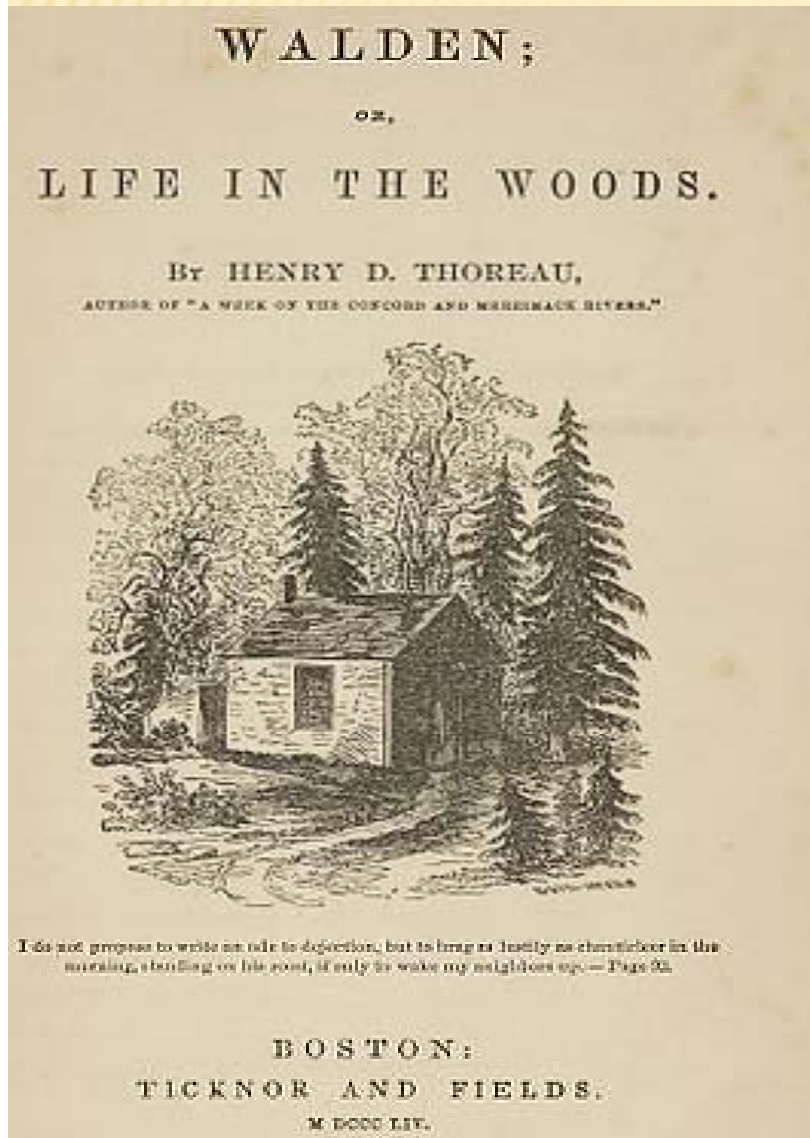
- **cabin**- A small house built of wood; usually in a wooded area
- **wattles**- strong interwoven sticks used for making fences and walls
- **glade**- a clearing; an open area



Wattles

This famous work was written by Henry David Thoreau. The central idea of **Thoreau's** book 'Walden' was to stay close to nature and feel its bliss.

A man building a house with clay and wattles.



STANZA 2

- ✕ The narrator believed that he will experience peace there while staying at Innisfree. There the hazy mist of morning slowly falls to the earth.
- ✕ The poet explains that there is peace in slow pastoral life of the isle where there is no rush and no crowd.
- ✕ Slowly as the fog clears and it is morning time and still there is silence such that the sound of the cricket is clearly heard.
- ✕ In this place, the poet describes that the brightness of the moon lights the nights and the afternoons have a purple tinge in the light of the setting sun.
- ✕ By evening the sky is full of linnet birds with their wings fluttering all over.

