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## UNIT 2: WILLIAM BLAKE: “A CRADLE SONG” I & II

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### UNIT STRUCTURE

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### 2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss the life and works of the visionary poet William Blake
- grasp the content of the volume from *Songs of Innocence and Experience*
- explain both the poems under the same title—“The Cradle Song”
- explain the major themes pertaining to the poems
- analyse the style and language employed in the poems
- gain an idea on the critical reception of both Blake and his poems

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### 2.2 INTRODUCTION

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William Blake is one of the most prominent English poets of the Romantic Age in the History of English Literature. Besides being a talented writer and painter, he was also a skilled engraver. The

combination of his poetical genius and his skilled artistry made a remarkable difference to his literary works. Blake is known to have infused life into his literary texts through the inclusion of his illustrations in the form of etched engravings. Further, Blake is also considered a 'visionary' and a 'prophetic' poet owing to his philosophical inclinations early in life and his wide knowledge of theology that had found a creative expression through both his literary as well as, artistic works. The Biblical scriptures were a major influence and a source of inspiration throughout Blake's lifetime as reflected in his mystical writings. While introducing you to the interesting biography of the creative genius William Blake, this unit will also take up two of his selected poems in details, both bearing the same title namely, "A Cradle Song" taken from his poetry collection, *The Songs of Innocence* (1789) and from *The Songs of Experience* (1794) respectively.

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## 2.3 WILLIAM BLAKE: THE POET

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Let us now go through the life and literary works by William Blake before exploring the prescribed poems for the unit.

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### 2.3.1 His Life

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William Blake (28 November 1757–12 August 1827) was born to Catherine Hermitage and James Blake to be raised among six siblings in a devout and religious household in London. He was mostly tutored at home by his mother. As a school-going boy, he was hardly inclined towards studies owing to which he had chosen to discontinue formal studies at the local school after having acquired the basic skills of reading and writing. Thus, his parents decided to enrol him in a drawing school named Henry Pars's Drawing School where he received special training to become a skilled draughtsman. Thereafter, he attended the Royal Academy for a long time before he made up his mind to take up engraving as his vocation.



Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Blake](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Blake)

The training and apprenticeship that he received under the guidance of the engraver James Basire for a long seven years had greatly enriched his professional skills and knowledge. Gradually, he also began to develop a keen interest in exploring the artistic works of the classical masters such as Raphael, Michelangelo, and Albert Durer among several others. It is during this phase of his life, that he began to nurture his poetic sensibilities as well. Several times in his life, Blake had experienced mystical visions and sightings for an instance, at the tender age of four he had a frightful vision of God peering through a window, and in another, he claimed to have seen Christ and his Apostles at the Westminster Abbey in London while working on his drawings. The depth of his literary reflections woven with religious symbolism and mysticism is perhaps the reason for which he is considered a 'visionary' or 'prophetic' poet.

Blake married Catherine Boucher and settled down to a family life in the year 1782. As a husband, he made all efforts to educate and train his wife to read and write, as well as, to paint and engrave with ease. She was a constant support to Blake and together they produced some of the best-illuminated works or engravings. Even in the final hours of his life, Blake did not cease working on the last of illustrations for *Inferno*, singing hymns and sketching a portrait for Catherine as an expression of his love for her. Thus, having spent a fulfilling life, Blake had breathed his last on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1827, followed by his wife in the year 1831. A memorial was built at Westminster Abbey in the year 1957 in their memory.



**Draughtsman:** A drafting technician who makes technical draw-ings

**Apprenticeship:** A system of training a new crop of profe-ssionals into a trade

**Westminster Abbey:** A reference to one of the world's greatest chur-ches of St. Peter

**Mysticism:** Vague religious or spiritual beliefs

**Hymns:** religious songs in the praise of God



### CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 1:** Name the major source of influence and inspiration throughout the lifetime of William Blake.

