

## THE PEASANT POET- ROBERT BURNS- VOCABULARY, TONE, SYMBOL



Should auld acquaintance be forgot, / And never brought to mind? / Should auld acquaintance be forgot, / And days o' lang syne?

—Auld Lang Syne by Robert Burns

*Robert  
Burns*

**UNIT OVERVIEW:** The poetry of the 18<sup>th</sup> century as previously discussed had its emphasis on elegance, style and a refined manner. One poet of the time, however, caused much discussion. **Robert Burns** was a farmer's son and a farmer himself. His poetry reflected the more rustic side of life. He used this knowledge to develop his poetry, thus giving him the nickname as "The Peasant Poet."

Before we read his poetry, there are some vocabulary words that need defined.



Now answer questions 1-4

Now let's read...

### "To A Mouse"

WEE, sleekit, cow'rin, tim'rous beastie,

O, what a panic's in thy breastie!

Thou need na start awa sae hasty,

Wi' bickering brattle!  
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,           5  
Wi' murd'ring pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion,  
Has broken nature's social union,  
An' justifies that ill opinion,  
Which makes thee startle           10  
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,  
An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whiles, but thou may thieve;  
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!  
A daimen icker in a thrave           15  
'S a sma' request;  
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,  
An' never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!  
It's silly wa's the win's are strewin!   20  
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,  
O' foggage green!  
An' bleak December's winds ensuin,  
Baith snell an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,           25

An' weary winter comin fast,  
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,  
Thou thought to dwell—  
Till crash! the cruel coulter past  
Out thro' thy cell.

30

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,  
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!  
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,  
But house or hald,  
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,  
An' cranreuch cauld!

35

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,  
In proving foresight may be vain;  
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men  
Gang aft agley,  
An'lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,  
For promis'd joy!

40

Still thou art blest, compar'd wi' me  
The present only toucheth thee:  
But, Och! I backward cast my e'e.  
On prospects drear!  
An' forward, tho' I canna see,  
I guess an' fear!

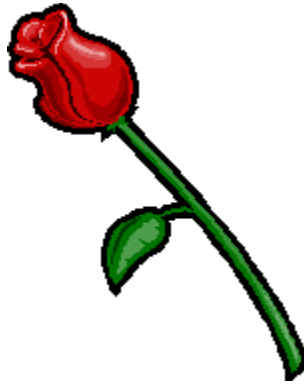
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Now answer questions 5-7

In addition to producing “rustic” poetry, Burns also has been considered a pre-Romantic poet. Scholars believe this because his sentiment is revealed in his poetry. One such poem of this type is “A Red, Red Rose.”

### **A Red, Red Rose**



O MY Luve’s like a red, red rose,  
That’s newly sprung in June:  
O my Luve’s like the melodie,  
That’s sweetly play’d in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonie lass,  
So deep in luve am I;  
And I will luve thee still, my dear,  
Till a’ the seas gang dry.

Till a’ the seas gang dry, my dear,  
And the rocks melt wi’ the sun;  
And I will luve thee still, my dear,  
While the sands o’ life shall run.

And fare-thee-weel, my only Luve!  
And fare-thee-weel, a while!  
And I will come again, my Luve,

Tho' 'twere ten thousand mile!



**Now answer questions 8-11**