

# Literary Analysis

“There Will Come Soft Rains” (poem) by Sara Teasdale

**Do Now:** What would happen if humans disappeared from the earth? What would the world be like without humans? How would nature respond? What would happen to our homes, buildings, roads, bridges and machines? This is a “what if” question, so use your imagination and what you know about science to help you answer this question.

**Before reading the poem,** review the definition of **irony**, **theme** and **personification** in your notebooks. Add the definition of imagery to your reference section. **Imagery**--the use of language that appeals to the reader’s senses. Example: The snow crunched under my feet as the cold wind pinched my face and made my eyes water.

**While reading the poem,** take notes in the margins. You will cut and paste this poem into your notebooks, under unit two, when you are finished.

“There Will Come Soft Rains” by Sara Teasdale

There will come soft rains and the smell of the ground,  
And swallows circling with their shimmering sound;

And frogs in the pool singing at night,  
And wild plum trees in tremulous white;

Robins will wear their feathery fire,  
Whistling their whims on a low fence-wire;

And not one will know of the war, not one  
Will care at last when it is done.

Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree,  
If mankind perished utterly;

And Spring herself when she woke at dawn  
Would scarcely know that we were gone.

**After reading** and discussing the poem, complete the following questions in your notebooks, under unit two. Title your page, “There Will Come Soft Rains” by Sara Teasdale.

1. Find some examples of imagery in the poem and write them down. What effect does this imagery have on the reader?
2. Describe what makes this story ironic? Be specific by giving some examples. (Hint: How does nature feel now that humans are gone?)
3. Make a list of some topics for this poem. Choose one, and turn it into a theme statement.
4. Creative Writing Assignment: Write your own poem, from the perspective of nature, as if

humans have disappeared from the earth. Try to incorporate some of the poetic devices that we learned from this poem.