

7

Words

Summary

The poem "Words" by Charles Swain highlights the limitations and true value of words. The poet explains that words alone cannot fully satisfy human emotions or the heart. Often, people use many words, but they fail to express genuine feelings. Such words are compared to summer birds that quickly fly away, leaving behind emptiness.

The poet describes the human heart as a traveller (pilgrim) that seeks comfort and understanding. However, it often finds that words are as useless as weeds when they are not sincere. On the other hand, a few simple and truthful words can bring much more happiness than a large number of meaningless ones.

The poem also suggests that people who speak less but speak from the heart can bring real joy and comfort to others. Words that only sound attractive but lack true feeling are compared to plants that look beautiful but bear no fruit.

In the end, the poet emphasizes that words should be meaningful and heartfelt, not just decorative or excessive.

- **Message:** A few sincere words are more valuable than many empty words.

New Terms

- **Satisfy** – to fulfill or meet a need
- **Depart** – to go away
- **Pilgrim** – a traveler, especially on a journey with a purpose
- **Weeds** – unwanted plants (used here for useless things)
- **Impart** – to give or communicate
- **Hosts** – a large number
- **Cheer** – to make happy
- **Summoned** – called upon
- **Gaudy** – very bright or showy (often in a tasteless way)
- **Blossom** – flower
- **Particle** – a very small amount
- **Of** – often

Reflect and Respond

I. Why are words important? Can we communicate without words? How? Share your answers with your classmates and teacher.

Ans.

- **Why are words important?** - Words are important because they help us express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly and connect with others.
- **Can we communicate without words? How?** - Yes, we can communicate without words through gestures, facial expressions, body language, signs, and pictures.

II. Use the given sentences as clues to find words from the grid and fill the blanks. One example has been done for you.

- My mother summoned me to introduce her friends.

Column 1 Horizontal →	Column 2 Vertical ↓
1. We eat food to _____ our hunger.	4. The view from the top of the hill was _____ the difficult climb.
2. The train will _____ from the station at 5.00 p.m.	5. The herbs and spices _____ flavour to food.
3. The gardener was removing the _____ to clean the flower beds.	6. Flowers _____ in spring.
	7. We enjoyed a delicious _____ after the ceremony.

A	S	A	T	I	S	F	Y	T	B
L	U	Y	G	B	K	C	U	L	L
D	M	A	N	D	G	J	F	O	O
B	M	H	I	W	W	E	E	D	S
A	O	C	M	L	O	H	A	F	S
U	N	Z	L	A	R	L	S	E	O
D	E	P	A	R	T	G	T	A	M
G	D	D	R	I	H	A	K	O	R
E	N	P	F	D	F	S	E	T	D
N	B	O	E	L	S	N	I	A	T

Ans. Fill in the blanks from the grid:

- Column 1 - Horizontal:
 1. We eat food to satisfy our hunger.
 2. The train will depart from the station at 5.00 p.m.
 3. The gardener was removing the weeds to clean the flower beds.
- Column 2 - Vertical:
 4. The view from the top of the hill was worth the difficult climb.
 5. The herbs and spices add flavour to food.
 6. Flowers blossom in spring.
 7. We enjoyed a delicious feast after the ceremony.

Check Your Understanding

- I. Fill in the blanks with one word from the poem. One example has been done for you.
- In this poem, the poet reflects that words fail to truly satisfy what the heart wants to convey. Words are compared to summer birds who 1. depart, leaving nothing behind. The heart, is equated to a 2. pilgrim who finds that words are as worthless as 3. weeds when needed. He feels that a few sincere words can bring more 4. joy than many meaningless ones. He adds that a voice that brings happiness to a 5. lonely place does not say much, but the few words it does, are very precious. Moreover, if words could satisfy us, the 6. world would celebrate but words often fail to do that. The poem ends on the note that empty words may look impressive with lots of flowers, but they cannot produce anything valuable, like a 7. fruit.

