

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

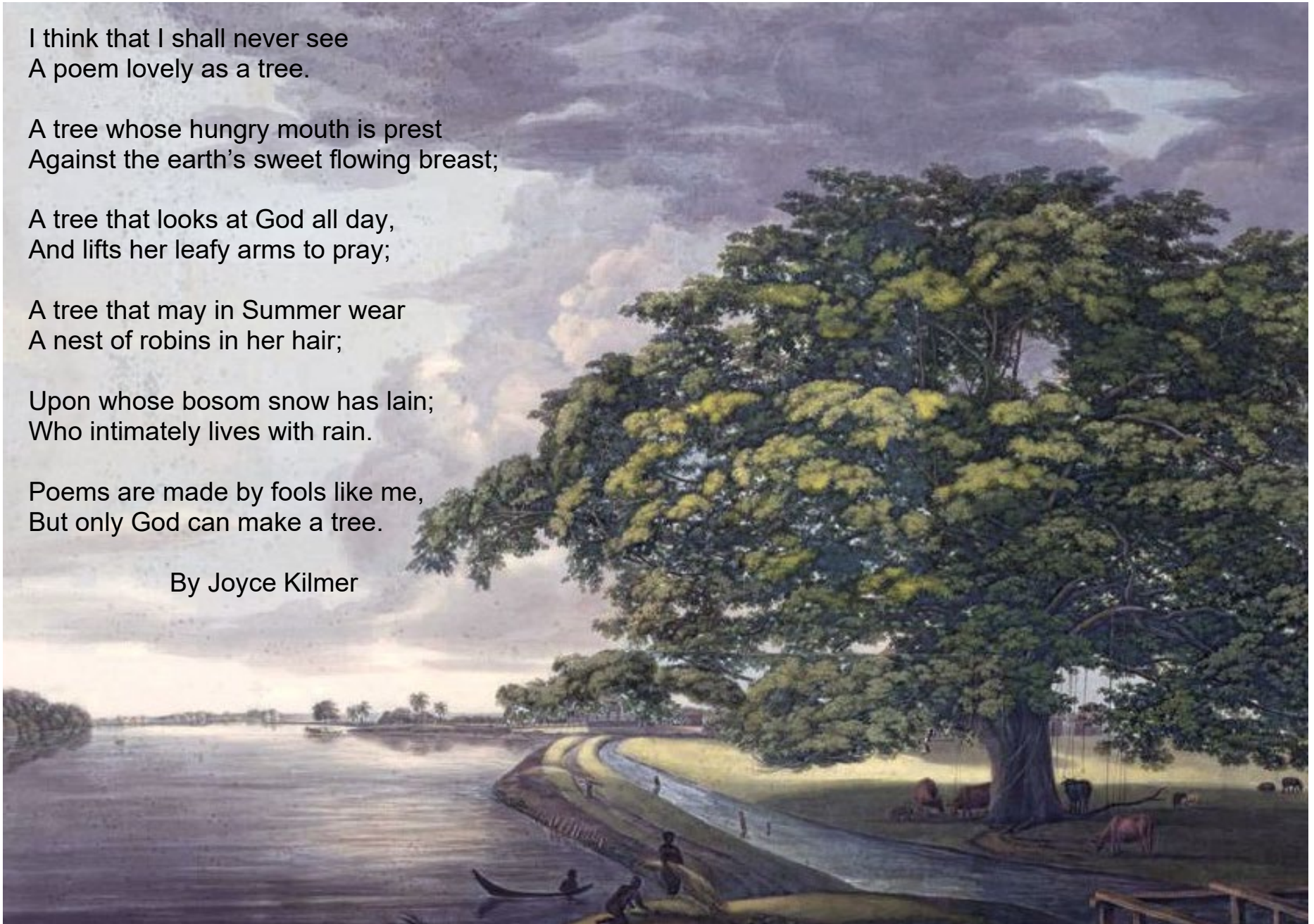
A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in Summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

By Joyce Kilmer



Painting: Watercolour of a landscape with a large tree near the Commewijne River in Suriname (Netherlands), painted by Louise von Panhuys, who lived there from 1811 until 1816. (courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)



The Story of Joyce Kilmer

On a cold winter day, a woman named Annie anticipated the birth of her child. The day was December 6, 1886. The small family lived in a comfortable home located in New Brunswick, New Jersey. Her husband, Dr. Frederick Kilmer, was a physician and chemist known for inventing Johnson and Johnson's baby powder. This would be Annie's fourth and last child. Two of her children had already died in infancy. Would this child meet the same fate?

The baby was a boy. The couple named their son "Joyce". Their boy did grow up to go to school and even have a family of his own. Yet, all of Annie's children would die long before her.

