

The Frost Place

Mrs. Gadapee

Three Frost Poems to Consider, Three Prompts, Then a Share Session

Now Close the Windows

Now close the windows and hush all the fields;

 If the trees must, let them silently toss;

No bird is singing now, and if there is,

 Be it my loss.

It will be long ere the marshes resume,

 It will be long ere the earliest bird:

So close the windows and not hear the wind,

 But see all wind-stirred.

Focus: Sensory details/ loss

Prompt: Write a poem that leaves one sense out of the description. Try to make it at least 8-10 lines, but don't stretch for rhyming or meter unless it comes naturally to you.

After Apple Picking

My long two-pointed ladder's sticking through a tree
Toward heaven still,
And there's a barrel that I didn't fill
Beside it, and there may be two or three
Apples I didn't pick upon some bough.
But I am done with apple-picking now.
Essence of winter sleep is on the night,
The scent of apples: I am drowsing off.
I cannot rub the strangeness from my sight
I got from looking through a pane of glass
I skimmed this morning from the drinking trough
And held against the world of hoary grass.
It melted, and I let it fall and break.
But I was well
Upon my way to sleep before it fell,
And I could tell
What form my dreaming was about to take.
Magnified apples appear and disappear,
Stem end and blossom end,
And every fleck of russet showing clear.
My instep arch not only keeps the ache,
It keeps the pressure of a ladder-round.
I feel the ladder sway as the boughs bend.
And I keep hearing from the cellar bin
The rumbling sound
Of load on load of apples coming in.

For I have had too much
Of apple-picking: I am overtired
Of the great harvest I myself desired.
There were ten thousand thousand fruit to touch,
Cherish in hand, lift down, and not let fall.
For all
That struck the earth,
No matter if not bruised or spiked with stubble,
Went surely to the cider-apple heap
As of no worth.
One can see what will trouble
This sleep of mine, whatever sleep it is.
Were he not gone,
The woodchuck could say whether it's like his
Long sleep, as I describe its coming on,
Or just some human sleep.

Focus: Repetitive task/ seasonal chores

Prompt: Think about a seasonal chore that you either really like to do or one that you really dislike. Make a list of all the specific details about the chore (ex. Stacking cord wood—splinters, bugs, wood rot, logs that roll off, sawdust, lichen, itchy gloves, cool temperatures, etc.). Use as your focus Frost's line, "One can see what will trouble/ this sleep of mine..." and really dig deep into the technical and sensory details of the chore. Try to make your poem 15-20 lines long, but don't focus on rhyme or meter. This poem should really tell the story of the task and how you feel about it.

A Late Walk

When I go up through the mowing field,
The headless aftermath,
Smooth-laid like thatch with the heavy dew,
Half closes the garden path.

And when I come to the garden ground,
The whirl of sober birds
Up from the tangle of withered weeds
Is sadder than any words.

A tree beside the wall stands bare,
But a leaf that lingered brown,
Disturbed, I doubt not, by my thought,
Comes softly rattling down.

I end not far from my going forth
By picking the faded blue
Of the last remaining aster flower
To carry again to you.

Focus: Adjectives/ Specificity of language/ Sensory details/ Seasonal details

Prompt: This is a poem about last things, and what we notice about them. Take a short walk around the property, and really focus on something that might be the last of its kind for the season: a leaf, an apple, an insect, etc. Describe the setting where you found this item, using as much sensory detail as possible. Would you save this thing, if you could? What relationship does your speaker have to the item? To whom might you give it? Try to make your poem at least ten lines, and don't worry about rhyme or meter.