

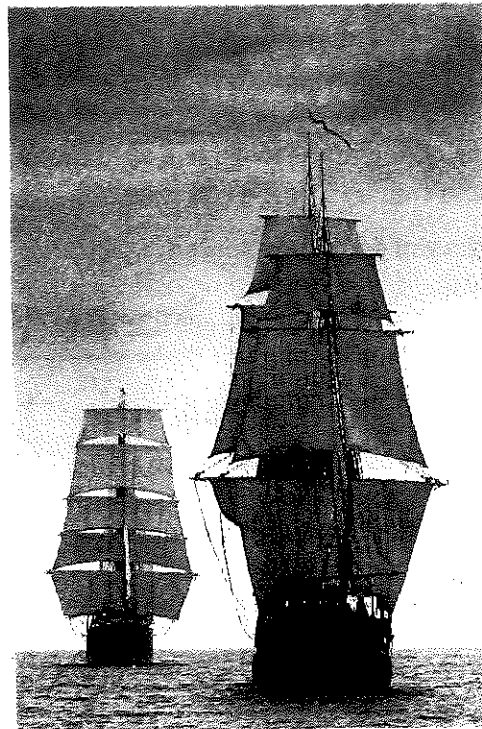
SET A PURPOSE
FOR READING

Read to find out how the speaker feels about being at sea.

Sea-Fever

Poem by

JOHN MASEFIELD

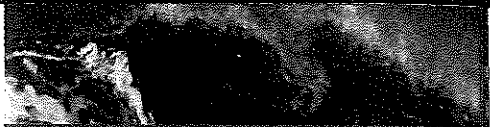


BACKGROUND In “Sea-Fever,” John Masefield uses terms related to sailing that may be unfamiliar to you. Although supertankers and cruise ships are much taller than sailing ships, the term *tall ship* is used in line 2 to describe a sailing boat with high masts. In line 3, the “wheel’s kick” is a reference to what can happen when a sudden shift in the wind or tide causes a ship to spin out of control. In line 6, the word *trick* is a sailing term for a round-trip voyage. Years ago, a “long trick” might have involved a voyage from England to China and back, a trip that could last for more than a year.

METER

Read aloud lines 1–4, labeling each syllable with a stressed or unstressed mark. Is the pattern the same in each line? Explain.

I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and
the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by,
And the wheel’s kick and the wind’s song and the white
sail’s shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea’s face and a grey dawn breaking. ⑥



Monitor Your Comprehension

B RHYME

Reread lines 1–12. Underline the rhyming pairs in each stanza and record the words below.

Rhyming Words

What is the pattern of rhyme?

PAUSE & REFLECT

How would you describe the speaker's personality, based on the details mentioned in the poem?

5 I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the
 running tide
 Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
 And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
 And the flung spray and the blown spume,¹ and the
 sea-gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again to the vagrant² gypsy life,
 10 To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's like
 a whetted³ knife;
 And all I ask is a merry yarn⁴ from a laughing fellow-rover,
 And a quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long
 trick's⁵ over. **PAUSE & REFLECT**

1. **spume** (spyōōm): foam or froth on a liquid.
2. **vagrant** (vā'grənt): wandering from place to place; unrestrained.
3. **whetted** (hwět-ĭd): sharpened.
4. **yarn**: long, entertaining tale.
5. **trick**: term of work or duty.

SET A PURPOSE
FOR READING

Read to find out about the
life of a village blacksmith.

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

Poem by

HENRY WADSWORTH
LONGFELLOW



BACKGROUND A blacksmith makes and repairs iron objects by hammering them against an anvil, which is a heavy iron block. Using the roaring fire in his forge, the blacksmith would shape iron into horseshoes, weapons, and tools. Because of improvements in the production of such objects, blacksmiths are rare today.

sinewy (sin'yōō - ō) *adj.* lean and tough

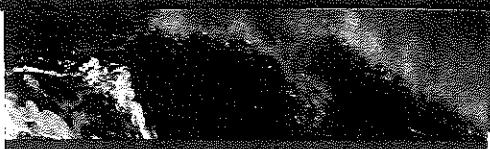
brawny (brō'nē) *adj.* strong and muscular

Ⓞ RHYME

Reread lines 1–12, underlining the rhyming words. Which lines in the first two stanzas rhyme?