**Q 2:** What was the special training that he received at Henry Pars's Drawing School?

**Q 3:** Mention some of the instances that William Blake was subject to mystical visions and sightings.

**Q 4:** What was the Blake's contribution as a husband towards his wife Catherine Boucher?

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### 2.3.2 His Works

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The major literary works of William Blake are his volumes of poetry comprising his epic or narrative poems like *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* (1794), his first collection of poetry *Poetical Sketches* (1783), *Tiriel* (1789), *The Book of Thel* (1789), *The Song of Los* (1795), *Jerusalem* (1804-1820), *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (1793), *Milton: A Poem* (1804-1810) and *Song of Liberty* (1906). His prophetic books include: *America: A Prophecy* (1793), *Europe: A Prophecy* (1794), *The Book of Urizen* (1794), *The Book of Ahania* (1795), the unfinished *Vala or The Four Zoas* (1797) and in parts *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* composed between 1790 and 1793. Most of his literary works were accompanied with illustrations and hand-made etchings. For an instance, the illustrations for *Book of Job*, which were begun at the age of sixty-five, were artistic masterpieces in themselves that had earned him wide acclaim as both a painter and engraver. In addition, some of his best representative art works include Blake's illustrations for the Bible and the first part of the epic poem *Divine Comedy* (1472) titled *Inferno* by the Italian poet Dante Alighieri.

Blake introduced his innovations into the art of relief etching and employed the same in the illuminations of some of his volumes such as *Songs of Innocence and Experience* (1789), *The Book of Thel* (1789), *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790-1793) and *Jerusalem* (1804-1820). Thus, he poured elements of mythology and the supernatural, religious and personal symbolism into his literary works and brought them alive with his remarkable illustrations drawing inspiration from the classical

masters. The etchings and engravings created by him are an enriching visual delight containing various mystical, religious and mythological figures. He had also notably illustrated the *Original Stories from Real Life* (1791) written by the English advocate and feminist Mary Wollstonecraft. Some of his contemporaries with whom he is known to have interacted with were Joseph Priestly, Mary Wollstonecraft, Thomas Paine, Richard Price, William Wordsworth and William Godwin who were also some of the renowned figures of England at that time.



### CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 5:** Name the first collection of Blake's poetry that was published in 1789.

**Q 6:** Which were some of the major volumes that introduced Blake's innovative relief etchings?

**Q 7:** What did the etchings and engravings designed by Blake portray?

## 2.4 EXPLANATION OF THE POEMS

*The Songs of Innocence* first published in the year 1789 was a complete collection, comprising poems such as "The Echoing Green", "The Blossom", "The Divine Image", "Nurse's Song", "The Lamb", "The Little Black Boy", "The Chimney Sweeper", "Infant Joy", "A Dream" and "On Another's Sorrow" among a few others. Interestingly, a corresponding volume was titled *Songs of Experience* comprising poems such as "Earth's Answer", "The Clod and the Pebble", "The Sick Rose", "My Pretty Rose", "The Garden of Love", "The Tyger", "The Little Vagabond", "London" and "The Voice of the Ancient Bard" to mention a few. While the first collection contained nineteen poems, the second collection contained twenty-six poems.

Both the collections of Blake's poems were compiled and published together in the year 1794 under the complete title of *Songs of*

*Innocence and of Experience Showing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul*. The volume had interesting illustrations suited to the text being cantered on the representation of the two contrary states of the human mind i.e., 'innocence' and 'experience'. Let us then discuss, compare and contrast between the two poems and also gain a better insight into the poems both bearing the same title i.e., "A Cradle Song", the first taken from the early compilation of *Songs of Innocence* and the second taken from the following *Songs of Experience*. The concise explanations together with a glossary for your quick reference shall further supplement your individual reading of the poems.

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### 2.4.1 A CRADLE SONG (SONGS OF INNOCENCE)

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"Sweet dreams, form a shade O'er my lovely infant's head; Sweet dreams of pleasant streams By happy, silent, moony beams.	Sweet sleep, with soft down Weave thy brows an infant crown. Sweet sleep, Angel mild, Hover o'er my happy child."
Sweet smiles, in the night Hover over my delight; Sweet smiles, mother's smiles, All the livelong night beguiles.	Sweet moans, dovelike sighs, Chase not slumber from thy eyes. Sweet moans, sweeter smiles, All the dovelike moans beguiles.
Sleep, sleep, happy child, All creation slept and smil'd; Sleep, sleep, happy sleep While o'er thee thy mother weep.	Sweet babe, in thy face Holy image I can trace. Sweet babe, once like thee, Thy Maker lay and wept for me,
Wept for me, for thee, for all, When He was an infant small. Thou His image ever see, Heavenly face that smiles on thee,	Smiles on thee, on me, on all; Who became an infant small. Infant smiles are His own smiles; Heaven and earth to peace beguiles."

