

Hi, this is Ross from Learning without Borders and today we're going to be learning about the poem *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud* by William Wordsworth. This poem is a perfect example of Wordsworth's idea that the natural world was the greatest source of human happiness. In characteristically simple language, it describes the simple joy the poet felt in discovering a patch of flowers as he was out walking one day beside a lake. More importantly, the poem describes how, as much as he enjoyed seeing the flowers at the time, it is the memory of this image that brings him most joy and brings him happiness when he might otherwise feel bored or stressed out.

Wordsworth uses some common poetic tools in this poem. He begins by comparing the way he walks to the aimless way a cloud floats through the sky. He even gives this cloud an emotion: loneliness. This loneliness is quickly ended when the poet sees "a host of golden daffodils"; the word host can mean a "group", but it also means somebody who welcomes you into their home and takes care of you. Like the cloud, the daffodils are also given human characteristics – Wordsworth describes them as "dancing", which makes them seem happy. Later he goes on to suggest that the waves of the lake are dancing too, and that they are in competition with the flowers.

This type of language brings life to the natural world, so that instead of just being a collection of objects, the daffodils, and waves feel like characters in themselves. This way of thinking about nature – as something that can interact with and influence human emotion – is key to Wordsworth's poetic vision.

Here is the poem:

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they

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Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

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