

# Upon the Burning of Our House July 10th, 1666

Without sharing the title, read the entire poem through once without stopping to explain anything. Ask if someone can tell what the poem is about. Reread with explanations.

by Anne Bradstreet  
(1612-1672)

**In silent night when rest I took,  
For sorrow neer I did not look,  
I waken'd was with thundring nois  
And Piteous shrieks of dreadfull voice.  
That fearfull sound of fire and fire,  
Let no man know is my Desire.  
I, starting up, the light did spye,  
And to my God my heart did cry  
To strengthen me in my Distresse  
And not to leave me succourlesse.  
Then coming out beheld a space,  
The flame consume my dwelling place.**

- Thundering noise?
- Define piteous, shrieks, dreadful.
- Spye=spy – what does that mean?
- What is a dwelling place?

**And, when I could no longer look,  
I blest his Name that gave and took,  
That layd my goods now in the dust:  
Yea so it was, and so 'twas just.  
It was his own: it was not mine;  
Far be it that I should repine.**

- What does it mean... when “I could not longer look?”
- “Blest his Name that gave and took?”
- “layd my goods now in the dust?”

He might of All justly bereft,  
But yet sufficient for us left.  
**When by the Ruines oft I past,  
My sorrowing eyes aside did cast,  
And here and there the places spye  
Where oft I sate, and long did lye.**

- What are ruins?
- Sorrowing eyes? Would you be able to long look at your destroyed home?
- Sate = sat

**Here stood that Trunk, and there that chest;  
There lay that store I counted best:  
My pleasant things in ashes lye,  
And them behold no more shall I.  
Under thy roof no guest shall sitt,  
Nor at thy Table eat a bitt.**

- Store - a thing/object
- Think about your own home, your bedroom—where you put things, your favorite things.....

**No pleasant tale shall 'ere be told,  
Nor things recounted done of old.  
No Candle 'ere shall shine in Thee,  
Nor bridegroom's voice ere heard shall bee.  
In silence ever shalt thou lye;  
Adieu, Adeiu; All's vanity.**

- What is a tale?  
- Do you and your family ever tell stories about things that have happened in your home? What if it were destroyed? What would you miss most about your home?

**Then streight I gin my heart to chide,  
And didst thy wealth on earth abide?  
Didst fix thy hope on mouldring dust,  
The arm of flesh didst make thy trust?  
Raise up thy thoughts above the skye  
That dunghill mists away may flie.**

- Are our *things* what is most important? Can't things be replaced? What can't? (Life)  
To Puritans religion was the most important –didn't think they had anything to do w/ what happened – everything was God's will.

**Thou hast an house on high erect  
Fram'd by that mighty Architect,  
With glory richly furnished,  
Stands permanent tho' this bee fled.  
It's purchased, and paid for too  
By him who hath enough to doe.**

Puritans believed that their greatest gift was not on this earth in this life – that their “true” home would be in heaven.

A Prise so vast as is unknown,  
Yet, by his Gift, is made thine own.  
Ther's wealth enough, I need no more;  
**Farewell my Pelf, farewell my Store.  
The world no longer let me Love,  
My hope and Treasure lyes Above.**

- Pelf = money, riches  
- store = things  
- Again, “hope and treasure lyes above”