The poem reads like a 'lullaby' or a bedtime song that is generally sung by mothers or nurses to lull infants or even little

children into sleep. The woman singing the song could also be a nurse but owing to the words 'my child' as sung in the very first lines, we will assume that the woman is the baby's mother. While reading the opening lines of the poem "A cradle song", the first image that comes to our mind is that of an infant held delicately on a mother's lap and arms, who sings a sweet song for her little baby. Like all mothers, she wishes for her baby to have a peaceful sleep and the sweetest of dreams. It is an ideal moment that reflects the pure love of a mother for her child, free from any worldly concerns and solely concentrated on that peaceful moment. While the mother enjoys the expressions on her baby's face, she is conscious that her sleeping infant is not disturbed. Thus, the opening lines of the poem capture the sheer beauty of the image of a mother who lovingly holds her infant and cherishes the joy of motherhood.

The mother wishes for little angels or cherubs to weave a garland of dreams for the little baby, hovering above her infant, as angels are believed to be the protecting guardians of innocent babies or children while they are deep asleep. In her happy and delighted thoughts, the mother notices sweet smiles on her baby's face that immediately brings a loving smile on her own as well. This special moment captures the innocence of the baby who is cushioned in care and comfort, as well as, cocooned in its own little world of innocence and purity. There is an aura of sweet charm around the baby who sleeps peacefully with a tender smile and sweet moans. The mother of the infant is careful all along in order to ensure that her baby does not wake up while singing her sweet lullaby.

She sings of Lord Jesus Christ who looks upon all with loving grace and the ways in which the smile of little infants literally reflects the smile of infant Jesus. Just in the way that the baby's smile charms her, the smile of the Lord charms entire Heaven and earth into divine peace. She is literally moved to tears when a look at her baby brings to her mind the Holy image of infant Jesus



**Wiles:** tricks, ploys or such devices

**Softest Limbs:** a reference to a baby's soft arms and legs

**Cunning wiles:** cunning refers to a crafty, devious or a person who is sly

**Dreadful:** terrible, causing or involving great suffering

**Trails and Tribulations:** a reference to the difficult and challenging experiences of life

**Hinting:** suggesting

**Vulnerable:** exposed to the possibility of harm or attack of something unwanted

**Irreversible:** something that cannot be changed or altered

because she is also reminded of the pains that Jesus had to suffer in His life. His birth itself was a revelation of God's prophecy and Almighty God has His own plans for each one, which is revealed only with time. Thus, she worries that life will not always be the same for the baby in the future to come. Yet, the song also captures the image of the Heavenly face of Jesus that smiles in blessing to her little babe.

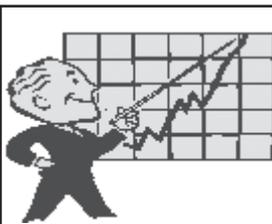
## 2.4.2 A CRADLE SONG (SONGS OF EXPERIENCE)

Sleep, sleep, beauty bright,	Sweet babe, in thy face
Dreaming in the joys of night;	Soft desires I can trace,
Sleep, sleep; in thy sleep	Secret joys and secret smiles,
Little sorrows sit and weep.	Little pretty infant wiles
As thy softest limbs I feel,	O' the cunning wiles that creep
Smiles as of the morning steal	In thy little heart asleep!
O'er thy cheek, and o'er thy breast	When thy little heart doth wake,
Where thy little heart doth rest	Then the dreadful light shall break.

The second cradle song takes a different tone with its narrative that clearly reflects that all is not well with the world and life is only short of revealing its share of **trials and tribulations** once the little child baby up. As the mother sings for her little baby, she finds herself enveloped with worries of her baby's future. The joy and resonance of the ideal moment that found a lyrical expression in her earlier cradle song is now replaced with the gloom of an uncertain future that awaits her baby. This is why she sings thus, "little sorrows sit and weep" referring to the realities of the world that everyone has to face and struggle with sooner or later. Infanthood is the only ideal phase when an infant is protected from all the sorrows of the world under the utmost care and protection of his or her parents.

