

Name: _____

MENDING WALL

- 1 Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
- 2 That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it
- 3 And spills the upper boulders in the sun
- 4 And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.

- 5 The work of hunters is another thing:
- 6 I have come after them and made repair
- 7 Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
- 8 But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
- 9 To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
- 10 No one has seen them made or heard them made,
- 11 But at spring mending-time we find them there.

- 12 I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;

YOUR PARAPHRASE

There is something that doesn't
love a wall, because every year, it
breaks and there are big gaps
left in it.

This isn't hunters who take
rocks out of the wall to find the
rabbit that's hiding there. I've
fixed those holes. But the gaps,
no one has made them or seen
them made, but every spring,
they're there.

Every year I arrange to meet

Name: _____

13 And on a day we meet to walk the line
14 We keep the wall between us as we go.
15 And set the wall between us once again.
16 To each the boulders that have fallen to each.

17 And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
18 We have to use a spell to make them balance:
19 'Stay where you are until our backs are turned!'
20 We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
21 Oh, just another kind of outdoor game,
22 One on a side. It comes to little more:

23 There where it is we do not need the wall:
24 He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
25 My apple trees will never get across
26 And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
27 He only says, 'Good fences make good neighbors.'

my neighbour and walk the wall.
We keep the wall between us
and fix it as we walk, each of us
replacing the rocks on our side.

Some rocks are so round that we
have to work hard to get the
rocks to balance: "Don't move!"
Our fingers get rough with
handling the rocks. It's like a
game. No big deal.

We get to a place where I
think we don't need a wall - I
have apple trees, my neighbour
has pine. My neighbour responds,
'Good fences make good
neighbours'

Name: _____

28 Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
29 If I could put a notion in his head:
30 'Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it
31 Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.
32 Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
33 What I was walling in or walling out,
34 And to whom I was like to give offense.

35 Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
36 That wants it down.' I could say 'Elves' to him,
37 But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
38 He said it for himself. I see him there

39 Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
40 In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
41 He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
42 Not of woods only and the shade of trees.

I'm feeling mischievous and
wondering if I could get my
neighbour to think about why
we need a wall. I ask why
fences make good neighbours.
There are no animals to keep out.
I think we need a reason.

I say "there's something that
doesn't want this wall here". I
want to say it's elves, but I don't.
I want him to come to the same

conclusion. He reminds me of a
caveman, using stones as weapons
There seems to be a darkness
in him. He will not think about

Name: _____

- 43 He will not go behind his father's saying,
44 And he likes having thought of it so well
45 He says again, 'Good fences make good neighbors.'

Robert Frost, 1874 – 1963

why we need a wall. He just
repeats, "Good fences make
good neighbours."

Please answer the following questions on a sheet of loose-leaf. Remember to answer in well-written sentences/paragraphs that have proper capitalization and punctuation. Once you're done, staple your answers to this packet of papers and pass it all in.

1. If you have to live in this poem, would you be the speaker or the neighbor? Why?
2. Why do you think our speaker rebels against the wall? What does he or she want?
3. "Good fences make good neighbors" is often quoted and is a familiar line to many people. List as many other sayings, phrases, expressions, etc, as you can think of that have to do with walls, fences, borders, or other things that keep people separate.