

Spring and Fall Key Info

Writer: Gerard Manley Hopkins | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Key Facts

- **Author:** Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889)
- **Title of the Author:** English poet and Jesuit priest
- **Full Title:** Spring and Fall: to a Young Child
- **Total Lines:** 15 lines
- **Stanza:** 1 stanza
- **Genre:** Poetry
- **Published Date:** 1918 (posthumously)
- **Written Date:** 1880
- **Form:** Rhymed stanza (loosely based on rhyme royal)
- **Meter:** Sprung rhythm
- **Rhyme Scheme:** AABCCDDDEEFFGG
- **Tone:** Sad, reflective, and compassionate
- **Point of View:** Second-person (addressing the child)
- **Setting:** Autumn season, nature's changing leaves
- **Time Setting:** Fall (autumn)
- **Place Setting:** Countryside or natural landscape

Key Notes

- **Form and Structure of the Poem:** This poem is a short meditative piece consisting of 15 lines. It is written as a single stanza. The poem follows a rhythmic pattern and uses Hopkins' unique Sprung Rhythm. In the poem, the poet addresses a little girl named Margaret, who is crying after seeing the leaves fall from the trees. The poem begins with the child's innocent emotion but ends by expressing a deep truth of life — the reality of death and spiritual realization.

Gerard Manley Hopkins's poem "Spring and Fall: to a Young Child" is rooted in deep spiritual and philosophical reflections. Hopkins was a pious Jesuit priest. He used to feel the presence of God in the beauty of nature. Through the changing patterns of nature, he perceived the truths of human life, death, and the soul.

During the Victorian era, religious faith was being challenged by scientific reasoning and new ideas. However, in this poem, Hopkins has shown a connection between nature and spiritual thought. He shows how a small feeling or experience can lead one to realize the deeper truths of life. The poem expresses not only philosophical thought but also a tender spiritual awareness. It is an example of Hopkins's theories of "inscape" and "instress", where the inner truth and divine presence are sought in every object and emotion.

LxNotes