**Tintern Abbey**

By William Wordsworth (1770-1850)



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| *5**10**15**20**25**30**35**40**45**50**55**60**65**70**75**80**85**90**95**100**105**110**115**120**125**130**135**140**145**150**155**160* | Five years have passed; five summers, with the lengthOf five long winters! and again I hearThese waters, rolling from their mountain-springsWith a sweet inland murmur. —Once againDo I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,Which on a wild secluded scene impressThoughts of more deep seclusion; and connectThe landscape with the quiet of the sky.The day is come when I again reposeHere, under this dark sycamore, and viewThese plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,Which, at this season, with their unripe fruits,Among the woods and copses lose themselves,Nor, with their green and simple hue, disturbThe wild green landscape. Once again I seeThese hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little linesOf sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farmsGreen to the very door; and wreathes of smokeSent up, in silence, from among the trees,With some uncertain notice, as might seem,Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,Or of some hermit’s cave, where by his fireThe hermit sits alone.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Though absent long,These forms of beauty have not been to me,As is a landscape to a blind man’s eye:But oft, in lonely rooms, and mid the dinOf towns and cities, I have owed to them,In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart,And passing even into my purer mindWith tranquil restoration:—feelings tooOf unremembered pleasure; such, perhaps,As may have had no trivial influenceOn that best portion of a good man’s life;His little, nameless, unremembered actsOf kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,To them I may have owed another gift,Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,In which the burden of the mystery,In which the heavy and the weary weightOf all this unintelligible worldIs lighten’d:—that serene and blessed mood,In which the affections gently lead us on,Until, the breath of this corporeal frame,And even the motion of our human bloodAlmost suspended, we are laid asleepIn body, and become a living soul:While with an eye made quiet by the powerOf harmony, and the deep power of joy,We see into the life of things.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ If thisBe but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft,In darkness, and amid the many shapesOf joyless day-light; when the fretful stirUnprofitable, and the fever of the world,Have hung upon the beatings of my heart,How oft, in spirit, have I turned to theeO sylvan Wye! Thou wanderer through the woods,How often has my spirit turned to thee!And now, with gleams of half-extinguish’d thought,With many recognitions dim and faint,And somewhat of a sad perplexity,The picture of the mind revives again:While here I stand, not only with the senseOf present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughtsThat in this moment there is life and foodFor future years. And so I dare to hopeThough changed, no doubt, from what I was, when firstI came among these hills; when like a roeI bounded o’er the mountains, by the sidesOf the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,Wherever nature led; more like a manFlying from something that he dreads, than oneWho sought the thing he loved. For nature then(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,And their glad animal movements all gone by,)To me was all in all.—I cannot paintWhat then I was. The sounding cataractHaunted me like a passion: the tall rock,The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,Their colors and their forms, were then to meAn appetite: a feeling and a love,That had no need of a remoter charm,By thought supplied, or any interestUnborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,And all its aching joys are now no more,And all its dizzy raptures. Not for thisFaint I, nor mourn nor murmur: other giftsHave followed, for such loss, I would believe,Abundant recompense. For I have learnedTo look on nature, not as in the hourOf thoughtless youth, but hearing oftentimesThe still, sad music of humanity,Not harsh nor grating, though of ample powerTo chasten and subdue. And I have feltA presence that disturbs me with the joyOf elevated thoughts; a sense sublimeOf something far more deeply interfused,Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,And the round ocean, and the living air,And the blue sky, and in the mind of man,A motion and a spirit, that impelsAll thinking things, all objects of all thought,And rolls through all things. Therefore am I stillA lover of the meadows and the woods,And mountains; and of all that we beholdFrom this green earth; of all the mighty worldOf eye and ear, both what they half-create,And what perceive; well pleased to recognizeIn nature and the language of the sense,The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soulOf all my moral being.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Nor, perchance,If I were not thus taught, should I the moreSuffer my genial spirits to decay:For thou art with me, here, upon the banksOf this fair river; thou, my dearest Friend,My dear, dear Friend, and in thy voice I catchThe language of my former heart, and readMy former pleasures in the shooting lightsOf thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little whileMay I behold in thee what I was once,My dear, dear Sister! And this prayer I make,Knowing that Nature never did betrayThe heart that loved her; ’tis her privilege,Through all the years of this our life, to leadFrom joy to joy: for she can so informThe mind that is within us, so impressWith quietness and beauty, and so feedWith lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor allThe dreary intercourse of daily life,Shall e’er prevail against us, or disturbOur cheerful faith that all which we beholdIs full of blessings. Therefore let the moonShine on thee in thy solitary walk;And let the misty mountain winds be freeTo blow against thee: and in after years,When these wild ecstasies shall be maturedInto a sober pleasure, when thy mindShall be a mansion for all lovely forms,Thy memory be as a dwelling-placeFor all sweet sounds and harmonies; Oh! then,If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughtsOf tender joy wilt thou remember me,And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance,If I should be, where I no more can hearThy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleamsOf past existence, wilt thou then forgetThat on the banks of this delightful streamWe stood together; and that I, so longA worshipper of Nature, hither came,Unwearied in that service: rather sayWith warmer love, oh! with far deeper zealOf holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,That after many wanderings, many yearsOf absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,And this green pastoral landscape, were to meMore dear, both for themselves, and for thy sake. |

**Assignment**

**About the Great Work of Literature**

“Lines Written a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey on Revisiting the Banks of the Wye During a Tour, July 13, 1798” (commonly known as simply “Tintern Abbey”) by British Poet Laureate William Wordsworth (1770-1850) is considered one of the greatest works of British literature. It is within the category of British Romantic poetry (although it is unrhymed, it is in iambic pentameter). The poem is written by Wordsworth upon his visit to the picturesque location of the ruins of Tintern Abbey. He visited here five years before with his sister and this work is a reflection upon that previous visit and other themes.

**Instructions**

Read “Tintern Abbey.” Feel free to take notes on the text and use a dictionary. **Other than a dictionary, no other source of aid may be used.** After reading, chose one of the below prompts to write your essay on.

1. As discussed earlier this year, British Romantic period poetry is characterized by several dichotomies (interconnected relationship between two things). The first dichotomy is between the positive glorification of nature outside of industrializing city life on the one hand and a negative sense of loneliness on the other hand. The second dichotomy is between a positive sense of creativity, imagination, and emotion on the one hand and a negative sense of irrationality and being overly emotional on the other hand.

Analyze how “Tintern Abbey” fits into one or both of these dichotomies. You may also consider whether Wordsworth is able to overcome the negative sense of both or either dichotomy.

1. Memory and inspiration play significant roles “Tintern Abbey.” Choose one of these two themes, memory or inspiration, and talk about the significant role it plays in “Tintern Abbey.” Also, you may connect this theme to another book you have read or your own life experiences or observations (If you do so, be sure to thoroughly cover “Tintern Abbey” before moving on to your own example).

Your response should be at least 500 words in length.

**Grading**

Your writing will be graded both on its outer form (the mastery of grammar and vocabulary, and length: 75%) and its inner form (the strength, brilliance, and clarity of your analysis: 25%).