

The poem:

'Little by little,' an acorn said,
As it slowly sank in its mossy bed,
'I am improving every day,
Hidden deep in the earth away.'

Little by little, each day it grew;
Little by little, it sipped the dew;
Downward it sent out a thread- like root;
Up in the air sprung a tiny shoot.

Day after day, and year after year,
Little by little, the leaves appear;
And the slender branches spread far
and wide,
Till the mighty oak is the forest's pride.

'Little by little,' said a thoughtful boy,
'Moment by moment, I'll well employ,
Learning a little every day,
And not spending all my time in play.
And still this rule in my mind shall dwell,
Whatever I do, I will do it well.

'Little by little, I'll learn to know
The treasured wisdom of long ago;
And one of these days, perhaps we'll see
That the world will be the better for me'
And do you not think that this simple plan
Made him a wise and useful man?

ANONYMOUS

Summary of the poem:

In the poem Little by Little it describes how an acorn improves and enhances itself over the years as it lies buried deep underneath the earth. A root of the plant grows downwards. Simultaneously, a tiny shoot of the plant appears above the ground and thereafter the leaves appear on it. Soon after that, the slender branches of the tree spread across everywhere. In due course of time, the acorn grows into a mighty oak tree.

In a similar way, just as an acorn symbolizes strength and potential; every child wants to grow up one fine day as a wise and intelligent individual just like the mighty oak tree. In the poem the boy plans to employ himself well so that he becomes a wise and useful man.

Read to understand:

A. Complete the summary of the poem with suitable words or phrases from the help box.

Ans: downwards, tiny shoot, leaves, branches spread, mighty oak, employ, wise, useful.

B. Answer these questions:

1. What is the rule that the boy says he will keep in mind?

Ans: The rule that the boy says that he will keep in his mind is *whatever he will do, he will do it well*.

2. Mention any three things that the boy plans to do to become 'a wise and useful man'.

Ans: The three things are:-

- i) By not spending all his time in play.
- ii) By keeping in his mind that whatever he will do, he will do it well.
- iii) By acquiring treasured wisdom of long ago.

3. Identify the lines which suggest that our actions can make the world a better place.

Ans: The lines which suggest that our actions can make the world a better place are:-

'Little by little, I'll learn to know
The treasured wisdom of long ago;
And one of these days, perhaps we'll see
That the world be the better for me'

Discuss and Write:

1. Why do you think the oak is considered the 'forest's pride'?

Ans: Oak is considered as the 'forest's pride' because oak is the powerful, strong and huge tree in the forest. The forest is proud to have such a powerful tree like oak.

2. Do you agree with the poet that the boy is 'thoughtful'? Give a reason for your answer.

Ans: Yes, I agree with the poet that the boy is 'thoughtful' because the boy always thinks about the different ways by which he can become a better and useful man in the society.

3. Where can you acquire 'the treasured wisdom of long ago'? How can that knowledge be helpful to you?

Ans: We can acquire 'the treasured wisdom of long ago' through books based on moral values and success stories of great personalities.

That knowledge can be helpful to us at every stage of our life. We can implement those moral values in our life.

Read to appreciate:

Write down any ten such pairs of rhyming words from the poem. Then add one word of your own that rhymes with each pair.

Ans:

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|----------|--------|-----------|
| 1. said | bed | red |
| 2. day | away | ray |
| 3. grew | dew | new |
| 4. root | shoot | boot |
| 5. year | appear | disappear |
| 6. wide | pride | tide |
| 7. boy | employ | toy |
| 8. day | play | gay |
| 9. dwell | well | yell |
| 10. plan | man | ran |

