

## 2.3 The Twins

**\_ Henry S. Leigh**

### Paraphrase of the poem

Henry S. Leigh's 'The Twins' is a humorous poem. The poem presents senseless and absurd mistakes in the life of twins. One of the twins is the speaker in this poem. The speaker is speaking about the effects of being similarity with his brother. The similarity chased him from his birth to the death.

In the opening stanza, the speaker tells that he grew exactly like his brother. He grew like his brother in form and feature, face and limb. Because of physical resemblance the people misunderstood them for each other. The similarity created confusion among all his relatives. Anybody did not know who was a twin.

In the second stanza, the speaker speaks about the absurd mistake at the naming ceremony. Before naming ceremony their names were fixed. The nurse washed them before the ceremony. They were completely mixed with each other. Because of nurse's mistake or as per the order of fate their names were interchanged. The speaker got his brother's name and his brother got the speaker's name.

The third stanza describes how his school life was affected because of physical resemblance. The physical similarity also chased him in his school life. The speaker was always punished for his brother's mistake. The speaker desperately asked for guidance. He asked everyone what he/she would do if he was in his place. However, he asked how one could prove one's identity. The concluding stanza depicts the domestic life of the speaker. Their close resemblance changed the situation of his domestic life. The speaker's intended bride became his brother's wife. Such types of absurd and senseless mistakes went on up to the end of his life. When the speaker died, the neighbours came and buried his brother John.

### Warming Up !

#### Chit-Chat

#### 1. Two babies born at the same time are called twins. Guess and share who are:

\*triplets: Three babies born at the same time are called triplets.

\*quadruplets: Four babies born at the same time are called quadruplets.

\*quintuplets: Five babies born at the same time are called quintuplets.

**2. Imagine you had an identical twin (brother or sister). Imagine and share with your classmates what pranks you two would play on your friends, elders in the family and even in school.**

Ans: We two would play pranks on my friends, elders in the family and in the school like

1. Playing mischiefs with friends by telling I am not who wants you. (friends)
2. Saying other's name for our mistakes. (family)
3. Blaming each other for our mistakes. (school)

**1. Study the following pairs or groups of words. Cup and saucer/needle and thread birds and beasts/take a risk / sip tea/coffee/hide and seek etc.**

**2. These are sets of words that more than often go together and occur together. We call such sets Collocation.**

**Insert the proper words from the bracket to form collocations.**

Ans :

- (a) absolutely necessary (b) cannot afford  
(c) formal clothes (d) job interview  
(e) pass time (f) accept defeat  
(g) early morning (h) catch a cold  
(i) leading role (j) joint owners

**3. Exaggeration or overstatement often causes humour. For example, She is thin as a pin.**

- He has a pea-sized brain
- My shoes are killing me.

**When such exaggerated lines occur in poetry, they are examples of the Figure of Speech; Hyperbole. Complete the following examples of Hyperbole using words from the bracket below.**

- (a) She wept **an-ocean** of tears.
- (b) The hungry man ate **a ton** of food.
- (c) He runs faster than **a horse**.
- (d) Brrrr..! I am freezing to **death**.

I shall come over in just a **second**.

### **Margin Questions For Discussion**

**1) In what aspects were the brothers alike each other?**

Ans: The brothers were alike each other in form and feature, face and limb.

**2) What name did the speaker get?**

Ans: The speaker got the name of his twin brother.

**3) How did the speaker suffer at school?**

Ans: The speaker suffered too much at school. He was punished for his brother's mistakes.

**4) What is impossible in the last two lines?**

Ans: The last two lines describe that when the speaker died, the neighbours buried his brother John. Funeral on alive person is impossible in the last two lines.

### **English Workshop**

**1. Rewrite putting the mistakes in the speaker/s life, in their proper order.**

- (a) He got beaten-up, often, at school.
- (b) The speaker's bride became his brother's wife.

(c) The speaker desperately asked for guidance.

(d) No one in the family could distinguish between the twin – babies.

**(e) At the naming ceremony wrong names were given to the two twin brothers. Even in death, the twins were not spared during burial.**

Ans:

1) No one in the family could distinguish between the twin babies.

2) At the naming ceremony wrong names were given to the two twin brothers.

3) He got beaten up, often, at school.

4) The speaker desperately asked for guidance.

5) The speaker's bride became his brother's wife.

6) Even in death, the twins were not spared during burial.

**2. Pick out four situations in the lives of the twins, which are too absurd and senseless to believe.**

Ans:

1) Changing names of twins during naming ceremony.

2) The speaker got punishment (or his brother's mistakes in school.

3) The speaker's Intended bride became his brother's wife.

4) The neighbours buried speaker's brother instead of him.

**3. (A) Complete the web diagram.**

Poet	- Provide amusement
uses	-Provide comic relief
humour	-reduce boredom
to	-Point out misunderstanding among people
	-Present twins' life & funny situations
	-create laughter

**(B) Write any two lines from the poem, that you find most humorous.**

**Ans: For somehow, my intended bride Became my brother's wife.**

**4. Pick out lines that contain:**

**\*Alliteration:**

**Ans:**

**(a) In form and feature, face and limb.**

**(b) That folks got taking me for him.**

**(c) It puzzled our kith and kin.**

**\*Pun:**

**Ans:**

**(a) Yet not a soul knew which**

**(b) For John turned out a fool.**

**\*Hyperbole:**

**Ans:**

**(a) For somehow, my intended bride Became my brother's wife.**

**(b) And when I died, the neighbours came**

**And buried brother John.**

**5. Pick out from the poem sets of words that generally go together**

**For example, kith and kin.**

**Ans: (a) form and feature (b) face and limb**

**(c) turned the tide (d) fate's decree**

**6. Write in your notebook, the summary of this poem in about 15 to 20 lines in your own words.**

**You can suggest another humorous title.**

**Ans:** The students should write summary of this poem with the help of paraphrase of poem

**7. Read the poem. Write an appreciation of the poem in about 12 to 15 sentences with the help of the following points.**

### **Points**

<b>Title</b>	<b>The Twins</b>
<b>Poet</b>	<b>Henry Sambrooke Leigh</b>
<b>Rhyme scheme</b>	<b>abab cdcd</b>
<b>Favourite line</b>	<b>For somehow, my intended bride Became my brother's wife I like these lines because they provide comic situations to me. They amuse me in well manner.</b>
<b>Theme/Central idea</b>	<b>The poem is about the absurd mistakes that took place in the lives of twins. The poem provides different comic and funny situations to the readers. The poet is speaking about the demerits of being twin.</b>
<b>Figures of speech</b>	<b>Alliteration: In form and feature, face and limb. Pun - John turned out a fool. Hyperbole - And when I died, the neighbours came And buried brother John.</b>
<b>Special features type of poem language, style, tone, implied meaning etc.</b>	<b>This is a humorous poem., The poet has used simple language. The poet has used sets of words that generally go together. The style of poem is simple and straight forward. The poem is musical so far as rhyme-scheme is concerned.</b>
<b>Why I like/ dislike the poem</b>	<b>I like because the it is a funny and comic poem. It provides different comic situations to me. It creates laughter in me. I like simplicity in presentation.</b>