

Words Summary

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Detailed Summary

Words are like Axes: The poet compares words/writing to the blow of axes on the wood. Axes strike wood and create echoes. The echoes spread out like a running horse. Poets can spread out their thinking or express deep emotions through words. Just as axes cut down trees so that their wood can be made into something else, the speaker can transform raw experience into art by writing about it. Just like an axe, words can cut deep and hurt. Words can cut—those who read them and, perhaps, those who write them.

Once words are written, they go out freely like the echo and the running horse. It means that once words are written or published, they cannot be controlled.

Words are like Sap: The speaker compares words to sap () coming out of the wood. This means that writing is deeply emotional. Words often come from pain or sorrow, just like sap comes from a cut tree. While writing, poets can release their pain by crying.

When a rock falls into calm water, the water struggles to become calm again and regain its mirror-like surface. It suggests that after writing something emotional or painful, poets try to be calm again, just like the water.

White Skull: In the water, the rock drops, turns, and sinks like a white skull (a skull is a symbol of death). The skull lies among the green plants under water. This image shows the poet's fear that she may be forgotten after death. But her words may still live on and help others, like the white skull feeding the **"weedy greens"** (green plants) under water.

Words as Riderless Horses on the Road: Many years later, the poet sees her words on the road. The words are now **"dry"** and **"riderless"** horses. It means the words are now free from the poet's control. They are **"dry,"** meaning they may have lost their connection to the poet's emotions. They live on their own. On the other hand, the poet's life is controlled by the stars. The reflection of the stars is on the pool water. This means that while words are free and uncontrollable, the poet's own life is bound by larger forces—fate, time, and the universe.