

The Tyger

By : William Blake

The Tyger,' has been scrutinized from literal and metaphorical points of view as he revisits his preferred dilemmas of innocence vs. experience . As for God, his creations are just beautiful and transcend the notions of good-evil .

The Tyger ' gives no visible answers except to offer more questions.
“Songs of Innocence” and “Songs of Experience”

The Tyger' is an extension of the same theme , **representing two diverse perspectives of the human world.**

Q / What is the juxtaposition in The Tyger ?

juxtapose opposing sides of human nature, comparing and contrasting innocence with corruption .

Q / why The Tyger leads to some troubling questions ?

in essence, is a poem where the poet asks the tiger about its creator and his traits .

Q / What is the poem primarily questions ?

The existence of God and his metaphysical attributes, referring to the tiger's multiple corporeal characteristics as purely a work of art. The poet wonders how the creator would have felt after completing his creation. Is he also the creator of the lamb?

Q / What literary devices does William Blake use ?

1 - Alliteration

2 - Enjambment

3 - Allusion

The latter is one of the most important as Blake alludes to the major question at the heart of the poem, if God created the tiger, what kind of creator is he? By referring to the tiger's fearsome nature throughout the piece, Blake is, in turn, referring to the darker sides of life itself .

Q / What does the initial verse refer to ? (Discuss)

**Tyger, Tyger, burning bright
In the forests of the night
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry**

The initial verse refers to 'The Tyger,' questioning its beauty and its creator . the speaker clearly makes it a point to discuss God as an entity as opposed to the tiger. William Blake champions metaphors as the first one is 'burning bright,' [which refers to the tiger's bright yellow fur as it roams freely in the forest at night](#) .

The central question, as the reader slowly realizes, pertains to the existence of God . William Blake attacks the Christian God as he asks whether a divine entities capable of creating such a mesmerizing creature with perfect definitions and extraordinary beauty. Whether he deems, God wrong for creating such a creature is left open-ended to the reader .

The "fearful symmetry" is a nuanced trait that has dual allusions :

- [one for the tiger and the other referring to a divine deity](#) . The sublime characteristic refers to an entity that is both big and powerful yet remains mysterious. As a result, the poet starts off with poetic allusions, entirely open-ended for the reader to perceive as he pleases. He slowly arrives at the question as to what kind of God God is if he created such a scary creature .

Q / Mention the name of the poet and elaborate lines below :

**In what distant deep or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?**

The poet is William Blake .

The poet's fascination with the "Tyger" increases as he seems mesmerized by his fiery eyes. He feels that the fire in his eyes came from a distant heavenly body such as hell/ heaven. The poet adds to the fiery image of the tiger by using the metaphor of burning in the first verse. The third line throws the reader off track. William Blake is slowly coming to the point of his argument– God.

Q / What did the poet use to create supernatural image ?

using the words '**hand**' '**wings**' and **fire**, relating to the divine being.

Q / What did the poet discuss in stanza three ?

**And what shoulder, and what art
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when they heart began to beat,**

The poet discusses the physical characteristics of the almighty creator , contemplating his various physical features. The lines are lost in translation as the poet wonders in-depth about God's physical attributes, which could also be an allegory to the tiger's characteristics .

Q / What the questions steps involved in stanza four ?

**What the hammer? What's the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? What dead grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp**

This stanza questions the steps involved in the creation of the all-mighty jungle creature, the tiger. An allegorical reference to a blacksmith is included in these lines. The hypothesis is that some intelligent creator was developing his creation as a blacksmith hammers and forms metal with considerable toil. The stanza is steeped in rhythmic poetry, adding flair and colour. As is made apparent, the poet grows more impatient and begins questioning faith overall .

Q / Stanza Five

**When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see ?
Did he who made the lamb make thee ?**

These are the ‘Christian’ verses of the poem. The first line indicates the demotion of God’s arch-angel ‘Satan’ as a sign of rebellion against God’s will. It’s also a veiled reference to the epic poem ‘[Paradise Lost](#) ‘ by John Milton.

He refers to the all-mighty creator looking with reverence at his finalized creation. The lamb can dually mean ‘the lamb of god’ or lamb from his poem ‘The Lamb ’ The former is an open reference to Jesus Christ (the Lamb of God), sent by God on earth to atone for the sins of humanity .

Q / Stanza Six

**Tyger Tyger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry**

The last stanza is the repetition of the first as a chorus. The word ‘could’ has been replaced by ‘dare’ by the poet. In this section, the poet attempts to question the creator’s ability. The poet tries to challenge God’s abilities in the final lines.

Themes

1 - all living entities must reflect their creator : the poem's primary objective: contemplating God in the heavens above. In essence, the tiger is a beautifully enigmatic creature that is at the same time lethal. This also reflects the nature of God.

2 - Religion : This is seen through Blake's constant questioning regarding what kind of all-knowing creator could be both violent and so magnificent at the same time? as a powerfully destructive living entity can be a creation of a purely, artful God .

Why is “Tiger” spelled “Tyger” in the poem ?

because William Blake employed the Middle English spelling of the word .

Who is the speaker in ‘The Tyger’?

This poem is written from the third-person point of view .

What's the central image of ‘The Tyger’?

The central image of this piece is that of a tiger roaming steadily and silently in the dark forests of the night .

Is ‘The Tyger’ a modern poem ?

This poem was published in 1794 and it rose to notoriety in the Romantic era. It is both a poem of the romantic age and modern age .

Q / How does ‘The Tyger’ challenge common assumptions of the time about God and Christianity ?

Blake’s poem challenges the common assumptions of the contemporary period regarding God and Christianity. During that time, God was depicted as a kind and meek being who is benevolent to his creation. Blake challenged this conception and portrayed him as a being who has two sides. He is both the protector and the perisher .

What is “fearful symmetry” in ‘ The Tyger ’ ?

This phrase refers to the symmetrical physical structure of a tiger. Its body is designed in a manner that presents it as a ferocious creature. From the eyes to the paws, it is a creature born to feed on other creatures. The speaker is afraid by looking at this symmetry in the tiger .

- The final allusion to can connote his reference to the poem (**The Lamb**)

Why The Tyger’ consists of unanswered questions ?

- 1 - the poet leaves his readers pondering the will of the creator, his limitless power
- 2 - feeling awe towards God’s creation .
- 3 - the poet ends his poem with perspectives of innocence and experience, both subjects of great interest to him .

Symbolism

Q / This poem is full of symbols that are similar to the theme of his “Songs of Experience” .

the tiger is a symbol of God’s destructive side

It implicitly refers to another fact that he is both the **perisher** and the **protector** .

Q / Where readers can find the symbols of experience ?

in the following words, “night”, “fire”, “hammer”, “chain”, “furnace”, “anvil”, etc. The symbolic use of the words is consonant with the overall theme of Blake’s poem. It sets the tone and mood of the work .

- In Tyger , the word ‘ **Fire** ’ which refers to (**eyes**) .
 - In fifth stanza “and watered **Heaven** with their tears” the word heaven refers to (**Paradise Lost**) .
 - Explain **Religion** themes in Tyger
- This is seen through Blake’s constant questioning regarding what kind of all-knowing creator could be both violent and so magnificent at the same time .

Prepare by Ali Aqeel