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The Grumble Family

Lucy Maud Montgomery

Poem

The poet gives a vivid picture of neighbourhood scenes .Read to know how we should mend our ways.

There's a family nobody likes to meet;
They live, it is said, on Complaining Street
In the city of Never-Are-Satisfied,
The River of Discontent beside.

They growl at that and they growl at this;
Whatever comes, there is something amiss;
And whether their station be high or humble,
They are all known by the name of Grumble.

The weather is always too hot or cold;
Summer and winter alike they scold.
Nothing goes right with the folks you meet
Down on that gloomy Complaining Street.

They growl at the rain and they growl at the sun;
In fact, their growling is never done.
And if everything pleased them, there isn't a doubt
They'd growl that they'd nothing to grumble about!

But the queerest thing is that not one of the same
Can be brought to acknowledge his family name;
For never a Grumbler will own that he
Is connected with it at all, you see.



The worst thing is that if anyone stays
Among them too long, he will learn their ways;
And before he dreams of the terrible jumble
He's adopted into the family of Grumble.

And so it were wisest to keep our feet
From wandering into Complaining Street;
And never to growl, whatever we do,
Lest we be mistaken for Grumblers, too.

Let us learn to walk with a smile and a song,
No matter if things do sometimes go wrong;
And then, be our station high or humble,
We'll never belong to the family of Grumble!

About the Poet



L. M. Montgomery, (1874–1942) was a Canadian author best known for a series of novels beginning in 1908 with *Anne of Green Gables*. Montgomery went on to publish 20 novels as well as 530 short stories, 500 poems, and 30 essays. A prolific writer, Montgomery published over 100 stories between 1897 and 1907. Montgomery's work, diaries and letters have been read and studied by scholars and readers worldwide.





Glossary

discontent (adj.) - dissatisfaction with one's circumstances

amiss (adj.) - not quite right

growl (v) - make a low guttural sound in the throat

grumble (n) – a complaint about something in a bad-tempered way

gloomy (adj.) - sad or unhappy or depressing

queerest (adj.) – the strangest or the most unusual

acknowledge (v) - accept or admit the existence or truth of

terrible (adj.) - extremely bad or serious

wandering (v) - walking or moving in a leisurely or aimless way

A. Read the following lines from the poem and answer the questions given below.

1. *There's a family nobody likes to meet;*

They live, it is said, on Complaining Street

a. Where does the family live?

b. Why do you think the street is named as 'Complaining Street'?

2. *They growl at that and they growl at this;*

Whatever comes, there is something amiss;

a. What does the word 'growl' mean here?

b. Why do they find everything amiss?

3. *Nothing goes right with the folks you meet*

Down on that gloomy Complaining Street.

a. What is the opinion about the folks you meet down the street?

b. What does the word 'gloomy' mean here?

4. *The worst thing is that if anyone stays*

Among them too long, he will learn their ways;

a. What is the worst thing that can happen if anyone stays with them?

b. What are the ways of the Grumble family?



5. *And so it were wisest to keep our feet*

From wandering into Complaining Street;

- a. What is the wisest thing that the poet suggests?
- b. What does the phrase 'to keep our feet from wandering' refer to?

6. *Let us learn to walk with a smile and a song,*

No matter if things do sometimes go wrong;

- a. What does the poet expect everyone to learn?
- b. What should we do when things go wrong sometimes?

B. Answer the following questions in about 80-120 words.

1. Write a paragraph on 'The Grumble Family' and their attitude towards other folks.
2. If you were to live in the Complaining Street, how would you deal with the people who grumble?
3. From the poem 'The Grumble Family' what kind of behaviour does the poet want the readers to possess?

Literary devices:

Anaphora

An anaphora is a technique where several phrases (or verses in a poem) begin with the same word or words.

e.g. They growl at the rain and they growl at the sun;

Epithet

An epithet is an adjective or phrase expressing a quality or attribute regarded as characteristic of the person or the thing mentioned.

e.g. grumble family
complaining street

C. Answer the following:

1. *And whether their station be high or humble,...*
Pick out the alliteration from the above line.
2. Pick out the other examples for alliteration from the poem.
3. *The weather is always too hot or cold;
Summer and winter alike they scold.
Nothing goes right with the folks you meet
Down on that gloomy Complaining Street.*
Pick out the rhyming words and identify the rhyme scheme of the above lines.