

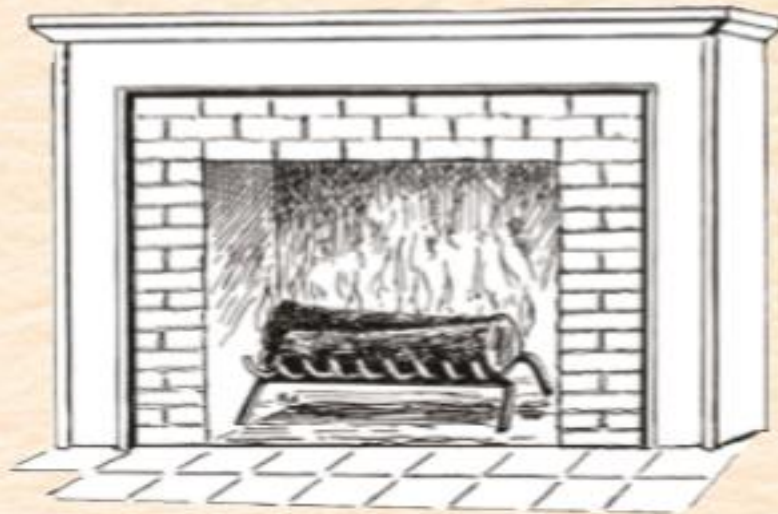
I Sit by the Fire and Think *by J. R. R. Tolkien*

I sit beside the fire and think of all that I have seen,
of meadow-flowers and butterflies in summers that have been;
Of yellow leaves and gossamer in autumns that there were,
with morning mist and silver sun and wind upon my hair.

5 I sit beside the fire and think of how the world will be
when winter comes without a spring that I shall ever see.

For still there are so many things that I have never seen:
in every wood in every spring there is a different green.

10 I sit beside the fire and think of people long ago,
and people who will see a world that I shall never know.
But all the while I sit and think of times there were before,
I listen for returning feet and voices at the door.



Use the Hints on this page to help you answer the questions.

- 1** Which best describes the first stanza?
- A** The speaker looks back on past events with sadness and deep regret.
 - B** The speaker looks ahead to future events with excitement.
 - C** The speaker thinks about the past and wonders about the future.
 - D** The speaker thinks about all he has to do in the months ahead.
- 2** How does the idea of time contribute to the poem's structure?
- A** The speaker thinks about the past and then the future, and at the end he returns to the present.
 - B** The speaker first thinks about what will happen in the future, wonders about the present, and then the past.
 - C** The speaker thinks about the present autumn, then wonders what winter without spring would be like.
 - D** The speaker recalls sitting by the fire during his youth, and remembers the sound of feet and voices.
- 3** State the theme of the poem. Give at least one example of a sentence from the poem that develops the poem's theme.

