

PBS Lesson Series

# ELA, Grade 7, Lesson 15

## Teacher Packet

How does Dickinson convey and develop  
the central idea about the railroad's  
effect on society?

1. We are going to read through the first few stanzas and ask ourselves, “What is the author’s message about the subject in each stanza?”
2. We’ll read the last stanza, underlining words and phrases that describe the subject. We’ll ask ourselves, “How is the author’s description of the subject different at the end of the poem?”
3. Finally, we’ll look at the poem as a whole and ask ourselves, “What central idea does the author convey about the subject of the text?”

		3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>

**I like to see it lap the miles,  
And lick the valleys up,  
And stop to feed itself at tanks,  
And then, prodigious, step**

1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>

**I like to see it lap the miles,  
And lick the valleys up,  
And stop to feed itself at tanks,  
And then, prodigious, step  
Around a pile of mountains,  
And, supercilious, peer  
In shanties by the sides of roads;  
And then a quarry pare**

**I like to see it lap the miles,  
And lick the valleys up,  
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1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Impressively fast, big, and powerful	Arrogant and unstoppable by nature or people		

**I like to see it lap the miles,  
And lick the valleys up,  
And stop to feed itself at tanks,  
And then, prodigious, step**

**Around a pile of mountains,  
And, supercilious, peer  
In shanties by the sides of roads;  
And then a quarry pare**

**To fit its sides, and crawl between,  
Complaining all the while  
In horrid, hooting stanza;  
Then chase itself down hill**

1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Impressively fast, big, and powerful	Arrogant and unstoppable by nature or people	Young, energetic, and new	

**I like to see it lap the miles,  
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And stop to feed itself at tanks,  
And then, prodigious, step**

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And, supercilious, peer  
In shanties by the sides of roads;  
And then a quarry pare**

**To fit its sides, and crawl between,  
Complaining all the while  
In horrid, hooting stanza;  
Then chase itself down hill**

**And neigh like Boanerges;  
Then, punctual as a star,  
Stop-docile and omnipotent-  
At its own stable door.**

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Impressively fast, big, and powerful	Arrogant and unstoppable by nature or people	Young, energetic, and new	Bring message of new technology



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Impressively fast, big, and powerful	Arrogant and unstoppable by nature or people	Young, energetic, and new	<p>Bring message of new technology</p> <p>More reliable than anything that has gone before</p>

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How is the author’s description of the subject different at the end of the poem?

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Impressively fast, big, and powerful	Arrogant and unstoppable by nature or people	Young, energetic, and new	Bring message of new technology  More reliable than anything that has gone before  God-like

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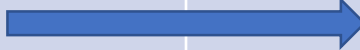
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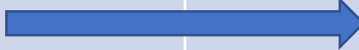
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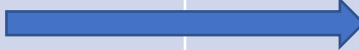


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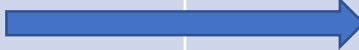
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In the poem, “The Railway Train,” Emily Dickinson describes a train at a time when it was first around in the 1800s, when she lived. The train is a new technology, which is very powerful, but is creating unstoppable change that may not always be good for society.



Through the poem, she tells the reader the train is a new technology, which is very powerful, but is creating unstoppable change that may not always be good for society.

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Through the poem, she tells the reader the train is a new technology, which is very powerful, but is creating unstoppable change that may not always be good for society.

In the beginning of the poem, Dickinson describes the train like an animal that is impressively fast, big, and powerful. She writes that it can “lap the miles” and “lick the valleys up.” The train is powerful because it can “step around a pile of mountains.”

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