*And I shall have some peace there, for peace
comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to
where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a
purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.*

- ✕ **'Veils of morning'**- like a covering of fog in the morning
- ✕ **glimmer**- shine brightly, like a star or a light
- ✕ **glow**- emit a steady even light without flames
- ✕ **linnet**- small songbird



Linnet

VISUAL IMAGERY

‘veils of morning’



‘noon is a purple glow’



‘evening full of the linnet’s wings’



STANZA 3

- ✖ The poet repeats his declaration of going to Innisfree as if with the recollections of the scenic beauty of the isle he has concretized finalized his decision to visit the isle.
- ✖ He remembers the soft sound of water clapping with the shore as he stands on the roadway or the gray pavements of the street.
- ✖ He can hear the this sound echoing deep in his heart; the longing to go to the peaceful life of woods.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day

I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;

While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,

I hear it in the deep heart's core.

- ✖ **‘lake water lapping’**- sound produced by the soft touch water with the shore.
- ✖ **pavement**- road cover with a material such as stone or concrete to make it smooth for walking and vehicles



Pavement

THEMES

Theme: It is defined as a main idea or an underlying meaning of a literary work, which may be stated directly or indirectly.

Subject: - **‘The Lake Isle of Innisfree’** a beautiful and tranquil symbol of beauty of nature.

- ✘ **Peace-** the speaker strongly desires for peace. He wishes to be alone at Innisfree apart from the seething of streets filled with people.
- ✘ **Nature Vs. Civilization-** the poem depicts that just by being close to nature we can be happy. The poet experiences freedom when he is close to nature while the civilization constricts him and takes those very values (freedom and peace) which matter most to him.
- ✘ **Nature and Spirituality-** Being close to the nature brings about a soothing change in a person. Nature is a powerful force which can bring about drastic changes in human beings. When the speaker is close to nature, he feels the connection to his inner self or spiritual self. Being in harmony with nature, the speaker recollects the joy and relaxation of his childhood.
- ✘ **Solitude and longing for escape-** The narrator also wants to spend time alone probably to reconnect with himself through connection with nature. The nature will help him to restore his balance of mind and with a clear mind he will be able to sort out the new directions he wants to move in, the confusions or the problems of his life.
The poem has plans for future and memories of the past as if the poet wants to break away from the present.
- ✘ **Imagination and Reality-** The narrator seeks peace in Innisfree. Through his memories or ‘imagined trip’ to the beautiful place, the poet visits the place in his imagination and momentarily gets a sense of comfort in his real life.

SYMBOLS

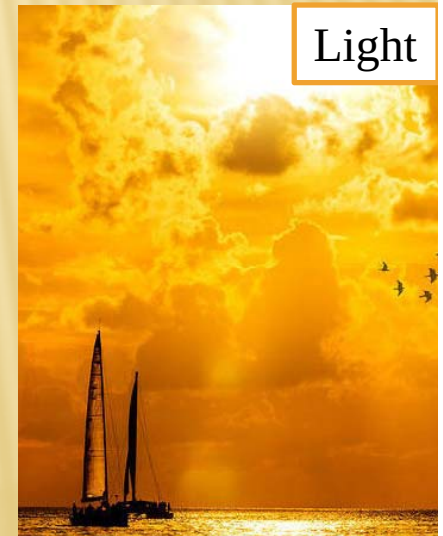
- ✗ **Innisfree**- Ideal place in nature which can provide peace and relaxation to a person. It is a symbol of happy memories of speaker's childhood.
- ✗ **Cabin**- is a symbol of simplistic and peaceful existence in natural surroundings as opposed to people's desires of living lavishly in mansions and villas.
- ✗ **bean-rows** – 'Beans' are a source for human beings to connect to forces with nature. It is a rich source of proteins, they are also considered to be symbol of transformation to an energetic and better life. (E.g. Jack and the Beanstalk)
- ✗ **Buzzing bees**- are a symbol of perseverance and personal power. Bee is a symbol of hard work and therefore a beehive is a symbol of prosperity rising from toil. (buzzing bees are happy and lively bees)
- ✗ **Light**- It symbolizes wisdom through experiences, realization and observations. It is also a symbol of illumination and revelation of nature.
- ✗ **Roads and pavements**- 'gray' as a colour symbolizes depression, loss and dullness.
Roads and pavements symbolizes dullness and artificiality of modern city life and constructions. Though the roads provide smooth pathways making people's lives easier but it also attracts a lot of crowd.