Ans. Fill in the blanks:

- | | | | | |
|-----------|------------|----------|--------|-----------|
| 1. depart | 2. pilgrim | 3. weeds | 4. joy | 5. lonely |
| 6. world | 7. fruit | | | |

Completed Passage:

- In this poem, the poet reflects that words fail to truly satisfy what the heart wants to convey. Words are compared to summer birds who 1. depart, leaving nothing behind. The heart is equated to a 2. pilgrim who finds that words are as worthless as 3. weeds when needed. He feels that a few sincere words can bring more 4. joy than many meaningless ones. He adds that a voice that brings happiness to a 5. lonely place does not say much, but the few 6. words it does are very precious. Moreover, if words could satisfy us, the world would celebrate but words often fail to do that. The poem ends on the note that empty words may look impressive with lots of flowers, but they cannot produce anything valuable, like a 7. fruit.

II. Let us appreciate the poem.

1. Read the poem again. Find any four sets of rhyming words and also write the rhyme scheme of the poem.

Ans. Any four sets of rhyming words:

- | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1. heart – depart | 2. care – air | 3. earth – worth | 4. said – head |
| 5. show – grow | 6. root – fruit | | |

- Rhyme Scheme: The poem follows an ABAB rhyme scheme in each stanza.

2. Read the following phrases and sentences taken from the poem. Identify the poetic device in each of them and explain what the poet wants to communicate through their usage.

(i) But words, like summer birds, depart...

Ans.

- Device:** Simile
- Meaning:** Words are compared to birds that quickly fly away, showing they are temporary and unreliable.

(ii) heart, a pilgrim upon earth...

Ans.

- Device:** Metaphor
- Meaning:** The heart is described as a traveller, suggesting it is always searching for true feelings and meaning.

(iii) words are of as little worth As just so many weeds

Ans.

- Device:** Simile
- Meaning:** Useless words are compared to weeds, showing they have no value.

(iv) If words could satisfy the chest ... Oft satisfy the least!

Ans.

- **Device:** Irony
- **Meaning:** Though words seem powerful, they often fail to truly satisfy feelings.

(v) The world might hold a feast...

Ans.

- **Device:** Hyperbole (Exaggeration)
- **Meaning:** The poet exaggerates to show how great it would be if words truly satisfied us.

(vi) Like plants that make a gaudy show All blossom to the root

Ans.

- **Device:** Simile
- **Meaning:** Words that look impressive are compared to showy plants that lack real value.

(vii) But whose poor nature cannot grow One particle of fruit!

Ans.

- **Device:** Metaphor
- **Meaning:** Such words are useless because they produce no meaningful result.

3. Which words are repeated in the poem? Why does the poet use repetition?

Ans.

- **Repeated words:** words, heart, satisfy
- **Reason:** The poet uses repetition to emphasize the central idea that words alone are not enough to express true feelings.

4. The stanzas 4, 5, and 6 end with exclamation marks. Choose the option that displays the emotions being expressed through them.

(i) 4. disillusionment 5. admiration and 6. frustration

(ii) 4. frustration 5. admiration and 6. disillusionment

(iii) 4. admiration 5. frustration and 6. disillusionment

(iv) 4. frustration 5. disillusionment and 6. admiration

Ans. (i) 4. disillusionment, 5. admiration, 6. frustration

III. Identify examples of hyperbole from the given lines.

If words could satisfy the chest,
The world might hold a feast.

- **Work in pairs. Complete the sentences given below with hyperboles. Use the hints given in the brackets.**
 1. I have _____ things to do on this weekend. (lots of/tonnes of)
 2. The player missed the basket by _____. (a mile/ an inch)
 3. My mother is so tired that she can sleep for a _____. (night/decade)
 4. I will be back in _____. (five minutes/two seconds)

Ans.

- **Example of hyperbole from the poem:** "The world might hold a feast" — This is an exaggeration to show how wonderful it would be if words could truly satisfy feelings.
- **Complete the sentences with hyperbole:**
 1. I have tonnes of things to do on this weekend.
 2. The player missed the basket by a mile.
 3. My mother is so tired that she can sleep for a decade.

4. I will be back in two seconds.

IV. Rhythm gives a lyrical quality to a poem. The rhythm (pattern of beats) in a line of poetry is described by a metrical form. A metre is formed by a stressed and an unstressed syllable. Syllable is the name given to a single unit of speech/beats of spoken language.

- The metrical form in the first four lines is given below. The stressed syllables have been underlined.
If words could sa tis fy the heart,
The heart might find less care;
But words, like sum mer birds, de part,
And leave but emp ty air.
- Now, listen to the teacher read the poem. As you listen, underline the syllables that are stressed in all the lines of the poem. Share your answers with the teacher.

