

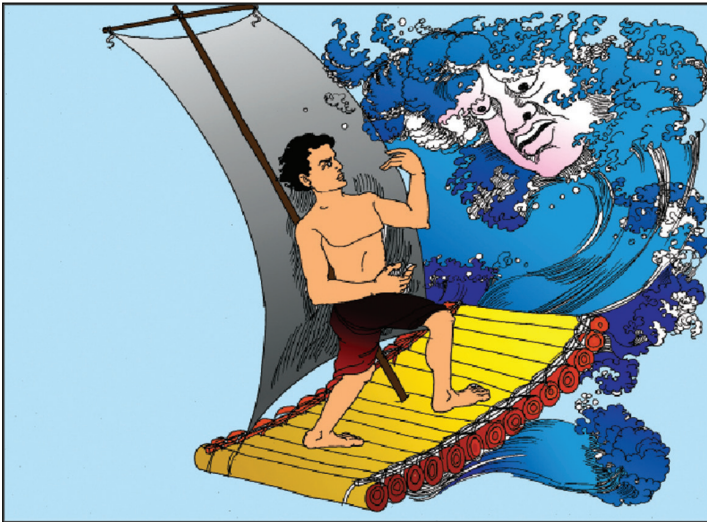
## POEM – 1

### HE DID IT

#### **Pre-reading activity:**

- *Have you ever stood on the seashore and watched the waves dancing and moving with high/low ebbs? Recollect your experiences if any and share the same with your friends. Have you ever thought of how waves break? Do you think you can conquer the waves?*

**Now read the following poem.**



Said the dangerous sea,  
“You’ll not conquer me,  
Try as hard as you can.  
You are not a whale,  
You are not a shark,  
You cannot walk  
On the waves, young man.”

7

So he made a boat  
That was able to float  
“Ho, ho!” said his foe,  
“It floats all right  
And it’s watertight,  
But you can’t make it go.” 13

“Oh yes I can,”  
Replied the young man.  
And he made some oars  
And learned how to row. 17

When the sea saw  
The boats and the oars  
And all the rowers,  
He said, “Young man,  
They make a fine show,  
But what will you do  
When they venture out 22

Where the deep sea swells  
Can take them up  
And toss them about  
Like cockshells”? 28

“You can’t stump me”,  
Said the bright young man,  
And cut down a tree

And made a tall mast  
And rigged it with sails  
To catch the high winds  
And weather the gales. 35

When the ships set out  
With their sails unfurled  
To cross the Atlantic  
And discover the world,  
The sea looked them over. 40

From stern to stern  
And when he saw,  
With considerable awe,  
That Columbus himself  
Was on one of them,  
He said, with a show  
Of humility,  
“I admit, young man,  
You have conquered me.” 50

***-MARY BRITTON MILLER***

***Glossary :***

conquer :  
venture :  
unfurl :



humility :  
rigged :  
stump (v) : to  
foe :  
oars :

## ***Understanding the poem***

### ***I. Answer the following questions.***

1. Why is the sea so confident that the young man will not be able to conquer him?

2. What did the young man do on listening to the challenge of the sea?

3. Did the sea think that the young man would be able to make his boat go? How did the young man prove that he could make it go?

