Stanza-wise Explanation

**Stanza-1**

*I LOVE TO RISE IN SUMMER MORN,
WHEN THE BIRD SINGS ON EVERY TREE;
THE DISTANCE HUNTS MAN WINDS HIS HORN,
AND THE SKYLARK SINGS WITH ME;
OH WHAT SWEET COMPANY!*

The speaker in this poem is a young boy who is joyful and likes to awake in the fresh and delightful summer morning. Further, describing the beauty of the summer morning, the boy likes the chirping of the birds on every tree, the sound of horn blown by the hunter from a distance field and sweet songs of skylark (bird).

**Stanza-2**

*BUT TO GO TO SCHOOL IN SUMMER MORN,
OH! IT DRIVES ALL JOY AWAY!
UNDER A CRUEL EYE OUTWORN,
THE LITTLE ONE SPEND THE DAY
INSIGN AND DISMAY.*

It is a matter of utmost disappointment for the speaker to attend the school in such a sweet summer morning where actually he wishes to enjoy the delight of summer. He is tired and even puzzled under the strict supervision of his teacher. The phrase *outworn* refers to the eyes of the teacher that actually tires the boy. Instead of enjoying the pleasures of summer, the child has to compulsory attended the school where he spends his day in boredom and sadness.

**Stanza-3**

*AH! THEN AT TIMES I DROOPING SIT,
AND SPEND MANY AS ANXIOUS HOUR;
NOR IN MY BOOK CAN I TAKE DELIGHT,
NOR SIT IN LEARNING’S BOWER,
WORN THROUGH WITH THE DREARY SHOWER.*

The child expresses his tiredness. He sits unwillingly in the sea of boredom. The child keeps under control the attack on him by the harsh personality of the teacher and unnecessary lectures (shower of meaningless words) and his urge for unchecked freedom. The *learning’s bower* refers to a garden where the child can be taught in an interesting way, only if nature accompanies him instead of the school teacher.

**Stanza-4**

*HOW CAN A BIRD THAT BORN FOR JOY
SIT IN CAGE IN SING
HOW CAN A CHILD, WHEN FEARS ANNOY,
BUT DROOP HIS TENDER WING
AND FORGET HIS YOUTHFUL SPRING?*

Again, the poet compares a child with a bird. According to his view, a bird which is born cheerful and fun-loving can never sing sweet songs, if caged. Similarly, a child if remained under the umbrella of annoying fear and tension, the distrust of his teacher can never enjoy the natural instincts of joy and playfulness. Indeed a world full of rigid course of discipline will ruthlessly take away the beautiful springs (the childhood days) of a person’s life.
Stanza-5

OH! FATHER AND MOTHER IF BUDS ARE NIPPED,
AND IF THE TENDER PLANTS ARE STRIPPED
OF THEIR JOY IN THE SPRINGING DAY
BY SORROW AND CARE’S DISMAY;

The boy complains to the highest authority, to father and mother, if a budding child is picked and swept of in the early stage of life in an ocean of sorrow, where there is no one to care for. If unhappiness crushes the sensitive plants, beautiful and the new born buds, summer can never be joyful.

Stanza-6

HOW SHALL THE SUMMER ARISE IN JOY
OR THE SUMMER FRUITS APPEAR?
OR HOW SHALL WE GATHER WHAT GRIEVES DESTROY,
OR BLESS THE MELLOWING YEAR,
WHEN THE BLAST OF WINTER APPEARS?

If care and concern rule over the plants, flowers, birds, such a summer will be dry and will bear no fruit. The child enquires his parents as to how they can win back what pain/sadness has destroyed. If the plants perish/dry-up due to the pain/sorrow, no fruit will be there in the season of autumn (mellowing year). This implies that if childhood pleasures and joys are restricted, one has to be very sure that the adult life will be absolutely dry and unproductive.

Theme of the The School Boy by William Brake

The poem the school boy discuss a boy’s repelling imprisonment at his school his company from the animate objects of the summer morning (birds, flowers etc.) to the inactive object of his school is indeed a matter of concern and grief. School life is an suffering for him.

The boys filling of summer festivity is countered by the terrifying eye of the teacher that robs from him all his childhood happiness. School is nothing but a prison that negates the playful activity of childhood. The restriction of an imposed in school forms a hurdle for the natural expression of creativity and forlorn the essence of genius-ness.

Overall Summary

“The Schoolboy” is a poem included in William Blake’s collection Songs of Innocence. It is told from the perspective of a young boy going to school on a summer day. The boy loves summer mornings, but he had to go to school unwillingly. He sits at his desk in boredom and cannot pay any attention to the lesson in the class because he wishes to play outside in natural surroundings. In the fourth stanza, the speaker asks, “How can the bird that is born for joy, sit in a cage and sing?” Here the author has compared young children, so full of energy and happiness, to songbirds, who deserve to free and fly on the winds. But, like songbirds trapped in a cage, children trapped in a classroom cannot express themselves, cannot capitalize on all that excess energy, and therefore their potential gets wasted.

The speaker addresses parents in the final two stanzas, asking how, “…if buds are nipped/ …and if the tender plants are stripped/ of their joy…How shall… the summer fruits appear?” That is, if children are stripped of their ability to play and have fun in the summer season, how shall they grow and develop to the fullest extent?

This poem is about allowing children to be children – allow them to play and run outside, to experience the benefits of nature and of the seasons. This practice is equally as beneficial to them as academic learning.