

Mending Wall Literary Device

Writer: Robert Frost | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Symbols

- **Wall:** The wall symbolizes the boundaries, separations, and emotional distances people create between one another. Frost shows that humans often build walls without real need. They build walls sometimes for safety, sometimes out of habit. Thus, the wall stands both for protection and isolation.
- **Spring:** Spring symbolizes renewal and change. Ironically, the wall is repaired in spring, the season of rebirth. It suggests a conflict between nature's urge for openness and man's desire for division.
- **Neighbour:** The neighbor represents tradition, blind conformity, and unquestioned authority. He clings to his father's saying, "Good fences make good neighbours," without reflecting on its meaning. He embodies conservatism and resistance to change.
- **Nature:** Nature is the opposing force that breaks down barriers. The line "Something there is that doesn't love a wall" symbolizes the natural world's preference for freedom and unity. It suggests that separation goes against nature's will.
- **Stones:** The stones symbolize the heaviness and rigidity of man-made divisions. They also stand for human effort, the repetitive, meaningless labor of rebuilding unnecessary walls. Stones also stand for the burden of maintaining emotional or social barriers.

Figures of Speech:

- **Metaphor:** The wall symbolizes barriers or boundaries between people's emotional, social, or psychological divisions.
- **Personification:** "Something there is that doesn't love a wall." Here, Nature is given human feelings, as if it actively works against the wall.
- **Simile:** "Like an old-stone savage armed". The neighbor is compared to a primitive man. It shows his attachment to outdated traditions.
- **Irony:** The speaker questions the need for the wall, but still helps to rebuild it. It reveals the contradiction between belief and action.

- **Repetition:** “Good fences make good neighbours”. Repeated to stress the neighbor’s unchanging, traditional mindset and the central conflict of the poem.

Moral Message:

- True friendship and understanding need no walls.
- Tradition without reason separates people, but questioning brings wisdom.

LxNotes