

Date 12 / 28 PV Log: (circle one) Poem / Movie / Picture / LyricTitle "Mending Wall"Author / Director / Robert Frost

Context (Where Found / Viewed / Read?)

I saw this poem on the packet given to us my Mr. Shakely called "Poetry on the AP Exam," and I have also read it a few times before. looked it up online in order to do a log on it because I currently don't have any logs on poems written in blank verse.

Content / CD / Summary / Precis (Say? "Plot? Setting/Situation? Key lines/phrases scenes, etc?)

"Mending Wall" takes place in the countryside where nature and hunters keep destroying a wall between two neighbors. Every spring, the speaker and his neighbor get together in order to fix the wall where it has crumbled and been destroyed, but eventually the speaker realizes that a wall does not need to exist between their two properties because " [The speaker's] apple trees will never get across / And eat the cones under his pines, [the speaker] tells him." The speaker does not believe that a wall is actually necessary if there is nothing to be contained, but the neighbor repeats his father's adage, "Good fences make good neighbors." The speaker believes his neighbor is just a skeptic stuck in an outdated time, but no matter how hard the speaker tries, the neighbor will not consider the destruction of the wall.

Content / CM / Meaning? / Theme(s)?

The wall in "Mending Wall" seemingly signifies a distinction between two very different people with completely different approaches to life and unique versions of reality. However, the poem is actually about two similar minded men who are tied to tradition, which ultimately allows them to maintain a quality relationship. The speaker does challenge the very old-school mentality that the neighbor exemplifies by questioning the need for a wall to maintain relationships between people when it really just inhibits freedom and discovery. Nevertheless, he is the one that appoints the day of mending and even mends by himself throughout the year. Although nature seems to want to have the wall destroyed like the speaker falsely advocates, the tradition of mending the wall together allows the two men to interact and communicate with each other much better than they would be able to on isolated properties.

Form (Diction? Construction Terms? Symbolism?)

"Mending Wall" is written in blank verse, meaning that it consists of unrhymed lines of iambic pentameter. There are many lines that disrupt the flow of the meter because they contain eleven syllables rather than ten. Moreover, quite interestingly, because the poem is not broken down into stanzas, the unequal lengths of the lines look like a rock wall turned sideways with many gaps and holes that need to be mended. This adds to the visual imagery of the poem. The wall ironically represents the item that both separates and brings together the two neighbors, which provides a happy medium for both of their apparent views.

Commentary (What do you want to say? Why like? Questions? Synthesis / Allusions-Connections / Relevance to personal experience, to literature, 20Q's? etc.)? "Poetic" Traits?

Because "Mending Wall" is written in blank verse, the poem flows smoothly and serenely, just as if the author was writing down ideas that freely drifted out of his mind. Moreover, after researching more about this poem, I discovered that it was actually an autobiographical account of the relationship between Frost and his neighbor, which aided in the simplicity and ease of reading the poem. The only thing that is sort of confusing in this poem is the views of both the neighbor and the speaker. The neighbor clearly advocates tradition and custom over modernization, but the speaker thinks differently than he acts. He is more into building the wall than his neighbor, yet he is the one who contemplates whether the wall is actually necessary or not. Thus, both men apparently cling to tradition, even though the poem seemingly promotes venturing out of one's comfort zone and trying new things. Tradition is poetic, and the reason that both of them adhere to it is because tradition is what they know. The return to tradition in order to maintain stability and prosperity could not be more evident in T.H. White's *The Once and Future King* when Arthur gains the throne and redirects his kingdom to the ancient code of chivalry. Tradition is constant, while change can be risky and dangerous. Change leads people into unknown territory, which may at times be beneficial; however, comfortable customs give people a sense of safety and security. Traditions are poetic because they continually leave people satisfied with a sense of meaning and significance.

over (do not mix logs; e.g., no poem log in front, and movie log on back)