4. What did the sea want to know when the young man was all set to go? [read lines 22-28]

5. Why did the young man make the mast?

6. Was the sea **angry** to see ships cross the Atlantic?

7. How did the sea show its greatness of heart?

8. Do you think the poet is telling a story? Or Would you take the poem as a reflection on man's conquest of the sea?

9. What is the attitude of the sea when it says, "I admit, young man, You have conquered me".

- a. magnanimous
- b. generous
- c. submissive and humble
- d. indifferent

10. Who is portrayed as the conqueror - the man or the sea?

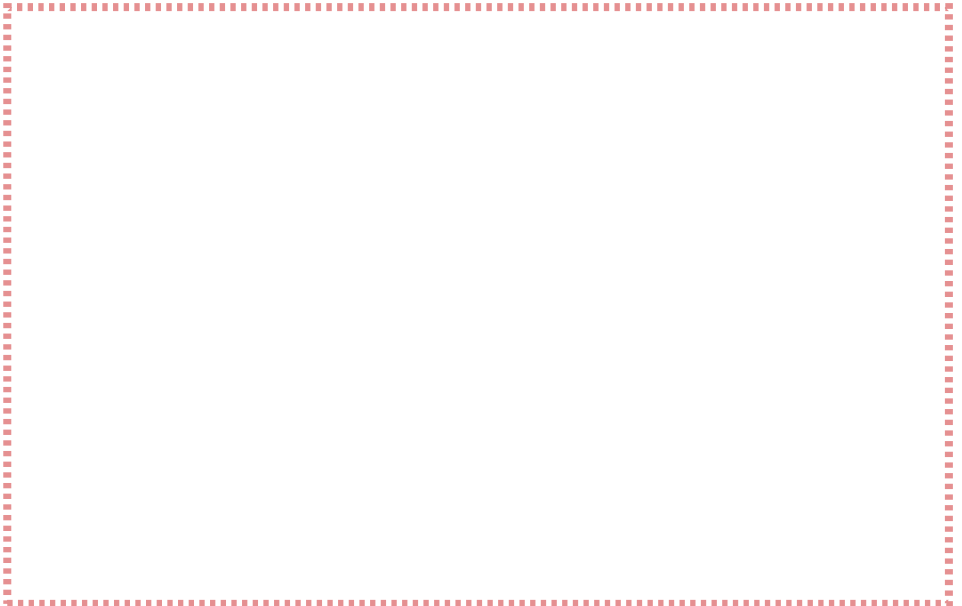


11. What aspects of man are described in the poem?



12. Explain

“And when he saw  
With considerable awe  
That Columbus himself  
Was on one of them.”



13. What picture of the sea do you get from the poem?

**II. Match column “A” with column “B”. Column “A” has the challenges given by the sea to man and column “B” has the responses given by man.**

**A**

**B**

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. You cannot walk                     | a. he made a tall mast |
| 2. You cannot make the boats go        | b. he made boats       |
| 3. You cannot venture out when I swell | c. he made oars        |

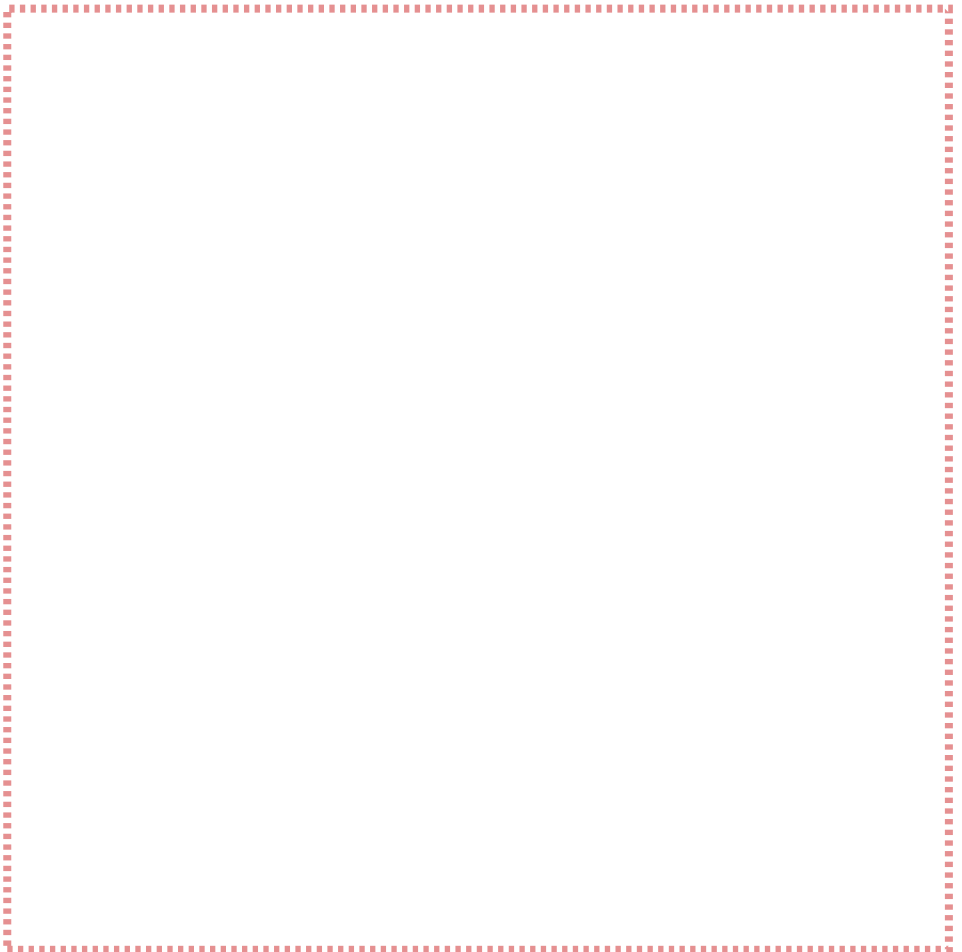
**III.** He said, with a show

Of humility,

“I admit, young man,

You have conquered me.”

- a. Who does the word “you” refer to?
- b. What aspect of man is described in the poem?
- c. When did the speaker say these words?





## **Appreciation :**

**IV.** a. *Pick out the questions posed by the sea to the man.*

Who do you think is mightier, 'The sea or the man'? Discuss in groups.

b. Pick out the pairs of rhyming words from the poem.

