

Name: _____ Teacher: _____ School: _____

Grade 7: Lesson 11 Analyze the Poem “The Railway Train” by Emily Dickinson

THE RAILWAY TRAIN.

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
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.

Emily Dickinson

Questions

1. Reread the first line. What is the meaning of the word “lap” in this line?
2. What does the line, “feed itself at tanks” lead you to imagine about the creature the author is describing?
3. Circle the verbs in the first through third stanzas. How do these verbs connect with the movements, sound and appearance of a train?
4. In the poem, Dickinson uses words to describe the natural environment. How does this setting help you envision a train?

Independent Practice Directions: What words or phrases suggest the subject of the poem is a train?

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