Ans. Here is the poem with stressed syllables marked in CAPITAL letters (since underlining isn't possible here):

• **Stanza 1:**

If WORDS could SA tis fy the HEART,
The HEART might FIND less CARE;
But WORDS, like SUM mer BIRDS, de PART,
And LEAVE but EMP ty AIR.

• **Stanza 2:**

The HEART, a PIL grim UP on EARTH,
Finds OFT en, WHEN it NEEDS,
That WORDS are OF as LIT tle WORTH
As JUST so MAN y WEEDS.

• **Stanza 3:**

A LIT tle SAID, and TRUE ly SAID,
Can DEE per JOY im PART
Than HOSTS of WORDS, which REACH the HEAD,
But NE ver TOUCH the HEART.

• **Stanza 4:**

The VOICE that WINS its SUN ny WAY,
A LONE ly HOME to CHEER,
Hath OFT the FEW est WORDS to SAY;
But, OH! those FEW, how DEAR!

• **Stanza 5:**

If WORDS could SA tis fy the CHEST,
The WORLD might HOLD a FEAST;
But WORDS, when SUM moned TO the TEST,
OFT SA tis fy the LEAST!

• **Stanza 6:**

Like PLANTS that MAKE a GAU dy SHOW,
ALL BLOS som TO the ROOT;
But WHOSE poor NA ture CAN not GROW,
One PAR ti cle of FRUIT!



One Point Learning

Critical Reflection

I. Read the following lines and answer the questions.

1. The heart, a pilgrim upon earth,
Finds often, when it needs,
That words are of as little worth
As just so many weeds.

(i) Why has the poet referred to the heart as 'a pilgrim'?

Ans. Because it is always searching for true feelings, meaning, and emotional connection.

(ii) When would a heart 'need' words?

Ans. The heart 'needs' words when a person wants to express deep emotions like love, sorrow, or comfort.

(iii) Complete the sentence with an appropriate reason.

- The words are like weeds because _____.

Ans. The words are like weeds because they are often useless and do not convey real feelings.

(iv) Mention two emotions the heart might be experiencing when it finds words to be of 'little worth'.

Ans. Two emotions: sadness and disappointment.

(v) What do these lines suggest about the nature of communication?

Ans. These lines suggest that communication without sincerity is ineffective; words alone are not enough unless they are meaningful.

2. If words could satisfy the chest,
The world might hold a feast;
But words, when summoned to the test,
Oft satisfy the least!

(i) How can words 'satisfy the chest'?

Ans. Words can 'satisfy the chest' when they truly express inner feelings and emotions of the heart.

(ii) How can words be 'summoned to the test'?

Ans. Words are 'summoned to the test' when they are used in real emotional situations to see if they can truly express feelings.

(iii) What does 'the world' holding 'a feast' imply?

Ans. 'The world' holding 'a feast' implies great happiness and celebration if words could truly satisfy human emotions.

(iv) Complete the sentence with an appropriate reason.

- The poet mentions that words satisfy the least because _____.

Ans. The poet mentions that words satisfy the least because they often fail to express true emotions sincerely.

(v) Select the word that does not mean the same as 'oft'.

- | | |
|---------------|------------|
| A. always | B. usually |
| C. frequently | D. often |

Ans. A. always

II. Answer the following questions.**1. What is the comparison that the poet draws between words and 'empty air'?**

Ans. The poet compares words to "empty air" to show that they may exist but often have no real value or emotional impact.

2. According to the poet meaningful words are more precious than a lot of them. Explain.

Ans. The poet believes that a few meaningful and sincere words are more powerful because they come from the heart, whereas many words without feeling are useless.

3. Do you agree that the poet presents contrasting ideas related to 'words' in the poem? If yes, why? If no, why not?

Ans. Yes, the poet presents contrasting ideas. He shows that words can either be meaningless and empty or powerful and valuable, depending on their sincerity and truth.

4. The theme of loneliness hovers over the poem. Support this statement with examples from the text.

Ans. The theme of loneliness is shown through phrases like "a lonely home to cheer" and the idea of the heart searching for meaning, which reflects emotional isolation and the need for genuine connection.

