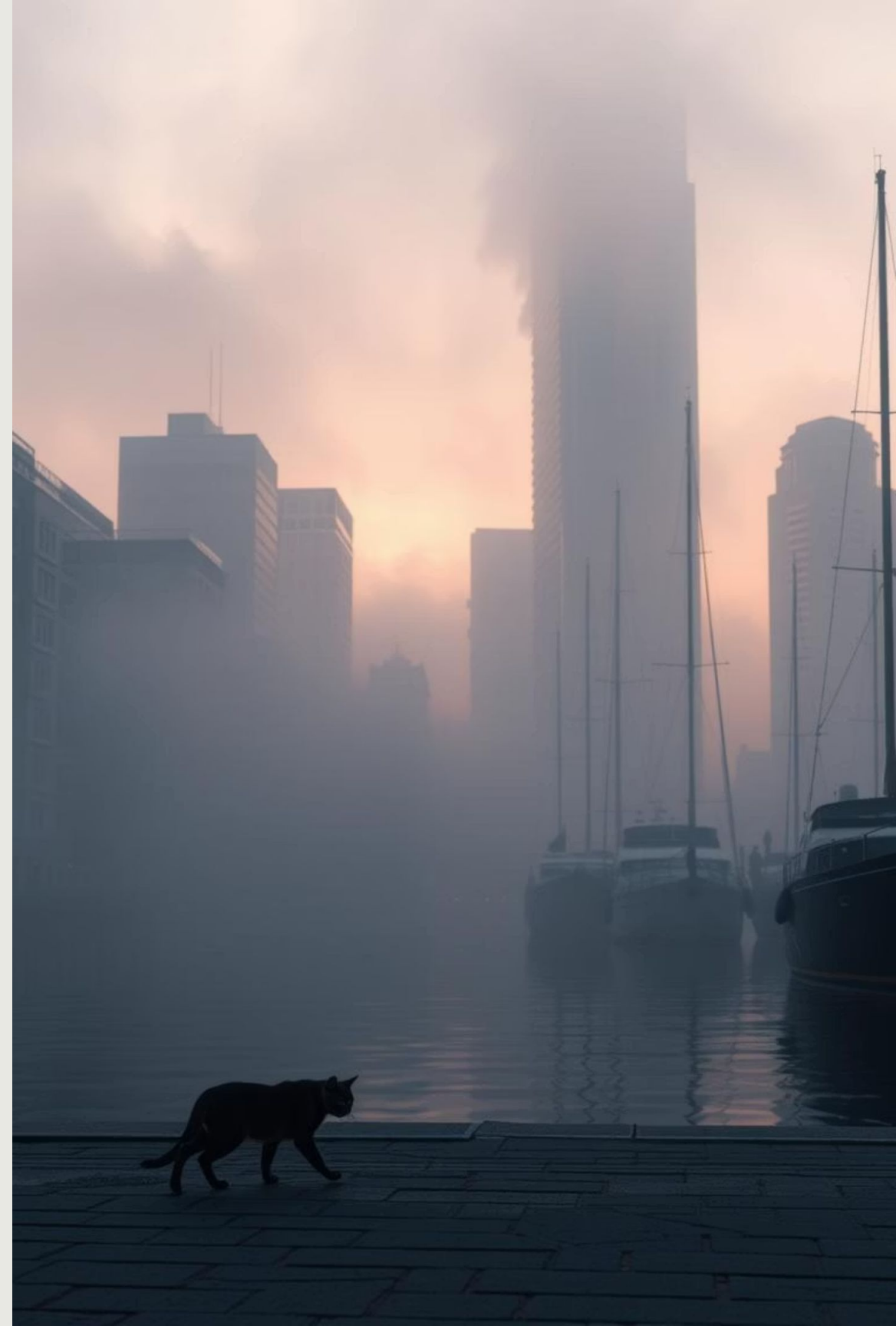


Unveiling "Fog" by Carl Sandburg: A Grade 10 Exploration

Welcome to our exploration of Carl Sandburg's evocative poem, "Fog," a powerful yet concise piece found in your NCERT First Flight textbook. We'll delve into its simple, striking imagery and uncover the profound comparisons it draws between nature and everyday life.



About the Poet: Carl Sandburg

Carl Sandburg, an eminent American poet, biographer, and folklorist, was a master of capturing the essence of the common person and the American landscape. His unique style, often referred to as "free verse," allowed his poetry to flow naturally, much like spoken language, making it accessible and deeply resonant with readers.

- Awarded three Pulitzer Prizes: two for his poetry collections and one for his comprehensive biography of Abraham Lincoln.
- Affectionately known as the "Poet of the People" for his relatable themes and democratic approach to verse.
- Pioneered free verse, a poetic form that mirrors the rhythms of natural speech, often connecting the beauty of nature with the intricacies of daily existence.

The Full Text of "Fog"

The fog comes

On little cat feet.

It sits looking

Over harbour and city

On silent haunches

And then, moves on.

This brief poem, composed of just six lines, paints a vivid picture of fog's silent and subtle arrival, its contemplative pause, and its eventual departure.

