Poem Analysis
Of
“Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening”
By
Robert Frost
POEM ANALYSIS
By: Henry Whitaker

Have you ever read the poem “Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening” by Robert Frost? The rhythm in this lyric poem is created by using the rhyme scheme of *aaba, bbcb, ccdc, dddd* and that gives it a musical sound when you read it. The theme of this poem is that it is nice to relax and do what you want, but some things have to be done. The main idea of the poem is responsibility. If you know you have things to do you should not do anything else until they’re done.

Frost uses figurative language to make his point and let the reader know his purpose. One type of figurative language that Robert Frost uses is repetition. He uses repetition in the lines that say,

“And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep”.

In a few lines above these, he just described the woods as “lovely, dark and deep” so this shows that even though he wanted to stay and watch the snow, he had to go and do what needed to be done. Frost uses repetition (*repeating a word or phrase to make it stand out*) to make it clear to the reader that he still had a long way to go in order to meet his responsibility of “promises to keep”. This supports the theme and main idea by showing that he couldn’t stop there; it’s more important for him to go on.

He also uses personification in the lines that say,

“My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near”.

Frost uses personification (*giving human qualities to something not human – the horse thinking*) to show that it is unusual for him to stop his horse there in the woods like that. This was something that he didn’t usually do unless there was a “farmhouse near”. Why would he “stop without a farmhouse near” then? Maybe “to watch his woods fill up with snow” was something so beautiful and relaxing that he had to stop for a while and watch when he first seen it happening.

“Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening” also seems to relate to Frost’s real life. His biography tells about a time that he stopped his horse in the woods (when it was cold) to cry after he couldn’t buy his kids some
Christmas presents. Then his horse “shook the harness bells” and it reminded him that he needed to get home before it got too dark. According to the biography, Frost was living a hard life at the time – not as the famous writer we know him to be. It seems like he included some details from his own life experiences to write this poem, and that may be why the tone seems sad and lonely, “only other sound’s the sweep”.

The author's purpose is revealed in the title - to explain his experience. He tells about when he stopped to look at the woods while it was snowing. He says he wants to watch the snow, but he has to go on because there’s something more important that he needs to do. I think that he is saying no matter how bad you want to do something else, the important things must be done first. I think the importance of responsibility is why he wrote the poem, “Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening”.