

Read the poem. What is your favourite line and why?

Note down which stanza each sentence summarises. The first one has been done for you.

Stanza	Sentence summarising what the speaker asks the tiger
1	The speaker asks what eternal being could possibly have made the tiger.
	The speaker asks who could possibly have had both the strength and the skill to create the tiger’s beating heart.
	The speaker asks what eternal being dared make the tiger.
	The speaker asks where it could have been made and who would dare to create such a ferocious beast.
	The speaker asks whether the creator was happy with his creation created and whether He made the lamb too.
	The speaker asks what remarkable blacksmith dared to conceive of the tiger’s brain.

In this poem, the poet asks the tiger about his creator.

Re-read the poem and...

- 1) underline any nouns or pronouns that refer to the tiger
- 2) circle that refer to the creator.

The Tyger

William Blake (1757 –1827)

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry? 4

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand, dare seize the fire? 8

And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet? 12

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp? 16

When the stars threw down their spears,
And water’d heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee? 20

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry? 24

Discuss the following questions:

- What does the word ‘burning’ suggest about the tiger?
- What is the difference between ‘deeps’ and ‘skies’? Why include both in stanza 2?
- Why do you think Blake compares the tiger to ‘the Lamb’, rather than an animal like a deer which would be its more natural prey?
- Why has Blake chosen to repeat the first stanza in the last with ‘could’ changed to ‘dare’?

Which statement do you most agree with?

Blake uses his poem to suggest that we should be in awe of the creator’s magnificent ambition and skill.

Blake uses his poem to suggest that we should fear any creator who could make a such a fearsome creature.

Preparing to teach

Art of the Sentence

This is a highly complex poem that yields lots of different interpretations. Given that this will be taught to Year 7s, we have provided the English Mastery 'art of the sentence' below to narrow the focus to the interpretation that is used in these lessons.

'The tiger must have been forged by a magnificent, skilful and perhaps malevolent creator'

What are the main things students need to understand here?

Connections (earlier or later in the unit; previous units; additional domain knowledge):

What are the possible misconceptions?

Traditional Lessons 11 + 12, Foundation Lesson 11:

Find the following slides and note down how the lesson(s) already help students:

Slides	How does this slide help secure students' understanding or avoid students' misconceptions?	What questions will you ask to show students that you expect students to express their understanding with accuracy and precision?
Traditional Pathway, lesson 11		
slide 4		
slides 10+11		
slides 14+15		
slide 17		
Traditional Pathway, lesson 12		
slide 3		
Slide 9		
Foundation Pathway, lesson 11		
slide 9		
slide 15		
Slide 16		