

PBS Lesson Series

# ELA, Grade 7, Lesson 11

## Teacher Packet

I like to see it lap the miles,  
And lick the valleys up,  
And stop to feed itself at tanks,  
And then, prodigious, step

I like to see it lap the miles,  
And lick the valleys up,  
And stop to feed itself at tanks,  
And then, prodigious, step

Around a pile of mountains,  
And, supercilious, peer  
In shanties by the sides of roads;  
And then a quarry pare

Around a pile of mountains,  
And, supercilious, peer  
In shanties by the sides of roads;  
And then a quarry pare

To fit its sides, and crawl between,  
Complaining all the while  
In horrid, hooting stanza;  
Then chase itself down hill

To fit its sides, and crawl between,  
Complaining all the while  
In horrid, hooting stanza;  
Then chase itself down hill

And neigh like Boanerges;  
Then, punctual as a star,  
Stop-docile and omnipotent-  
At its own stable door.



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Reread the first line. What is the meaning of the word “lap” in this line?

I like to see it lap the miles,  
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What does the line, “feed itself at tanks”  
lead you to imagine about the creature  
the author is describing?



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Circle the verbs in the first through third stanzas. How do these verbs connect with the movements, sound and appearance of a train?

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## THE RAILWAY TRAIN.

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And lick the valleys up,  
And stop to feed itself at tanks,  
And then, prodigious, step  
Around a pile of mountains,  
And, supercilious, peer  
In shanties by the sides of roads;  
And then a quarry pare  
To fit its sides, and crawl between,  
Complaining all the while  
In horrid, hooting stanza;  
Then chase itself down hill  
And neigh like Boanerges;  
Then, punctual as a star,  
Stop-docile and omnipotent-  
At its own stable door.

In the poem, Dickinson uses words to describe the natural environment. How does this setting help you envision a train?

## **THE RAILWAY TRAIN.**

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Focus Question: What words or phrases suggest that the subject of this poem is a train?