

Grammar and Composition for standard X: textual activities made easy with adequate explanations

The School Boy

IMAGERY:

Imagery is the use of figurative language to create a visual representation of ideas in our mind. Though it is normally associated with visual images, it is also connected with other physical senses like sense of hearing (auditory), sense of smell (olfactory), sense of touch (tactile), sense of taste (gustatory).

- *It was dark and dim in the forest.*
The words “dark” and “dim” are visual images.
- *The children were screaming and shouting in the fields.*
“Screaming” and “shouting” appeal to our sense of hearing, or auditory sense.
- *He whiffed the aroma of brewed coffee.*
“Whiff” and “aroma” evoke our sense of smell, or olfactory sense.
- *The girl ran her hands on a soft satin fabric.*
The idea of “soft” in this example appeals to our sense of touch, or tactile sense.
- The fresh and juicy orange is very cold and sweet.
“Juicy” and “sweet” – when associated with oranges – have an effect on our sense of taste, or gustatory sense.

(Activity 1, textbook page170)

Images	What they stand for
School boy	Freshness, playfulness
School	Formal education, present and future, hindering of

	natural growth, maturity
Bird	Nature as free and unfettered, freedom, music
Plant	Spring as time of growth, tenderness

➤ **(Activity 2, textbook page 170)**

Find out the images from the poem and categorize them.

Visual images	Both visual and auditory	Auditory images
Boy sitting droopingly Little ones (children) Cruel-eyed teachers Birds, Skylark Birds in cage, Nipped buds, Stripped plants, Fruits, Huntsman's horn	Little ones and their sighs Boy and skylark and their song. Birds and their singing. Huntsman's horn and his blowing sound	Skylark's songs Birds' singing Huntsman's blowing horn. The little ones' sighing.

In this poem, the poet William Blake critically points out the meaninglessness of the modern class-room education system. Through the perspective of a school boy, the poet asks some questions to parents. How can a bird that is born for joy sing songs when it is caged? In the same way, how can a boy who wants to be in company with the songs of the skylark and huntsman in a summer morning, sit in a classroom under the cruel eyes of teachers and forget his youthful spring?

In the poem there are a lot of visual and auditory imageries. The skylark, birds, cruel-eyed teacher, caged bird, nipped buds, stripped plants, blossoms, huntsman's horn are **visual images**. Birds' songs, skylark's singing, huntsman's horn's sound, sighs of the school boy are examples of **auditory imageries**.

The poet compares the children to a caged bird, asking, "How can the bird that is born for joy / Sit in a cage and sing?" In the next stanza, the children are compared to 'nipped flower buds', and they are "tender plants stripped / Of their joy in the springing day." These comparisons constitute well for the use of the poetic device **metaphor**. Each stanza of the poem is comprised of five lines having a regular rhyme scheme of ABABB.