The poet prefers 'nature trails' in order to be away from crowd and in nature's peaceful company.

Beehive



Light



POETIC DEVICES

1. Allusion- It is a brief / **indirect** or passing reference to an object, person, place, character or idea of literary, historical, cultural, mythological or political significance that has gained a lot of popularity. It is not described in detail nor is the source revealed.

E.g. She acts like **Scrooge** with her money. (Scrooge alludes to 'A Christmas Carol' by Charles Dickens. A character who is stingy with money.)

a. **Allusion to Bible-** Opening phrase of the poem "***I will arise and go***" is a phrase similar to "***let us arise and go***" (Book of Genesis 35:3 King James Version). It suggests the spiritual nature of the phrase.

The allusion expresses that the poet is disavowing his worldly possessions and returning to nature. It is similar to the son of god redirecting his faith and affinity to God and returning home.

b. **Allusion to 'Walden'-** '**Nine bean-rows**' are allusions to Henry David Thoreau's chapter in book '**Walden**' which is entitled '**The Bean-Field**' which resonates with Thoreau's connection to nature and his faith in the power to work in his field to enrich his spirituality. '**Cabin**' in '**Walden**' is a symbol of Thoreau's 'fortress of solitude close to nature'. Likewise it has been used by Yeats and serves the purpose in Innisfree.

2. Metaphor- (It is a direct reference to a thing regarded as representative or symbolic of something else.)

'***the veils of morning***' is a **metaphor** that compares the early morning haze such as fog and dew to a veil or a separator. A '**veil**' used as a covering often worn for religious purposes.

3. **Repetition-** (Repetition mean simple repetition of a word(s) or lines to secure emphasis.)

“I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree ... I will arise and go now.”

4. **Imagery-** (In a poem when poet uses a descriptive or figurative language, it is an instance of Imagery. They often describe vivid scenes involving colour, sounds, tastes, smells, touch, shapes, sizes involving features of thing, people, animals, imaginations or places.)
The poem is full of imagery with phrases like ‘**small cabin**’, ‘**Dropping from the veils of the morning**’, ‘**There midnight’s all a glimmer**’, ‘**noon a purple glow**’

5. **Alliteration-** (It is the occurrence of the same consonant letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words.)

“I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore.” (soft ‘l’ and ‘s’ sounds)

6. **Internal Rhyme-** (It is a rhyme involving a word in the middle of a line and another at the end of the line or in the middle of the next line.)

“While I stand on the **roadway**, or on the pavements **grey**,” (**roadway** and **grey** are rhyming words.)

7. **Anaphora-** (The author uses it to generate a particular effect in the readers like persuasion through repetition of certain word or phrase at the beginning of successive lines of writing or speech.)

“**go** now and **go** to ...”, “**dropping** slow **Dropping** from”

“build **there**... have **there**... peace **there**... **There** midnight’s...”

SOME MORE DETAILS

It is a twelve-line poem comprising three **quatrains** (a stanza having four lines)

1. Rhyme Scheme of the Poem

'Innisfree' rhymes with 'honey-bee'

I will arise and go now, and go to **Innisfree**,

a

And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles **made**;

b

Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the **honey-bee**,

a

And live alone in the bee-loud **glade**.

b

Rhyme scheme is: - ABAB

'made' rhymes with 'glade'

2. Tone of the Poem

(Tone- the atmosphere that the author sets while writing the poem.)

Persuasive, longing (for the idyllic isle), appreciative, optimistic, earnest, dreamy

3. Mood of the Poem

(Mood- the feelings that the reader gets after reading the poem.)

Lonely, peaceful, nostalgic, reflective

3. Point of View

First person point of view- the poet uses the word 'I'