

Gerard Manley Hopkins  
God's Grandeur  
Some challenging questions!

Worksheet by:  
Keith Tankard  
Knowledge4Africa.com

In this sonnet, Hopkins juxtaposes the wonders of God against the achievements of humankind. God and humankind are presented as opposites, not so much Goodness vs Evil but rather Perfection vs Imperfection.

Humankind, our works and our deeds are portrayed as tainted, common and ugly as opposed to God whose creation is perceived as fresh and warm and sparkling with life and light. In this poem, one should examine closely the words which the poet uses to portray each of these juxtapositions.

---

1. There are essentially two main sonnet types: the Shakespearian or Elizabethan sonnet, and the Petrarchan or Italian sonnet.
  - What type of sonnet is this one -- and be able to explain why. (6)
  
2. "The world is charged with the grandeur of God."
  - What does the poet mean? (4)
  
3. "It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;  
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil  
Crushed."
  - To what does the pronoun "it" refer? (2)
  - What does the poet mean when he says, "It will flame out"? (2)
  - What figure of speech is being used in the phrase, "like shining from shook foil"? What indeed is "shook foil"? (6)
  - How does it "gather to a greatness, like the ooze of oil crushed"? (4)
  
4. "Why do men then now not reck his rod?"
  - What does Hopkins mean when he says this? (4)

<[www.knowledge4africa.com](http://www.knowledge4africa.com)>

**This worksheet is copyrighted. No part of it may be copied or printed in any form whatever without the express permission in writing of the author. The sole exception is for non-profit educational purposes.**