

# St. Andrews Scots Sr. Sec. School

9th Avenue, I.P. Extension, Patparganj, Delhi – 110092

Session: 2023-2024 - Notes

**Class:X**

**Subject:English**

**Topic: Poem-2 Fire and Ice**

Q1. "I think I know enough of hate". What does the poet know about hate?

Ans. The poet says that he knows enough of hate, but we are not told he has first-hand knowledge about hate or he experiences it at a distance. But the poet's intuitive power reminds him that it is no less dangerous than the fire of lust. It can also play a trick upon anybody as it is a silent killer.

Q2. The tone of the speaker contrasts with the seriousness of the subject matter. Justify.

Ans. In the poem, the speaker is presenting his personal opinion about the possibilities of the end of the world, which is a serious matter. But the speaker's tone is casual and conversational. Throughout the poem, he is using casual words like 'some say', 'I hold with', 'I think I know', etc.

Q3. 'Fire and Ice' projects a pessimistic outlook. Comment

Ans. The poet after observing the world and its ways, has expressed ideas of how the world will end. Some people believe that the world will be destroyed by fire, while others argue that it will be frozen. The poet, has not been pessimistic in his outlook, but realistic, as he tries to convey the gravity of the situation, through the poem. He is perhaps cautioning us to keep a check on ourselves and our emotions at all times.

Q4. What is the underlying idea of the poem, 'Fire and Ice'? poet,

Ans. The poet equates fire with 'desire' and ice with 'hatred'. Both of these are growing with enormous speed. If we don't check them from growing, the world will perish. So, we must restrain our desires and love our fellow beings.

Q5. What message does the poet give to the readers?

Ans. Once Robert Frost claimed, "my poem begins in delight but ends in wisdom". The poem 'Fire and Ice' echoes the above statement. In this poem, the poet considers the age-old question whether the world will end in fire or in ice. It is quite interesting that the poet does not give his own opinion in this regard. It is meaningless to ask which one is stronger as we know both of them are equally harmful to the world. We can associate fire with lust, greed, avarice, and intolerance, whereas, ice can be associated with hatred and indifference. The fire of lust and greed gets publicity, but the coldness of hatred is also dangerous as it is a silent killer. All of such black sides of human nature can obstruct the progress of human civilization.