While her baby is cocooned in a world of pleasant dreams, the mother sings of the "soft desires", the hinting of "secret joys"

and the "secret smiles" that she traces on her baby's face. She feels the soft limbs of her baby and thinks of the ways in which the little heart of the baby will soon be vulnerable to the creeping and "cunning wiles" of the world. It dawns on her that there will be a day when her little child would grow up and step into adolescence followed by adulthood that spells the realm or state of 'experience' from 'innocence'. In addition, with time and experience casting its long shadows on an individual, nothing ever remains the same. This is an universal truth and for this reason, she truly 'dreads' the reality of this world and the irreversible role of 'experience' that will eventually rupture her son's 'innocence', as well as, her cherished joys of motherhood.



### CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 8:** Mention the reason for which the lady is suddenly moved to tears while singing her cradle song.

**Q 9:** What is the change that is found in the tone of the second cradle song?

## 2.5 MAJOR THEMES

This section shall highlight some of the major themes in both the poems to which the learner may also add from his or her own reading and critical analysis of the poems.

### Two States of the Human Mind:

The contrasting states of 'innocence' and 'experience' are two opposite states of the 'consciousness' and 'being' of an individual as also reflected in the volume titled *Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience* by William Blake. It is through the gradual stages of life that an individual figures out the realities of this world. This rupture of innocence makes an individual realise the sharp contrast from the ideals of his or her imagined world. It is 'experience' that moulds and transforms the human mind from an 'innocent' and 'inexperienced' state of mind to

its 'matured' and 'well-experienced'. In addition, it takes the 'weight of experience' for the youthful mind to be seasoned into maturity, as well as, to gather the wisdom of this world.

As portrayed by Blake, the poems in *Songs of Innocence* are given to ideal happiness of childhood that is untouched by the realities of life. The world of innocence is symbolic of the childhood years filled with happiness, freedom and playfulness, an ideal state of the mind where pure innocence and ignorance are both blissful. On the other hand, *The Songs of Experience* reveals the practicalities of life, symbolising the years of adulthood that is abound with unknown obstacles, setbacks and challenges of life. Thus, both these human states of mind may be compared to the two opposite sides of a coin that looks away from each other.

### **The Story of Jesus Christ:**

In her cradle song, the mother of the baby infant sings of how her baby reminds her of infant Jesus. She is reminded of the story of Lord Jesus Christ, who was born as a blessing to Mother Mary and Joseph in around 6 B.C in the city of Bethlehem, Jerusalem. As the amazing story of Jesus goes, God had prophesied and destined His only Son to die on the Cross, in all His innocence for the greater benefit of mankind, so that entire mankind, appreciated the righteousness of Almighty God in Heaven and the passion of Christ Jesus for entire humanity. Thus, Jesus grew up to love humanity to such an extent that He took the sins and the burdens of people in the extreme form of his own crucifixion i.e., Jesus took the pain of being innocently nailed on the Cavalry Cross for sins committed by others.

It is this loving sacrifice of Jesus Christ that is considered to have redeemed the entire human race and established His abundant grace on the face of earth. For this reason, the mother sings of Lord Jesus who had "wept" or rather taken everyone's pain and sorrow as His own. It may be mentioned that the complete story on the life, teachings and sacrifice of Jesus Christ is very significant for our knowledge, as well as, captivating in the moral lessons that it offers. Thus, the second cradle

song takes a different tone and points to the concerns related to the realities and struggles of life as also reflected in the life of Christ. Also, the cradle songs capture the love and concerns of a mother for her child in the image of Mother Mary who suffered her share of worries and sorrows as the mother of Jesus Christ.

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## 2.6 STYLE AND LANGUAGE

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In the first poem, we are introduced to varied pleasant images as that of the mother, sleeping infant, hovering angel and the image of infant Christ almost like a spell or incantation that captures the reader's mind almost immediately. In the second poem, we find the images of the infant's tender heart and softest limbs, cunning wiles and dreaded light. Both the "Cradle Song" poems are lyrical as also reflected in the structure and the usage of words or rather lyrics in the lullaby. In addition, it is this lyrical quality of the first poem had inspired the renowned English music composer, Benjamin Britten to cast the same into a piece of musical composition. Although, the poems are simple in essence, they beautifully capture the thoughts of a mother who admires her infant child and also worries about the future of the infant.