Under a spreading chestnut-tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
5 And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
10 He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man. Ⓞ



Week in, week out, from morn till night,
 You can hear his bellows¹ blow;
 15 You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
 With measured beat and slow,
 Like a sexton² ringing the village bell,
 When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
 20 Look in at the open door;
 They love to see the flaming forge,
 And hear the bellows roar,
 And catch the burning sparks that fly
 Like chaff from a threshing-floor.³

PAUSE & REFLECT

25 He goes on Sunday to the church,
 And sits among his boys;
 He hears the parson pray and preach,
 He hears his daughter's voice,
 Singing in the village choir,
 30 And it makes his heart rejoice. Ⓢ

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
 Singing in Paradise!
 He needs must think of her once more,
 How in the grave she lies;
 35 And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
 A tear out of his eyes.

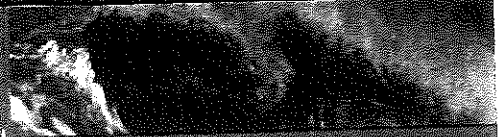
PAUSE & REFLECT

Reread lines 13–24. What is the speaker's attitude toward the blacksmith?

Ⓢ METER

Read aloud lines 25–30, marking the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables. What do you notice about the pattern of the rhythm?

1. **bellows:** a device for providing air to feed a fire.
2. **sexton:** an employee of a church, responsible for maintaining the building and ringing the church bells.
3. **chaff from a threshing-floor:** Chaff is the dry coating on grains of wheat. It is discarded during threshing, when the wheat and straw are separated.



Monitor Your Comprehension

repose (rī-pōz') *n.* freedom from work or worry; rest

PAUSE & REFLECT

Reread lines 43–48. Why does the speaker express gratitude toward the blacksmith?

Lined writing area for student response.

Toiling, —rejoicing, —sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begin,
40 Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught!
45 Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil⁴ shaped
Each burning deed and thought.

PAUSE & REFLECT

4. **sounding anvil:** An anvil is a heavy block of iron on which metals are hammered into shape. *Sounding* refers to the ringing noise the hammering makes.

Academic Vocabulary in Writing

associations device insight reaction specific

What **associations** do you make with the life of a sailor and the life of a blacksmith? What **insights** into these occupations do you get from the poems? Use at least two Academic Vocabulary words in your response. Definitions of these words are on page 203.



READING 4 Understand, make inferences, and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of poetry.

Texas Assessment Practice

DIRECTIONS Use “Sea-Fever” and “The Village Blacksmith” to answer questions 1–4.

- 1 The “call” that the speaker refers to in lines 5–6 of “Sea-Fever” means —
 - A the desire ~~to sail~~ on the sea
 - B the noise ~~of a foghorn~~
 - C the order ~~of the captain~~
 - D the need ~~to earn~~ a living
- 2 In line 12 of “Sea-Fever,” the “long trick” refers to —
 - F the sail ~~mast~~
 - G the trip ~~at sea~~
 - H a caught ~~fish~~
 - J a crew member
- 3 What brings the village blacksmith to tears in lines 35–36?
 - A His mother’s singing sounds like an angel.
 - B The difficulties of his job make him want to quit.
 - C The children who visit make him long for his youth.
 - D His daughter’s voice reminds him of his deceased wife.
- 4 The speakers of “Sea-Fever” and “The Village Blacksmith” both —
 - F express how work can bring satisfaction
 - G lament over the harshness of everyday life
 - H take pleasure in not knowing what each day will bring
 - J feel nervous about the dangerous aspects of work