

A POISON TREE
by *William Blake*

I was angry with my friend;
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I watered it in fears,
Night and morning with my tears:
And I sunned it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night.
Till it bore an apple bright.
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine.

And into my garden stole,
When the night had veiled the pole;
In the morning glad I see;
My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

1. In stanza 1, who were the people the persona was angry with?

2. In stanza 1, why was the persona unable to settle his anger towards his enemy?

3. In stanza 2, how did the persona nurture his anger into a tree?

4. In stanza 2, how do you know that his foe was unaware of the persona's anger?

5. In stanza 3, explain why his foe beheld the apple shine.

6. In stanza 4, why did his foe steal the persona's apple 'when the night had veiled the pole'?

7. In stanza 4, why did the persona feel happy when he found his foe outstretched beneath the tree in the morning?

8. Do you think the persona's foe is aware that the persona is angry with him? Give a reason to support your answer.

9. What would you do if you know that a person is angry with you? Give a reason for your response.

10. Do you think that it is wrong for a person to be angry? Give a reason for your answer.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS : A POISON TREE

1. His friend and his foe.
2. Because he did not express his anger towards his enemy.
3. By watering his anger with his fears and tears and sunning it with smiles and wiles.
4. Because the persona sunned his anger with smiles as if he is at good term with his foe.
5. Because the foe knew that the apple belonged to the persona.
6. So that no one would know of his action as it was dark.
7. Because he felt like it served his foe right and his revenge had been avenged.
8. No, because the persona had never expressed his anger to his foe.
Yes, because he regarded the persona's apple @ anger as tempting.
9. I would confront him amicably and apologise if necessary, because I want to clear the air between us.
10. No, because we should let out our anger and not suppress it as in the long run, it may affect us negatively.