

English Task

Poetry

In 2-3 sentences, what is the poem about?

What do you think the poet's opinion of farmers is?

Rewrite the poem in your way, (this can be as a story, non-fiction piece, rap, song, etc)

"We'll all be rooned", said Hanrahan
In accents most forlorn
Outside the church, ere Mass began
One frosty Sunday morn'

The congregation stood about
Coat collars to the ears
And talked of stock and crops and drought
As it had done for years

"It's lookin' crook" said Daniel Croke
"Bedad it's cruke me lad,
But never since the banks went broke
Has seasons been so bad"

"It's dry all right" said young O'Neil
With which astute remark
He squatted down upon his heel
And chewed a piece of bark

And so around the chorus ran
"It's keepin' dry no doubt"
"We'll all be rooned" said Hanrahan
"Before the year is out"

"The crops are done, you'll have your work
To save one bag of grain
From here way out to Back o' Bourke
They're singing out for rain"

"They're singin' out for rain" he said
"And all the tanks are dry."
The congregation scratched its head
And gazed around the sky

"There won't be grass, in any case
Enough to feed and ass

There's not a blade on Casey's place
As I came down to Mass"

"If rain don't come this month" said Dan
And cleared his throat to speak
"We'll all be rooned" said Hanrahan
"If rain don't come this week"

A heavy silence seemed to steal
On all at his remark
And each man squatted on his heel
And chewed a piece of bark

"We want an inch of rain, we do"
O'Neil observed at last
But Croke "maintained" we wanted two
To put the danger past

"If we don't get three inches man
Or four to break this drought.
We'll all be rooned" said Hanrahan
"Before the year is out"

In God's good time, down came the rain,
And all the afternoon
On iron roof and window pane
It drummed a homely tune

And through the night it pattered still
And lightsome, gladsome elves
On dripping spout and window sill
Kept talking to themselves

It pelted, pelted all day long
A-singing at its work
Till every heart took up the song
Way out to Back o' Bourke

And every creek a banker ran
And dams filled overtop
"We'll all be rooned" said Hanrahan
"If this rain doesn't stop"

And stop it did in God's good time
And Spring came into fold
A mantle o'er the hills sublime
Of green and pink and gold

And days went by on dancing feet
With harvest hopes immense

And laughing eyes beheld the wheat
Nid-nodding o'er the fence

And, oh, the smiles on every face
As happy lad and lass
Through grass knee deep on Casey's place
Went riding down to Mass

While round the church in clothes genteel
Discoursed the men of mark
And each man squatted on his heel
And chewed a piece of bark

"There'll be bush fires for sure, me man,
There will without a doubt
We'll all be rooned" said Hanrahan
"Before the year is out"

John O'Brien

