

# Why Read a Poem About Sheep?

In this activity, you will learn about why you should be thrilled to read "The Shepherd." You'll also learn some great new words and their synonyms! (In case you forgot, synonyms are two different words that share the same meaning).

**Directions:** For each word in the word bank below, find its synonym in bold in the article, and write it in the blank below.

You might **wonder** why you should read a poem about a **herd** of sheep and their shepherd, written by a man who died more than 200 years ago. This is an **excellent** question! (In fact, you should always ask yourself, "Why am I **reading** this?" before you start reading over an article or a book.)

The reason to read a poem like "The Shepherd" is that it is a classic, which means it is still worth reading years and years after it was written. Reading a classic poem or story gives you a chance to **travel** back in time and learn about a **fascinating** person and a time in history. William Blake was born in London in 1757, a time when London was a **filthy** city where most people were **poor** and had few **pleasures** to look forward to. One rare pleasure was poetry. Most people couldn't read or write back then (including Mrs. Blake!). But they loved to listen to poetry.

William Blake wrote poetry about **topics** everyone could understand, especially religion and nature. He was also a **talented** artist. William Blake **tried** to write poems that could be enjoyed by **regular** people. Blake was also an artist, and is just as **famous** today for his glorious paintings and engravings as he is for his poetry.

So the next time you see a sheep, or even wear a sweater **made** of wool, you might say, "Oh, this reminds me of the lovely poem "The Shepherd" by William Blake. Because here's another reason to read classic poetry—you can impress your **friends** with how **smart** you are!

## Word Bank

Pals	_____
Question	_____
Delights	_____
Poring	_____
Enthralling	_____
Subjects	_____
Gifted	_____
Exemplary	_____
Intelligent	_____
Attempted	_____
Average	_____
Group	_____
Renowned	_____
Created	_____
Dirty	_____
Impoverished	_____
Journey	_____