CLASSICS LIBRARY · STORY MAP

Michael: A Pastoral Poem

William Wordsworth · *1800 · English original, as hosted*

If from the public way you turn your steps up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Gill, you will suppose that with an upright path your feet must struggle. So this pastoral narrative begins. Then: The pastoral Mountains front you, face to face. But, courage! William Wordsworth, complete as hosted. For grades 9–12. A story of family, debt, and a son's leaving; bereavement later, with gravity. Quote this wording, including "Green-head Gill" and "open'd" if you quote that line, as this file prints them.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

How should a school read this file as Wordsworth's complete pastoral narrative, beginning with a turning from the public way up Green-head Gill, rather than as a short lyric only?

"If from the public way you turn your steps Up the"
Opening

William Wordsworth's Michael: A Pastoral Poem, complete as hosted. It opens: If from the public way you turn your steps up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Gill. The pastoral Mountains front you, face to face. But, courage! For grades 9–12. A narrative of family, debt, and a son's leaving; bereavement later, with gravity. Quote this wording.

KEY CHARACTERS

Michael
The shepherd of this pastoral narrative; his story comes after the turning from the public way

William Wordsworth
The author of this complete pastoral poem

HOW TO BEGIN MICHAEL

> *"If from the public way you turn your steps Up the"*
> Opening

> *"The pastoral Mountains front you, face to face. But"*
> Opening

Grades 9–12
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01

If from the Public Way You Turn

OPENING

If from the public way you turn your steps. The poem begins with a turning, off the public way.

- Keep "from the public way you turn your steps."
- 9–12.
- A complete pastoral narrative, not a lyric only.
- Quote this wording.

> *"If from the public way you turn your steps Up the"*
> Opening

02

Green-head Gill

OPENING

Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Gill. The place is named at once, as this file spells it.

- Keep "tumultuous brook" and "Green-head Gill."
- 9–12.
- A place, before the family story.
- Quote this spelling.

> *"Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Gill, You"*
> Opening

03

The Pastoral Mountains Front You

OPENING

The pastoral Mountains front you, face to face. The mountains are met as a front, not as a distant view only.

- Keep "front you, face to face," and this capitalization of Mountains.
- 9–12.
- Still the opening landscape.
- Quote this wording.

> *"The pastoral Mountains front you, face to face. But"*
> Opening

04

But, Courage!

OPENING

But, courage! For beside that boisterous Brook the mountains have all open'd out themselves. A courage is spoken before the hidden valley is shown.

- Keep "But, courage!" Stop before a line you will not quote whole.
- 9–12.
- Keep "open'd" if you continue the line.
- Quote this wording.

> *"But, courage! for"*
> Opening

05

Wordsworth, a Complete Pastoral Narrative

THE EDITION

William Wordsworth, Michael: A Pastoral Poem, complete as hosted. For grades 9–12. A narrative of family, debt, and a son's leaving; bereavement later, with gravity, not spectacle. Quote this wording, including "Green-head Gill." One complete poem; do not invent what the file does not say.

- Name Wordsworth, and this complete poem.
- 9–12. Gravity later.
- A turning from the public way, up Green-head Gill.
- Quote this English.

> *"If from the public way you turn your steps Up the"*
> Opening

A turning from the public way | A tumultuous brook, named | Mountains, face to face | A spoken courage | A pastoral narrative, complete

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 9–12

1. It opens: "If from the public way you turn your steps up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Gill."
2. "The pastoral Mountains front you, face to face. But, courage!"
3. William Wordsworth, Michael: A Pastoral Poem, complete as hosted. A narrative, not a lyric only.
4. For grades 9–12. Family, debt, and a son's leaving; bereavement later, with gravity, not spectacle. Quote this wording.

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