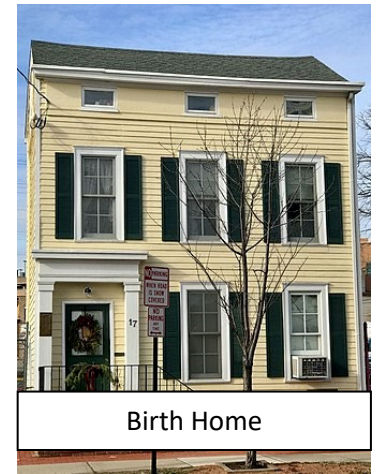
Annie enjoyed writing and composing music. Perhaps this is where her son Joyce developed his love of writing. When eight, Joyce began school at Rutgers College Grammar School. He became editor-in-chief of the school paper. All through preparatory school he wrote. While in his high school years, he met Aline, who also loved to write. The two fell in love, but waited to marry until after he graduated from Columbia University in 1908. The next year, they had a baby of their own. Four more

children soon followed. All the while, both Joyce and his wife wrote and wrote.

Joyce also worked hard. Soon after his marriage he got a job helping to write a dictionary. Joyce got paid five cents for each word he defined. For most men, this would earn them ten to twelve dollars a week. However, it was said that Joyce "attacked the task with such vigor and speed that it was soon thought wisest to put him on a regular salary" (so he got paid by the year instead of by how much work he did).

When their second daughter Rose was born in 1912, life changed forever. Rose was soon struck with paralysis. The couple turned to God for help and converted to Roman Catholicism. Joyce described how "every morning for months" on his way "to the office" he "prayed for faith." He says that that when "faith did come, it came, I think, by way of my little paralyzed daughter. Her lifeless hands led me; I think her tiny feet know beautiful paths."

Joyce loved to write about nature and his faith. The next year Joyce wrote the poem "Trees." The family had been living in a home surrounded by beautiful trees (see



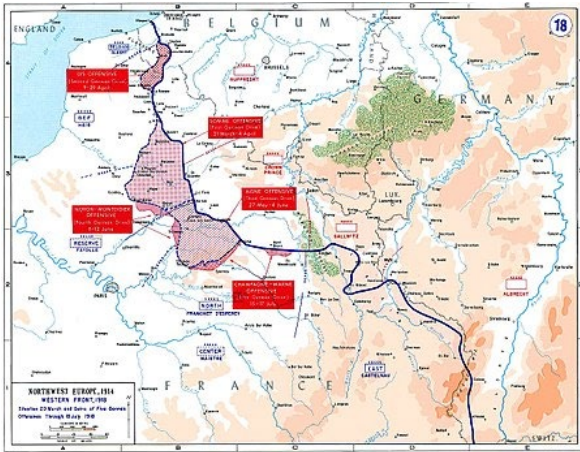
Birth Home



Poetry

Trees by Joyce Kilmer

picture), which perhaps inspired his work. His poem "Trees" made Joyce even more famous. He toured giving lectures and was soon considered the leading American Catholic poet of his time.



Joyce's beloved daughter Rose would not live long. She died at the age of 4. Joyce then found himself leaving his grieving wife with a newborn as he traveled to France to fight in World War I. In France, Joyce soon became a sergeant. He was recommended to become an officer several times, but he chose instead to stay with his division. Joyce was respected by the soldiers around him. One man said, "[h]e was worshipped by the men about him. I have heard them speak with awe of his coolness and his nerve in scouting patrols in no man's land. This coolness and his habit of choosing, with typical enthusiasm, the most dangerous and difficult missions, led to his death." Joyce was killed by a sniper's bullet at the Second Battle of the Marne, just one year after arriving in France. He was only 31.

His wife wrote of Joyce and Rose:

I shall sit alone by the fire and see
Ghosts of you both come close to me.
For the dead and the absent always stay
With the one they love on Christmas Day.

Though Joyce's life was short, it was full of joys and sorrows. Many of his poems depict a legacy of the faith he gained left for the world and his family, as well as his love of nature. His daughter Deborah decided to follow in her father and mother's faith, devoting her life to the Catholic Church as a nun.



Manuscript Trace

(Beginners only do blue portion)

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A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree that may in Summer

wear

A nest of robins in her hair.

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But only God can make a tree.

Fill-in the Blank

(Beginners fill in one or more blanks by copying)

I _____ that I shall never _____

A _____ lovely as a _____ .

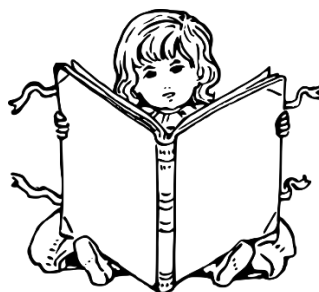
A tree that may in Summer wear

A nest of _____ in her _____ .

