**When I Heard the Learn’d Astronomer**

By Walt Whitman

When I heard the learn’d astronomer,

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When the proofs, the figures, were ranged in columns before me,

When I was shown the charts and diagrams, to add, divide,   
and measure them,

When I sitting heard the astronomer where he lectured wit  
 much applause in the lecture-room,

How soon unaccountable I became tired and sick,

Till rising and gliding out I wander’d off by myself,

In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to time,

Look’d up in perfect silence at the stars.

**Title**

### The title creates new horizons and leaves the reader **uncertain. The intelligent reader can immediately understand the poem is the first person and the protagonist is not the writer. In addition, “ hear” is a** perception **the verb ,so it outlines the protagonist ‘s will . Indeed he does not want to listen to the astronomer but he is forced himself to take part in the lecture.**

**Layout- Structure**

The poem is with a single stanza of 11 lines . Whitman wrote the poem in free verse, also called vers libre. Free verse generally has no metrical pattern or end rhyme. However, it may contain patterns of another kind, such as repetition.

**Denotation**

The first line is repeated so it creates, which **amphora of word “where” ,** a climax . The intelligent reader knows during the first 7 lines the protagonist will not tell about his feeling . This is highlighted by the passive verbs like “were ranged” and “was shown”. Passive verbs underline the passive process of the protagonist. Besides , with the verb “heard” intelligent reader realizes the protagonist undergoes the lessons even if he is bored and tired .   
The semantic field of first part is bound to attend the lesson.

The 8th line starts with an anaphoric change ,therefore “How soon” is the first word . Another change is the form of the verbs: from the passive to the –ing form . So, finally the protagonist is going to tell his emotions . He becomes tired because he is bored to listen the speech .  
the alliteration of “d” sound shows the **heaviness , he is feeling oppressed by** (proofs, figures, charts and diagrams).  
Then the main character shows his liking and **enthusiasm: “mystical moist night-air”.**As the adage suggests, silence speaks louder than words (of the lecturer). After all, silence is silence. There is no perfect or imperfect silence; silence is absence of sound. However, writer uses perfect in this way—sometimes for euphony, sometimes for emphasis.  
The same stars ,firstly studied, become a pleasant and **liberating moment where person can immerse itself in** reflections.   
Semantic field of Maths’ words makes the character overwhelmed, while the second part gives the idea of freedom. The poem is an emotion recollected in tranquility.

**Main Theme**

Mere numbers, charts, and diagrams cannot sum up the mystery, power, and beauty of the universe. Scientific calculation can quantify and measure the components and makeup of beautiful objects but cannot fathom their allure; only romantic musing can do that.    
Astronomy can analyze the electromagnetic radiation of a moonbeam; poetry can analyze the dreamy effect of a moonbeam on the human heart.  
Science is invaluable as a tool to help us understand the complexities of the universe. But we must guard against allowing it to indurate us to the wondrous beauty of nature.

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