5. How does the poet convey the superficial nature of words? What ought to be done to address this?

Ans. The poet shows the superficial nature of words by comparing them to weeds and showy plants that bear no fruit. This means they may look attractive but lack value. To address this, people should use fewer but sincere, heartfelt, and meaningful words.

Vocabulary in Context**I. The poet has used some figurative phrases. Match the phrases in Column 1 with their correct meanings in Column 2. Use each phrase in a sentence of your own.**

Column 1	Column 2
1. satisfy the heart	(i) many words
2. depart and leave but empty air	(ii) cheers up a person
3. hosts of words	(iii) there is no outcome
4. never touch the heart	(iv) makes one happy
5. wins its sunny way	(v) does not appeal to our emotions
6. plants that cannot grow fruit	(vi) makes no impact

Ans. Matching Answers

- satisfy the heart** → (iv) makes one happy
- depart and leave but empty air** → (vi) makes no impact
- hosts of words** → (i) many words
- never touch the heart** → (v) does not appeal to our emotions
- wins its sunny way** → (ii) cheers up a person
- plants that cannot grow fruit** → (iii) there is no outcome

Sentences:

1. **Satisfy the heart** – Her kind words truly satisfied my heart.
2. **Depart and leave but empty air** – His promises departed and left but empty air.
3. **Hosts of words** – He used hosts of words but said nothing meaningful.
4. **Never touch the heart** – His speech was long but never touched the heart.
5. **Wins its sunny way** – Her smile always wins its sunny way into everyone's life.
6. **Plants that cannot grow fruit** – His efforts were like plants that cannot grow fruit.

II. Create a 'Word Map' for each of the words from the poem given in the box.

depart	pilgrim	cheer	word
sunny	satisfy	heart	

To complete the word map include:

- Meaning (in your own words)
- Synonyms of the word
- Antonyms of the word
- Sentence using the word
- A quick sketch or symbol that represents the word

One example has been done for you.

- **Word:** cheer
- **Meaning:** to give a loud shout of approval or encouragement
- **Synonym:** comfort
- **Antonym:** sadden
- **Sentence:** The audience cheered her for great performance.
- **Sketch:** Picture of sunshine, sunflower, or a smiling face

**Ans. Word Maps****1. Word: depart**

- **Meaning:** to go away from a place
- **Synonym:** leave
- **Antonym:** arrive
- **Sentence:** The train will depart at 6 p.m.
- **Sketch:** ✈ or a moving train

2. Word: pilgrim

- **Meaning:** a person who travels on a journey
- **Synonym:** traveller
- **Antonym:** resident
- **Sentence:** The pilgrim walked miles to reach the temple.
- **Sketch:** 🚶 ♂

3. Word: cheer

- **Meaning:** to give a loud shout of approval or encouragement
- **Synonym:** comfort
- **Antonym:** sadden
- **Sentence:** The audience cheered her for great performance.
- **Sketch:** 😊 🌻

4. Word: word

- **Meaning:** a unit of language used to express ideas
- **Synonym:** term
- **Antonym:** silence
- **Sentence:** A kind word can make someone happy.
- **Sketch:** 

5. Word: sunny

- **Meaning:** bright and cheerful
- **Synonym:** bright
- **Antonym:** gloomy
- **Sentence:** It was a sunny day in the park.
- **Sketch:** 

6. Word: satisfy

- **Meaning:** to fulfill a need or desire
- **Synonym:** fulfill
- **Antonym:** disappoint
- **Sentence:** Food helps satisfy our hunger.
- **Sketch:** 

7. Word: heart

- **Meaning:** the centre of feelings and emotions
- **Synonym:** soul
- **Antonym:** indifference
- **Sentence:** Her words touched my heart.
- **Sketch:** 

Listen and Respond

- I. You will listen to a conversation between a girl and a boy. As you listen, mark four statements from 1–6 that are true. (Transcript for teacher on page 273)

