La Belle Dame Sans Merci, 1893. John Williams Waterhouse. Oil on canvas, 44.09 x 31.89 in. Hessisches Landesmuseum, Darmstadt, Germany.

“I am certain of nothing but the holiness of the heart’s affections and the truth of imagination—what the imagination seizes as beauty must be truth—whether it existed before or not.”

—John Keats
BYRON'S POETRY

MEET GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

George Gordon, Lord Byron—aristocrat, poet, member of Parliament, athlete, expatriate, and freedom fighter—was perhaps the most colorful figure of his day.

"Be thou the rainbow to the storms of life,
The evening beam that smiles the clouds away,
And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray!"

—Lord Byron, The Bride of Abydos

Descended from two noble but flamboyant and violent families, Byron inherited his title and a large estate at the age of ten, when his great-uncle, known as the "Wicked Lord," died. Byron had been born with a clubfoot, and the physical suffering and acute embarrassment it caused him profoundly affected his temperament. "No action of Lord Byron's life—scarce a line he has written—but was influenced by his personal defect," Mary Shelley wrote. To compensate for this impairment, Byron succeeded in becoming a masterful swimmer, horseman, boxer, cricket player, and fencer.

Literary Celebrity As a student at Cambridge University, Byron was known for his lavish lifestyle and flamboyant behavior; he even kept a tame bear as a pet. After graduating from Cambridge, he embarked upon an adventurous journey, traveling on horseback across Portugal and Spain and on to distant lands that few Englishmen had visited, including Asia Minor (present-day Turkey) and mountainous Albania. While traveling, he worked his adventures into his poetry, including the first part of his long poem Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage, which made him the toast of London society at age twenty-four.

In his own words, "I awoke one morning and found myself famous."

His books sold well, and he influenced art and fashion, as well as literature, with his flamboyant style. In addition, as a member of the House of Lords, he championed liberal political causes. For example, he bravely defended the rebelling Nottingham weavers, whose jobs were threatened by new textile machines.

Soon, however, this extraordinarily handsome poet—with brown curly hair, fine features, and intensely brilliant eyes—saw his fame turn to notoriety. Personal scandals plagued him as he pursued a self-indulgent lifestyle with many love affairs.

Poet in Exile At twenty-eight, Byron exiled himself from England, never to return. He briefly lived in Switzerland, where he spent time with the Shelleys, and then settled in Italy. There, he composed Don Juan, a verse satire that describes the adventures of a licentious, though naive, young man. Always an outspoken defender of personal and political freedom, Byron died of fever shortly after his thirty-sixth birthday, having exhausted his energies training Greek troops fighting for independence from the Turks. His efforts in support of the Greek independence movement made him a national hero in Greece. Byron influenced a host of eminent writers, including Goethe in Germany, Balzac in France, Pushkin and Dostoevsky in Russia, and Hawthorne, Melville, and Poe in the United States.

Lord Byron was born in 1788 and died in 1824.

For more about Lord Byron, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Poems

What makes you admire something or someone? In these poems, Lord Byron admires the strength of the sea and the beauty of a woman. As you read, think about the following questions:

- Why are people fascinated by violent natural events, such as volcanoes, tsunamis, and hurricanes?
- Which objects or events stir intense feelings in you that are difficult to express?

Building Background

In medieval times, childe referred to a young nobleman who was a candidate for knighthood. Byron applied that title to the hero of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage to suggest the character’s inner nobility and his quest for meaning. Sick of society, Harold embarks on a series of journeys across Europe, only to encounter more disillusionment in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars. As Byron describes him, Childe Harold is “the wandering outlaw of his own dark mind.”

“She Walks in Beauty,” a lovely lyric poem originally written for music, was inspired by the sight of the poet’s cousin by marriage, the beautiful Lady Wilmot Horton. She appeared at a party dressed in a black mourning gown decorated with spangles, or bits of sparkling material.

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea The Quest for Truth and Beauty

As you read, notice how these poems reflect Romantic ideals of beauty.

Literary Element Juxtaposition

Juxtaposition refers to the placing of two or more distinct elements of a literary work—for example, words, phrases, images, lines, or passages—next to or close to one another. For example, in line 7 of “Apostrophe to the Ocean,” Byron uses this technique to contrast the speaker’s future and his past: “From all I may be, or have been before.” As you read, look for other examples of this technique and consider its effects.


Reading Strategy Analyzing Figurative Language

When you analyze figurative language, you examine language that is not meant to be interpreted literally but is used for descriptive effect, often to suggest ideas. First, identify figures of speech, or specific devices of figurative language such as metaphor, simile, and personification. Then determine what each device contributes to the work.

Reading Tip: Identifying Figurative Language Use a chart to record examples of figurative language and to describe their function in the poems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“like a drop of rain” (line 16, “Apostrophe to the Ocean”)</td>
<td>simile</td>
<td>suggests the insignificance of humans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vocabulary

spurn (spurn) v. to reject or drive off; p. 845 Members of Congress spurned the unqualified nominee.

arbiter (är’ ba tar) n. a judge; p. 846 Public opinion is the final arbiter in a debate between two candidates.

mar (mār) v. to spoil or damage; p. 846 The walls of that building were marred with graffiti.

Vocabulary Tip: Analogies Analogies are comparisons based on relationships between words and ideas.