Central Idea of the Poem

1 Stealthy Arrival

The poem's core idea revolves around the comparison of fog to a cat, emphasising its silent and almost imperceptible approach.

2 Quiet Observation

Just like a cat, the fog settles quietly, encompassing the city and harbour, observing without intrusion.

3 Subtle Departure

It then vanishes just as quietly, highlighting nature's gentle yet powerful presence and its transient beauty.

Sandburg masterfully conveys the quiet grace and fleeting nature of fog through this simple, elegant parallel.

Detailed Explanation of the Poem

The poem opens with the striking image: "**The fog comes / On little cat feet.**" This immediate comparison sets the tone, implying the fog's silent, soft, and unannounced arrival. It doesn't rush in; it glides.

Next, we read: "**It sits looking / Over harbour and city / On silent haunches.**" Here, the fog is personified as a cat resting, observing its surroundings from a calm, still position. It covers everything gently, creating a sense of quiet solitude.



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Finally, the poem concludes with: "**And then moves on**" This line perfectly captures the transient nature

Key Poetic Devices Used

Metaphor

The most prominent device is the direct comparison of **fog to a cat**, without using "like" or "as." This creates a powerful, direct mental image.

Personification

The fog is given human-like (or animal-like) qualities: it "**sits**" and "**looks**". This makes the abstract concept of fog more tangible and relatable.

Free Verse

The poem is written in free verse, meaning it has **no fixed rhyme scheme or meter**. This allows for a natural, conversational flow that mirrors the unconstrained movement of the fog itself.

These devices work in harmony to enhance the poem's imagery and thematic depth, making it a compelling read.

Understanding Key Word Meanings

Harbour

A protected area of water, often with docks and facilities, where ships and boats can shelter. In the poem, it represents the urban maritime landscape the fog covers.

Haunches

The hip, buttock, and upper thigh of an animal, particularly when it is crouching or sitting with its legs bent beneath it.

Silent Haunches

This phrase refers to the cat's quiet, still posture as it observes its surroundings. It reinforces the idea of the fog's quiet, unmoving presence over the city before it departs.

The Profound Cat Comparison



Quiet Movement

Both fog and cats are known for their ability to move with incredible stealth, often appearing and disappearing without a sound.



Sudden Appearance

They can both materialise seemingly out of nowhere, creating a sense of mystery and surprise.

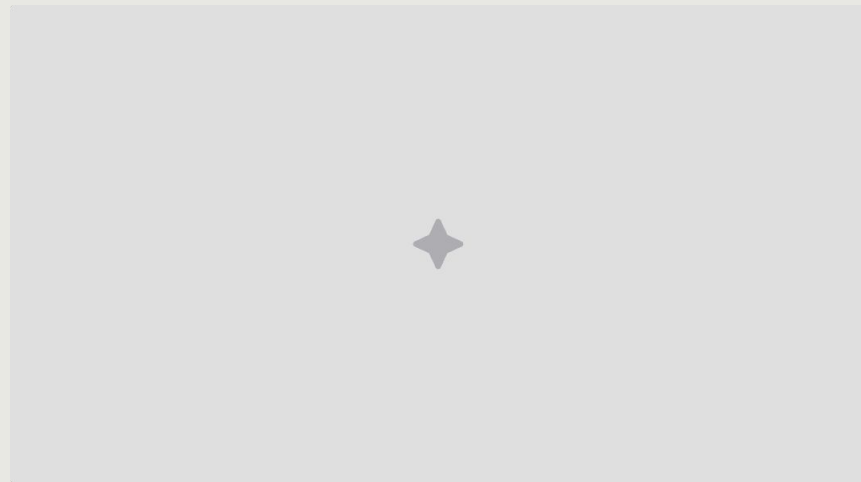


Vivid Imagery

The comparison evokes a powerful visual and sensory experience, allowing readers to truly "see" and "feel" the fog's behaviour.

This simple yet ingenious analogy makes the abstract concept of fog tangible and relatable, enhancing the poem's impact.

Additional Insights into "Fog"



Brevity Reflects Nature: The poem's concise nature mirrors the often brief and transient presence of fog itself, making every word count.

Observing the Mundane: It encourages us to pause and appreciate the subtle beauty and intricate details in everyday natural phenomena that often go unnoticed.

Symbol of Calmness: The fog, like the cat, brings a sense of quiet mystery and a temporary hush to the bustling city, symbolising moments of peace amidst chaos.

Simple Yet Profound: Sandburg demonstrates how simple language and imagery can convey deep meaning and evoke strong emotions.

Conclusion: A Poetic Gem for Grade 10

- ✔ "Fog" by Carl Sandburg is a masterful example of how simple language can create powerful and enduring imagery. Its concise narrative effectively teaches students about metaphor and personification, showcasing how these poetic devices bring inanimate objects to life. Furthermore, it serves as an excellent introduction to free verse poetry, encouraging students to appreciate the natural flow and rhythm of language. This poem invites us to look closer at the world around us and find wonder in the most ordinary of occurrences.