

Vacation Time

Vacation Time opens with the nostalgic recollections of vacation anticipation during school days. The narrator fondly remembers how, as a boy, he would daydream of play and freedom, eagerly awaiting the end of school to enjoy the outdoors and adventures that awaited him beyond the classroom. His attention would often drift away from his studies, lost in fantasies of romping and racing outside, especially during the agonizingly slow final two weeks of the term. He humorously recounts how questions from teachers would snap him back to reality, often at moments when his daydreams were most vivid – such as imagining himself fishing and feeling a bite at the very moment he was called upon.

The poem then shifts perspective to the narrator's present, observing his own children who are caught in the same cycle of longing and impatience for vacation time, mirroring his own childhood impatience. Despite his attempts to explain that time will seem to pass more swiftly as they grow older, his wisdom falls on deaf ears; to them, time is a slow-moving barrier to their fun and freedom, just as it was to him at their age. This reflection underscores a universal theme of the slow passage of time felt in youth and the eager anticipation for moments of joy and relaxation.

The Little Hurts transitions to a tender scene between the narrator and his daughter, showcasing moments of parental care and concern for the minor injuries children accumulate in their play. Each night, he tends to her new scrapes and bruises, expressing a father's worry and love as he gently admonishes her to be careful. These nightly rituals of caring for "the little hurts" serve as poignant, intimate glimpses into the parental role of healing physical wounds while bearing the emotional weight of their child's pain. Through this, a deeper narrative emerges, highlighting the inherent vulnerability of childhood and the protective instincts it evokes in parents. Both sections together create a rich, textured portrayal of family life, encompassing the joys

and worries of parenting, the eager anticipation of childhood, and the bittersweet passage of time.

