

Essential Question: How do we balance living in the moment with planning for the future?		
	What is the poet saying? Translation	How is this being said? Devices
<i>Carpe Diem</i> by Horace		
<i>Sieze the Day</i> by Robert Frost		
<i>A Psalm of Life</i> by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow		
<i>We live in Deeds</i> by Philip James Bailey		
<i>If</i> by Rudyard Kipling		
<b>Summary:</b>		

## CARPE DIEM

You have probably heard the saying, "carpe diem"... but do you know what it really means? Or where it comes from? Find out...

Source: <http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/carpe-diem.html>

### Meaning

'Carpe diem' is usually translated from the Latin as 'seize the day'. However, the more finicky of Latin scholars may very well seize you by the throat if you suggest that translation. 'Carpe' translates literally as 'pluck', with particular reference to the picking of fruit, so a more accurate translation is 'enjoy the day, pluck the day when it is ripe'. The extended version of the phrase 'carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero' translates as 'Pluck the day, trusting as little as possible in the future'.

The meaning is similar to that of many proverbs that we continue to use in English and is a warning to make the most of the time we have, with the implication that our time on Earth is short. Other such proverbs are 'Strike while the iron is hot', 'The early bird catches the worm'

### Origin

The original source for the Latin phrase is the lyric poet Quintus Horatius Flaccus (65 BC – 8 BC), more widely known as Horace. The term is first found in *Odes Book I*:

ORIGINAL: TU NE QUAESIERIS—SCIRE NEFAS—QUEM MIHI, QUEM TIBI  
FINEM DI DEDERINT, LEUCONOË, NEC BABYLONIOS  
TEMPTARIS NUMEROS. UT MELIUS, QUICQUID ERIT, PATI!  
SEU PLURES HIEMES, SEU TRIBUIT IUPPITER ULTIMAM,  
QUAE NUNC OPPOSITIS DEBILITAT PUMICIBUS MARE  
TYRHENUM. SAPIAS, VINA LIQUES, ET SPATIO BREVI  
SPEM LONGAM RESECES. DUM LOQUIMUR, FUGERIT INVIDA  
AETAS: CARPE DIEM, QUAM MINIMUM CREDULA POSTERO.

Translation: Ask not—we cannot know—what end the gods have set for you, for me; nor attempt the Babylonian reckonings Leuconoë. How much better to endure whatever comes, whether Jupiter grants us additional winters or whether this is our last, which now wears out the Tuscan Sea upon the barrier of the cliffs! Be wise, strain the wine; and since life is brief, prune back far-reaching hopes! Even while we speak, envious time has passed: pluck the day, putting as little trust as possible in tomorrow!

Read the following poem by Robert Frost, as you read take side notes indicating your interpretation of the poem.

### **Seize the Day by Robert Frost**

Age saw two quiet children  
Go loving by at twilight,  
He knew not whether homeward,  
Or outward from the village,  
Or (chimes were ringing) churchward,  
He waited, (they were strangers)  
Till they were out of hearing  
To bid them both be happy.  
"Be happy, happy, happy,  
And seize the day of pleasure."  
The age-long theme is Age's.  
'Twas Age imposed on poems  
Their gather-roses burden  
To warn against the danger  
That overtaken lovers  
From being overflooded  
With happiness should have it.  
And yet not know they have it.  
But bid life seize the present?  
It lives less in the present  
Than in the future always,  
And less in both together  
Than in the past. The present  
Is too much for the senses,  
Too crowding, too confusing-  
Too present to imagine.

## *A Psalm of Life*

*What the heart of the young man said to the psalmist*

TELL me not, in mournful numbers,  
Life is but an empty dream!--

For the soul is dead that slumbers,  
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!  
And the grave is not its goal;

Dust thou art, to dust returnest,  
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,  
Is our destined end or way;

But to act, that each to-morrow  
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,  
And our hearts, though stout and brave,  
Still, like muffled drums, are beating  
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,  
In the bivouac of Life,

Be not like dumb, driven cattle!  
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no future, howe'er pleasant!  
Let the dead Past bury its dead!

Act,--act in the living present!  
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,

And departing, leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,  
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,

A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,  
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,  
With a heart for any fate;

Still achieving, still pursuing,  
Learn to labor and to wait.

**Henry Wadsworth Longfellow**

***We live in deeds . . .***

WE live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;

In feelings, not in figures on a dial.

We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives

Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.

And he whose heart beats quickest lives the longest:

Lives in one hour more than in years do some

Whose fat blood sleeps as it slips along their veins.

Life's but a means unto an end; that end,

Beginning, mean, and end to all things -- God.

The dead have all the glory of the world.

**Philip James Bailey**

## About this Poem

In a 1995 BBC opinion poll, "If—" was voted the United Kingdom's favorite poem. During his lifetime, even Kipling started to resent the poem's popularity, saying it had been "anthologised to weariness."

# If—

Rudyard Kipling, 1865 - 1936

If you can keep your head when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;  
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,  
But make allowance for their doubting too;  
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,  
Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,  
Or, being hated, don't give way to hating,  
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;  
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;  
If you can meet with triumph and disaster  
And treat those two impostors just the same;  
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken  
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,  
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,  
And stoop and build 'em up with wornout tools;

If you can make one heap of all your winnings  
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,  
And lose, and start again at your beginnings  
And never breathe a word about your loss;  
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew  
To serve your turn long after they are gone,  
And so hold on when there is nothing in you  
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on";

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,  
Or walk with kings—nor lose the common touch;  
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;  
If all men count with you, but none too much;  
If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run—  
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,  
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!