

talk
to
me!

LET'S TALK EMPOWERMENT. LET'S TALK ENGLISH

Beehive 2: Wind by Subramania Bharati

1. Summary

This is an inspiring poem that uses Wind as a metaphor for difficulties in life. It says wind can create a lot of damage. Weak people crumble under its destructive force. However, if you work steadfastly to make yourself strong, you can stand up against hardships and come out of them even stronger. To make his point, the poet uses the imagery of a burning fire which grows and flourishes in the wind.

Click on the links below to see examples of how fighting against adversity can make you stronger and confident.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTcam_BuTOg

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VVckUjjFYIM>

2. Vocabulary

1. **Shutters** - panels fixed inside or outside a window that can be closed for security or privacy or to keep out the light.
We prepared for the storm by pulling down all the **shutters**.
2. **Scatter** - spread
My bag burst and the rice **scattered** all over the floor.
3. **Poking fun** - making fun at someone
The bully is always **poking fun** at the smallest child in the class.
4. **Weakling** – a person or animal that is physically weak
The stray dog does not get enough food so he is a **weakling**.
5. **Frail** - weak or easily damaged
My grandmother is very **frail** and cannot walk without help.
6. **Crumbling** - collapsing, breaking into small pieces
The walls of the fort are **crumbling** because they are so old.

7. **Rafters** - sloping beams that support a roof
The **rafters** of my house are very strong.
8. **Winnow** - to remove the unwanted coverings of seeds from grain by throwing the grain up in the air and letting the wind blow the unwanted parts away (1) also to separate the desirable from the undesirable (2)
I often see my grandmother **winnowing** wheat when I go to my village. (1)
There were 500 applicants for 2 jobs, so they had to **winnow** out most of them. (2)
9. **Joint (the doors)** - to join the doors tightly to the frame
The carpenter is very good; he always **joints** the windows firmly to their frames.
10. **Firmly** - tightly
The road was very bumpy, so the mother had to hold onto the baby **firmly**.
11. **Steadfast** - steady, determined
You must work hard and remain **steadfast** in your goal to become a Doctor.
12. **Flourish** - to grow strong and healthy
The crops **flourished** in the rich soil.

3. Questions

I.

1. What are the things the wind does in the first stanza?
2. Have you seen anybody winnow grain at home or in a paddy field? What is the word in your language for winnowing? What do people use for winnowing? (Give the words in your language, if you know them.)
3. What does the poet say the wind god winnows?
4. What should we do to make friends with the wind?
5. What do the last four lines of the poem mean to you?
6. How does the poet speak to the wind — in anger or with humour? You must also have seen or heard of the wind “crumbling lives”. What is your response to this? Is it like the poet’s?

- II. The poem you have just read is originally in Tamil. Do you know any such poems in your language?

4. Literary Devices

1. **Rhyme scheme:** There is no rhyme scheme in the poem.
2. **Anaphora:** When a word is repeated at the start of two or more consecutive lines.

Lines 2, 3, 4 begin with 'don't'.

Don't break the shutters of the windows.

Don't scatter the papers.

Don't throw down the books on the shelf

Lines 6, 7, 8 begin with 'you'.

You tore the pages of the books.

You brought rain again.

You're very clever at poking fun at weaklings.

3. **Personification:** Wind has been personified in this poem and addressed as 'You'.
4. **Repetition:** 'crumbling' is repeated many times to lay emphasis.

Frail **crumbling** houses, **crumbling** doors, **crumbling** rafters,
crumbling wood, **crumbling** bodies, **crumbling** lives,
crumbling hearts —
the wind god winnows and crushes them all.

5. **Alliteration:** The repetition of a consonant sound in two or more consecutive or closely connected words

'wind winnows' - 'w' sound is repeated

'won't what' - 'w' sound is repeated

'wind will' - 'w' sound is repeated

6. **Symbolism:** Symbolism is the use of symbols to convey ideas or qualities, by giving them symbolic meanings that are different from their literal sense. Wind is used as a symbol in this poem. It refers to the challenges and adversities that we face in our life.