This first poem, written in the year 1789, contains eight stanzas or quatrains with two rhyming couplets in each, for example notice the following quatrain: "Sweet sleep, with soft down/ Weave thy brows an infant crown/ Sweet sleep, Angel mild/ Hover o'er my happy child." While the second cradle song contains four quatrains with two rhyming couplets in each. Here, as the learner shall notice the pattern in which the quatrain or four-lined stanza of the poem contains a couplet or two lines that rhymes. Thus, both rhyme and repetition are evident in the song structure with words such as: shade-head, stress-bless, down-crown, child-mild, trace-face, smiles-beguiles etc and a constant repetition of words. For example, in the first cradle song, the word 'sweet' is repeated ten times and 'smiles' a total of eight times thus, giving a somnolent effect to the cradle song. Further, the repetition of the chosen words also sets the mood of the poem.

You may note that some of the other repeated words are dreams, sleep, sweet sleep, and sweet babe dove-like, beguiles, happy and wept. Similarly, in the second cradle song we shall find couplets with rhyming words i.e., bright-night, smiles-wiles, creep-asleep together with repetitive words such as: sleep, weep, secret, wiles and little heart. The second poem is rather mixed in its mood as it reflects a sweet yet a serious context in its entirety. Both the poems are very expressive, in which the descriptive words of the first poem such as: pleasant, soft, smiles, moans, dovelike sighs are replaced by words such as steal, cunning wiles and dreadful light.

While the mother sings her cradle song, the face of her infant, reminds her of the image of infant Jesus. Just in the way, that infant Jesus was laid in a manger once her baby too sleeps in her arms. Thus, we find a juxtaposition of images in the poem in which the infant is likened or rather seen in the image of Christ. Further, there are several metaphors found in the quatrains of both the poems such as: "Sweet dreams form a shade/ O'er my lovely infant's head", "Sweet dreams of pleasant streams/ Be happy silent moony beams", "All Creation slept and smil'd", "Little sorrows sit and weep", "Smiles of the morning steal" or "O' the cunning wiles that creep." What makes these cradle songs interesting are the images of mother and infant, Maker and Creation, heaven and earth, dream and reality, smiles and sorrows, dark and light, innocence and experience.

The striking aspect of both his volumes is the pattern of traditional hymns and songs that were used as a defining frame or structure for his verses. This adds to its lyrical quality and creates a rich musical effect almost suited to recitation and even singing. In this regard, Bowra opines, "[I]ndeed, no English poet, except Shakespeare, has written songs of such lightness and melody" (43). While reading the cradle songs by William Blake, one receives faint echoes from the poem "Nurse's Song" available in the same collection of *Songs of Innocence and Experience* (1794). Given his creative impulse and energy, Blake is considered one of the most outstanding poets of his time with his poetical gifts and artistic sensibilities, which had brought out such a relevant literary work

like the *Songs* that truly enlightens the readers' mind with its reflections on the two ends of human condition and experience. Max Plowman in his *Introduction to the Study of William Blake* (1994) writes: "Blake's theme was to reveal the nature of the soul to man. From the *Songs of Innocence* to *The Ghost of Abel*, his aim was to reveal the nature of the soul. This is ultimately the concern of every true poet. This is ultimately the concern of every true poet. Blake differs from others in that it was his whole concern. For him, the soul of man was the epitome of all things" (38).

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## 2.7 CRITICAL RECEPTION

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Blake's philosophy was firmly rooted in the belief that the creative forces of the mind and the poetic vision of those who were gifted held an extraordinary power that was not necessarily tied to the limitations of established truths and theories. The notes of romanticism or rather romantic ideals that were in the making could be felt through the kind of symbolism and thematic concerns, philosophical and spiritual reflections, references of human experiences and the natural world etc that was seen in his poetry. Blake intended readers to examine the 'two contrasting sides of the human soul' in his poetical volume *The Songs of Innocence and Experience* (1794) i.e., 'innocence' as reflected in the ideals of childhood and 'experience' as reflected in the complex realizations of adolescence or adulthood.

