



By James Kirkup

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Thinking about the Poem

1. (i) "Beneath all uniforms..." What uniforms do you think the poet is speaking about?

(ii) How does the poet suggest that all people on earth are the same?

Answer:

(i) The poet is probably speaking about the uniforms that the soldiers wear at the time of war. The word "uniform" here could also mean the traditional dresses of a country.

(ii) The poet suggests that all people on earth are the same as they breathe, buried, wake, sleep, hate, love and labour. The importance of the sun and air and water is equal for everyone. Everyone needs peace and suffers from starvation during wars.

2. In stanza 1, find five ways in which we all are alike. Pick out the words.

Answer:

Words which suggest the five ways in which we all are like are:

Each of us has a similar body

All of us breathe

All of us walk

All of us lie

We live and die on the same earth

3. How many common features can you find in stanza 2? Pick out the words.

Answer:

There are five common features in stanza 2. These features are the sun, the air, the water, peaceful harvest, hands and the labour.

4. "...whenever we are told to hate our brothers..." When do you think this happens? Why? Who 'tells' us? Should we do as we are told at such times? What does the poet say?

Answer:

Whenever there is war, leaders tell people to hate the other country. They tell us to do so because of their personal gains. But we should not act as a puppet in their hands and do as they say. We should understand that war is futile and analyses the situation before jumping to conclusions.. The poet says that if we fight against them, we kill and condemn ourselves.

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