

The Flower School – Poem appreciation

"The Flower-School" is a poem by Bengali poet [Rabindranath Tagore](#). It is narrated in the third person, but includes elements of a child speaking to a mother.

The title of the poem is almost paradoxical in that flowers do not actually attend school. Thus the title makes readers contemplate this [paradox](#) of how flowers create spectacularly beautiful blossoms without the training given human children.

The child's voice in the poem hypothesizes that flowers perhaps go to school underground and that their beautiful eruption above ground is similar to children being let out of school into playgrounds and rainstorms are similar to school holidays. The child, looking at the flowers waving in the wind, surmises that their true home is in the sky which is their mother.

As Tagore himself was a Brahmin who founded an ashram, one might also wish to think of the parallel that the flowers' underground life is like the life of humans living in mortal bodies, and like the flowers bursting into bloom above ground, so the human soul eventually departs the body to its true home.

The poem begins with a description of thunder coming from the sky. The speaker, we find out as the poem progresses, is most likely a child speaking to his mother. The child speaks directly to his mother during the poem. Rain falls on the land and the wind begins to blow amid the bamboo trees. It is at this point that the flowers show themselves in a vast array of colors in "wild glee." The speaker then presents his idea that the "flowers go to school underground." This is where the title comes from. The flowers then continue learning in their "school" with the "doors shut." If they make the mistake of wanting to play too early, the teacher makes them "stand in a corner." The "holidays" begin (as they do at the beginning of the poem) when the storms appear. It is at this point that the flowers (now described as "children") come out to play in many coloured outfits. The flowers grow up towards the sky, and the speaker refers to this as "their home." The speaker then admits that flowers "raise their arms" towards their own mother, just like the speaker raises his arms to his mother.