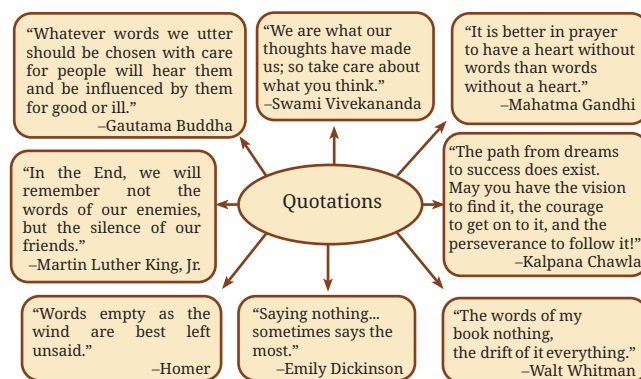
1. The girl was excited to participate in the declamation contest.
2. The boy was doubtful about the suitability of the topic chosen for the contest.
3. The girl explained that people prefer to keep their personal experiences to themselves.
4. The boy was unaware of the role played by body language in reflecting the speaker's confidence.
5. According to the girl, body language had an insignificant role to play in communication.
6. The girl had issued the book on body language earlier from the library.

Ans. True Statements:

1. The girl was excited to participate in the declamation contest.
2. The boy was doubtful about the suitability of the topic chosen for the contest.
4. The boy was unaware of the role played by body language in reflecting the speaker's confidence.

Speaking Activity

- I. Read the following quotations and select the one you like the most. Explain the quotation and share the reason for your choice with your classmates and teacher. You may talk about a connected personal experience too.



You may use the cues given below to state your choice and the reason.

- I chose _____ because...
- I selected _____ since...
- I decided on _____ due to...
- I picked _____ as...
- I settled for _____ because...

Ans. I chose the quotation by **Gautama Buddha** because it highlights the power of words.

The quotation means that whatever we say can deeply affect others. Our words can either encourage and inspire people or hurt and discourage them. Therefore, we should always think carefully before speaking and choose kind and positive words.

I picked this quotation because I have experienced how words can make a big difference. Once, a friend of mine was feeling sad, and I spoke kindly to her and encouraged her. She felt much better after that. This made

Writing Task

the great power, and we should always use them wisely.

- Write an essay on any one quotation from speaking activity. Follow the guidelines given below while drafting the essay.

Column 1: Paragraph Division	Column 2: Paragraph Content
1. Introduction	• Mention the quotation and the speaker. • Briefly mention the reason why it appealed to you. • State the purpose of the essay.
2. & 3. Body of the Essay	• Each paragraph should explain a specific point or idea related to the quotation. • Begin with a topic sentence that introduces the main point of the paragraph. • Provide evidence, examples, or narratives to support the main point. • Ensure a smooth flow between paragraphs by using transition words (e.g., In addition, For instance, However, Consequently, Finally).
4. Counterargument	• Think about any possible criticism of the quotation. • Give reasons why that criticism is baseless.
5. Conclusion	• Summarise the main points discussed in the body paragraphs. • End with a concluding statement that leaves a lasting impression.

Ans. Here is a well-structured essay based on the quotation by Gautama Buddha:

The Power of Words

“Whatever words we utter should be chosen with care for people will hear them and be influenced by them for good or ill.” — Gautama Buddha

This quotation by Gautama Buddha highlights the importance of speaking thoughtfully. It appealed to me because it reminds us that our words have a strong impact on others. In this essay, I will explain how words can influence people, why we must use them wisely, and how they shape relationships and society.

To begin with, words have the power to influence people’s thoughts and feelings. A kind word can uplift someone’s mood, while a harsh word can hurt deeply. For instance, when a teacher praises a student, it boosts the student’s confidence and encourages better performance. In addition to this, positive communication helps build trust and understanding among people.

Furthermore, careful use of words strengthens relationships. Words spoken in anger can damage friendships, sometimes permanently. However, thoughtful and respectful communication can resolve conflicts. For example, saying “I understand your point” instead of arguing can calm a situation. Consequently, choosing the right words helps maintain harmony in both personal and social life.

However, some people may argue that words are not as important as actions. While actions do matter, this criticism is not entirely correct. Words often guide actions and express intentions. Without clear and kind communication, actions may be misunderstood. Therefore, words and actions go hand in hand, and words cannot be ignored.

In conclusion, Gautama Buddha’s quotation teaches us to be mindful of our speech. Words can inspire, comfort, or harm others, depending on how we use them. By choosing our words carefully, we can create positive relationships and contribute to a better society. Thus, we must always think before we speak and use our words wisely.

One Point Learning