Poems are made by _____ like me,

But only _____ can make a

_____ .



Cursive Tracing
(Beginners only do blue portion)

I think that I shall never see

A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree that may in Summer wear

A nest of robins in her hair.

Poems are made by fools like me,

But only God can make a tree.

Spelling Detective

Identify all spelling rules that apply

I think that I shall never see
 A poem lovely as a tree.
 A tree that may in Summer wear
 A nest of robins in her hair.
 Poems are made by fools like me,
 But only God can make a tree.

Steps to Decoding Spelling

Beginners: Circle some of the irregular vowel families

Advanced: Cover the below hints and try to decode the passage

- Circle Irregulars & Special Letters: **th sh er ar oo ay ink ea s**
- Underline Two-Vowel Families: **ai ade ake ee ike**
- Write Rule Number (*i.e.* **apple⁴**, see rules below)

1: Lazy Vowel - Any vowel can be lazy and say "uh" instead

2: Vowel at End - A vowel at the end of a word, or syllable, usually says its' name

3. Y At End - Y says "I" at end of short words, but says "e" at the end of long (multi-syllable) words

4. Sleepy E - If "e" is at the end, it often falls asleep (especially after v, u, c, g, s, l, th)

6. O & I - O & I before two consonants often say their name



For Fun: Try Reading the Passage without the Spelling Rules. How do the rules change the way we pronounce words?

Copy Quote

(Beginners only do blue portion)




















The I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.
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A nest of robins in her hair.
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But only God can make a tree..

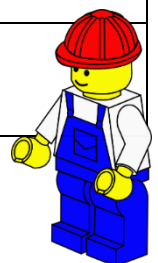
Fix-it Man

Editing Practice

I theenk that i shall never see
 A poem luvly asa tree house
 A tree that may in Sum mer waer
 A nest of robens in her hair
 Poems are mad by fools like me
 But only god can make a tree.

Check For:

Spelling		 spelleg <i>spelling</i>			
Punctuation	Complete Thoughts	 period	 question mark	 exclamation point	
	Divide/Join Thoughts	 comma	 colon	 semi-colon	 dash () parenthesis
	Additional Punctuation	 apostrophe	 hyphen	 quotation marks	
Capitilization		 <u>cap</u> ital l <u>et</u> ters	 <u>lc</u> Lowercase		
Spacing		 new paragraph	no  no new paragraph	 # addspace	 close up
Other Proofreading Marks		 insert	 delete	stet. ignore change	




Grammar Decoder

Decode Grammar

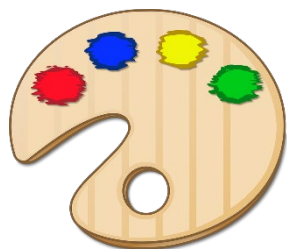
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Mark the Following

Part of Speech	Description & Notes	Mark
Articles	<i>a, an the</i> (Note: for beginners, only have them identify articles)	 above article
Nouns	<i>A person, place, thing or idea</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A noun follows every article (may not be the next word) Nouns usually can be counted Can usually say "the" in front of a noun 	<u>Underline Noun</u>
Proper Nouns	<i>A specific person, place of thing</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin with a capital letter (you cannot "count" proper nouns) 	<u>Underline Noun</u>
Personal Pronouns	<i>Takes the place of a noun</i> I, you, he, she, it, we, you, they, me, you, him, her, it, us, you, them	Write "pron" above word
Verbs	<i>Expresses an action or state of being</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action Verbs: try saying, "I will <u>(throw)</u>" or "Yesterday <u>(I threw)</u>" Common state of being verbs: am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been, become, seem 	<u>Underline verb twice</u>

Dictation & Art

Dictation - Write passage from memory & then make artwork (beginners copy blue portion)



Make Artwork!

Spelling Answer Key

I² th ink that I² shall never see

A² po*em lo¹ve⁴ly³ as a² tree.

A² tree that may in Summer wear

A² nest o¹f robins in her hair.

Po*ems are⁴ made by³ fools like me²,

But o⁶nly³ God can make a² tree.

*Exceptions:

Shall – instead of making the irregular “all” sound, the a makes it’s short sound (ă)

Poem – instead of “oe” being a two-vowel family, the vowels divide into different syllables. Since “o” is at the end of a syllable, it makes a long sound.

Grammar Answer Key

I^{pron} think that I^{pron} shall never see

✓ A poem lovely as a tree. ✓

✓ A tree that may in Summer wear

✓ A nest of robins in her^{pron} hair.

Poems are made by fools like me^{pron},

But only God can make a tree. ✓

Fix-it Man Answer Key

I theenk that i shall never see

A poem luvly asa tree house

A tree that may in Sum mer waer

A nest of robens in her hair

Poems are mad by fools like me

But only god can make a tree.