

ABOUT THE POEM

'The Rebel' is a lightly expressed poem written offhand style and does not relate to any bitterness or criticism. In the poem, the poet characterises a rebel, who does not conform to the norms of society. He is not typically a political rebel who wants a revolution in the country, but a common adolescent boy, who has a contrary attitude based on self-assertion.



When everybody has short hair,
The rebel lets his hair grow long.

When everybody has long hair,
The rebel cuts his hair short.

When everybody talks during the lesson,
The rebel doesn't say a word.

When nobody talks during the lesson,
The rebel creates a disturbance.

When everybody wears a uniform,
The rebel dresses in fantastic clothes.

When everybody wears fantastic clothes,
The rebel dresses soberly.

In the company of dog lovers,
The rebel expresses a preference for cats.

In the company of cat lovers,
The rebel puts in a good word for dogs.

When everybody is praising the sun,
The rebel remarks on the need for rain.

When everybody is greeting the rain,
The rebel regrets the absence of sun.

When everybody goes to the meeting,
The rebel stays at home and reads a book.



When everybody stays at home and reads a book,
The rebel goes to the meeting.

When everybody says, Yes please,
The rebel says, No thank you.

When everybody says, No thank you,
The rebel says, Yes please.

It is very good that we have rebels.
You may not find it very good to be one.

—D. J. ENRIGHT

ABOUT THE POET

D.J. Enright (1920–2002)

Dennis Joseph Enright was a British academic, poet, novelist and critic. After receiving a master's degree at the University of Cambridge, Enright began a prolonged period of academic wandering, teaching English in Egypt, Birmingham, Berlin, and Singapore from 1975 to 1980, he was an honorary professor at the University of Warwick. He authored *Academic* (1955), *Memoirs of A Medicant Professor* (1969) and a wide range of essays, reviews, anthologies, children's books and plays. He died on 31 December 2002, at the age of 82.

BRAIN STORM

A. Answer the following questions.

1. What is central theme of the poem?
2. What does the rebel want, when everyone is a cat lover?
3. What does everyone want, when the rebel is longing for rain?
4. How will the teacher react, if someone doesn't comes to school in proper uniform?
5. Is it good to be a rebel? How it would be to become a rebel? Would you like to be a rebel? Give suitable reasons to support your choice.

Answer Key
Class VII (English)
Poem 2 The Rebel

Exercise A)

1. The poem characterises a rebel, who does not conform to the norms of the society.
2. When everyone is a cat lover, the rebel wants to play around with a dog.
3. When the rebel is longing for rain, everyone wants sun.
4. If someone doesn't come to school in proper uniform, the teacher punishes them.