Maurice Bowra in *The Romantic Imagination* (2009) writes thus, "[t]he two sections of Blake's book, the songs of innocence and the songs of experience, are contrasted elements in a single design, The first part sets out an imaginative vision of the state of innocence: the second shows how life challenges and corrupts and destroys it" (29). At the same time, it must be noted that Blake's poetry is certainly not as simple as they may apparently seem on one's first reading. His poetry is layered with symbols, images, mysteries, codes and hidden messages that require or rather call for an in-depth study of his poetical texts. Significantly, Blake's first volume *Songs of Innocence* containing his

illuminations was published in the year 1789, which was also the year in which the historical French Revolution had begun.

While the critic Jean H. Hagstrum considers Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* (1794) as his "masterpiece" (see Blake's *Poetry and Designs*, 525), Northrop Frye opines that despite his creative genius and profundity as a poet, it becomes somewhat difficult for readers to fully appreciate his poetry that does not strictly follow poetical conventions and often refers to personalised symbolism or even mythology. Robert F. Gleckner makes a note of the major and minor symbols in Blake's poetry and the hidden meanings that are to be deciphered by the readers. Thus, critic Gleckner in his critical essay "Point of View and Context in Blake's Song" writes thus, "[f]or the serious reader of Blake's songs, then, a constant awareness of the context or state in which a poem appears is indispensable; and since each state is made up of many poems, the other poems in that state must be consulted to grasp the full significance of any one poem" (535).



### CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Q 10:** Briefly define the two contrasting sides that William Blake presents in his *Songs of Innocence and Experience* (1794).

**Q 11:** Why is Blake's poetry not as simple as it apparently seems? Explain briefly.

**Q 12:** What does Robert F. Gleckner opine with regard to William Blake's poetry?



## 2.8 LET US SUM UP

After having gone through this unit, you must have familiarised yourself with the life and times that inspired the literary works and creativity of the visionary English poet William Blake. While gaining an overall idea on the thematic contents of the volumes *Songs of Innocence*

*and Experience*, I am sure; you must also have grasped the content and the major themes of both the prescribed poems. Further, the detailed discussion on the style, language and the critical reception of Blake's poems shall enable you to grasp the nuances of his poetry. This unit has finally helped you further to explore and appreciate the hidden messages woven into the apparent simplicity of the poems by William Blake.




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## 2.9 FURTHER READING

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Bowra, Maurice. (2009). *The Romantic Imagination*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Johnson, Mary Lynn. (eds). *Blake's Poetry and Designs*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Plowman, Max. (1994). *An Introduction to the Study of William Blake*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors




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## 2.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS (HINTS ONLY)

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**Ans to Q No 1:** The scriptures.....as reflected in his mystical writings.

**Ans to Q No 2:** Drawing School....special training.....skilled draughtsman.

**Ans to Q No 3:** Several times.....experienced mystical visions.....frightful vision of God .....Christ and his Apostles

**Ans to Q No 4:** Educating and training his wife.....

**Ans to Q No 5:** His first collection of poetry was titled *Poetical Sketches*.

**Ans to Q No 6:** Innovations into the art of relief etching..... Illuminations of some of his works.....

**Ans to Q No 7:** Mystical, religious, mythological figures.

**Ans to Q No 8:** Reminded of Holy image.... infant Jesus.

**Ans to Q No 9:** Different tone.....narrative that clearly reflects that all is not well.....life has its share of trials and tribulations.

**Ans to Q No 10:** The 'two contrasting sides'.....in his poetical volume.....'innocence' as reflected.....and 'experience' as reflected....

**Ans to Q No 11:** Blake's poetry is certainly not as simple..... layered with..... that requires or .....study of his poetical texts.

**Ans to Q No 12:** Major and minor symbols.....hidden meanings.....to be deciphered by readers.....corresponding poems in both the parts.



## 2.11 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

- Q 1:** Discuss the life and works of the English poet William Blake.
- Q 2:** Give a detailed description of the text of the poems by William Blake as mentioned below:
- a. "A Cradle Song" taken from *Songs of Innocence*
  - b. "A Cradle Song" taken from *Songs of Experience*
- Q 3:** Write a short note on the contents and themes of *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience* by William Blake.
- Q 4:** Explain the major themes evident in the text of the poems both titled "A Cradle Song" by William Blake.
- Q 5:** Comment on the style and language employed by William Blake in the poems both titled "A Cradle Song."
- Q 6:** Discuss the critical reception of William Blake's poetry with reference to his *Songs of Innocence and Experience* (1794) and his poetry in general.

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