

## **Honeycomb: Textbook in English for class VII**

### **Poem: The Shed**

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**Introduction:** The poem “The Shed” by Frank Flynn is about the speaker’s (a child’s) fear and curiosity about the ‘Shed’ which is at the end of his/her garden. The poem deals with the psychology of a child to think over the information received from his/her brother. It also shows playful rivalry between siblings.

#### **What is shed?**

A shed is a temporary structure build to shelter something. There are many types of shed. (**Refer slide 2: Different Sheds**)

#### **Explanation of stanzas and its characteristics:**

The poem opens with the description of the ‘Shed’ which is at the end of the speaker’s garden.

**Stanza 1 – “There’s a shed at the bottom of our garden**

**With a spider’s web hanging across the door,**

**The hinges are rusty and creak in the wind.**

**When I’m in bed I lie and I listen,**

**I’ll open that door one day.”**

The above stanza beautifully describes the spider’s web and rusty hinges and creaking sound when wind passes through it. The speaker thinks about the scary things at the bed time. He /she has a strong desire to open the door and peep into it.

**Imagery:** The poet is really successful in bringing the image of the abandoned ‘Shed’ in front of the eyes of the readers through selected words like rusty hinges, spider’s web, dusty old window and Cracked window panes. (**Refer slide 5: Visual Imagery**)

**Stanza 2- “There’s a dusty old window around at the side  
With three cracked panes of glass.  
I often think there’s someone staring at me  
Each time that I pass,  
I’ll peep through that window one day.”**

The abandoned ‘Shed’ has old dusty windows and cracked panes. The stanza is an extension of the description of the Shed. How uncared, dilapidated it was! The speaker thinks someone is staring at him/her each time he/she passes by it. That was the fear in his/her mind.

**Stanza 3 – “My Brother says there’s a ghost in the shed  
Who hides under the rotten floorboards,  
And if I ever dare to set foot inside  
He’ll jump out and chop off my head  
But, I’ll take a peek one day.”**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> stanza clearly says how these fearful things went into the mind of the speaker. His/her brother told him/her about the ghost who hides under the rotten floorboard. He/she was also told that if he/she dared to peep into it the ghost would jump out and would chop his/her head.

**Atmosphere:** There is spooky, scary atmosphere in the poem. It is brilliantly described with the help of presence of ghost under rotten floor board, and its action of chopping off the head if someone enters into it. (**Refer slide 6: Atmosphere**)

Stanza 4- **“I know that there isn’t really a ghost,  
My brother tells lies to keep the shed for his den;  
There isn’t anyone staring or making strange noises  
And the spider has been gone from his web  
Since I don’t know when,  
I’ll go into that shed one day soon,  
But not just yet....”**

The concluding part says that the speaker knows there is no ghost in it. He/she convinces himself/herself that his/her brother told his/her a lie to keep the ‘Shed’ for his own hiding place (i.e. den) when they are at play, perhaps hide and seek.

The speaker also knows that nobody makes strange noises and spiders have gone from his web.

The speaker seems determined to go into that shed one day. The speaker was not ready to go into it right now but one day he/she would certainly go into it. This shows his/her fear and curiosity.

**Conflict /Tension:** There is clear conflict in the mind of the speaker between what he/she thinks, what he/she wants and what his/her brother told him/her

about the Shed and the ghost. This is psychology of a child to try to understand, analyse the information received and create one's own world.

**Vocabulary:**

Rusty - corroded by rust

Creak – make a sharp sound

Hinges – jointed device to pivot the door

Staring – looking constantly

Peek – look in

Dusty – covered with dust

Cracked – broken