Interactive Literary Elements Handbook To review or learn more about the literary elements, go to www.glencoe.com.
The Florentine Girl (The Artist’s Daughter), c. 1827.
Henry Howard. Oil on canvas, 965 x 610 mm.
Tate Gallery, London

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes⁠¹ and starry skies;
And all that’s best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect⁠² and her eyes:

Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o’er her face;

Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling place.

And on that cheek, and o’er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,

A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

---

1. Here, climes means “climates” or “atmospheres.”
2. Here, aspect means “appearance” or “face.”
There is a pleasure in the pathless woods;
There is a rapture on the lonely shore;
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep sea, and music in its roar.

I love not man the less, but nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal°
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the universe, and feel
What I can ne’er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore. Upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man’s ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknelled,° uncoffined, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth’s destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send’st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his gods, where haply° lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth—there let him lay.

Reading Strategy  Analyzing Figurative Language  What does the personification in this passage reveal about the ocean and the speaker?

Vocabulary
spurn  (spurn) v. to reject or drive off
The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans,° whose huge ribs make
Their clay° creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee and arbiter of war—
These are thy toys, and as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast° of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.°

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage,° what are they?
Thy waters washed them power while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts—not so thou,
Unchangeable, save to thy wild waves' play.
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure° brow;
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself° in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime°
Dark-heaving—boundless, endless, and sublime—
The image of eternity—the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone°
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wantoned° with thy breakers°—they to me
Were a delight—and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror, 'twas a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

31 leviathans: large ships
32 clay: human
35 yeast: the foam or froth of troubled waters
36 Armada...Trafalgar: a Spanish fleet that sailed against England in 1588 and was destroyed, as were most of the French ships captured by Lord Nelson at the Spanish cape of Trafalgar in 1805
38 Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage: powerful ancient empires
44 azure: sky blue
47 Glasses itself: reflects
49 torrid clime: the intensely hot area near the equator
53 zone: a climatic region of the earth
58 wantoned: frolicked breakers: large waves
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond

1. What new ideas about nature and beauty did these poems suggest to you?

Recall and Interpret

2. (a) What qualities besides beauty does the woman in “She Walks in Beauty” have? (b) What can you infer about the speaker’s feelings toward her?

3. (a) In lines 1–36 of “Apostrophe to the Ocean,” how does the speaker portray the relationship between the ocean and human beings? (b) What do these lines suggest about the ability of human beings to master nature?

4. (a) In lines 37–54 of “Apostrophe to the Ocean,” how does the speaker contrast the nature of the ocean with the fortunes of human beings? (b) What can you infer about the speaker’s views on humans and the ocean from this contrast?

Analyze and Evaluate

5. What images in “She Walks in Beauty” best communicate to you the woman’s beauty?

6. (a) In the last stanza of “Apostrophe to the Ocean,” how does the speaker describe his boyhood relationship with the ocean? (b) What do the first and last stanzas reveal about the speaker?

7. Byron wrote Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage in Spenserian stanzas, a verse form named after Edmund Spenser. (a) What is the rhyme scheme of each stanza? (b) What effects does Byron achieve with the longer ninth line of each stanza?

Connect

8. Big Idea The Quest for Truth and Beauty In “She Walks in Beauty,” what is the main idea that Byron conveys about physical beauty?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Juxtaposition

By using juxtaposition, poets can create unexpected pairings and stunning contrasts.

1. In lines 17–18 of “She Walks in Beauty,” why does the speaker juxtapose phrases about the subject’s mind and heart?

2. What examples of juxtaposition in “Apostrophe to the Ocean” did you find most effective?

Reading Strategy Analyzing Figurative Language

When you analyze the figurative language in a poem, you can often detect the work’s tone.

1. In the last line of “Apostrophe to the Ocean,” what does the word mane suggest about the ocean?

2. How would you contrast the tone of “Apostrophe to the Ocean” with that of “She Walks in Beauty”?

Vocabulary Practice

Practice with Analogies Choose the word that best completes each analogy.

1. spurn : snub :: obscure :
   a. confuse  b. upset  c. display

2. arbiter : judge :: error :
   a. correction  b. disclaimer  c. blunder

3. mar : repair :: insult :
   a. offend  b. extol  c. denigrate

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
The Byronic Hero

“Mad—bad—and dangerous to know.”
—Lady Caroline Lamb, on Lord Byron

George Gordon, Lord Byron was only thirty-six when he died. His brief life was marked by bold adventure, lascivious scandal, and artistic accomplishment. His work and lifestyle profoundly influenced the culture of his time.

When Byron published the first two cantos of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage in 1812, he became famous overnight. The speaker of this long poem is an unconventional outsider, a moody, passionate, mysterious wanderer. In short, he is a Byronic hero—an antihero, alienated and rebellious. Byron himself embodied many of these traits, and the archetype that he created has become ingrained in literature and popular culture.

Characteristics of the Byronic Hero

Literary critics have defined the Byronic hero in various ways, but most agree on the archetype’s essential characteristics.

Rebellious The Byronic hero is a rebel, an individualist who questions and rejects society’s laws, conventions, and morality. As the model for this type of figure, Byron might have looked to Melmoth the Wanderer, the title character of a highly popular gothic novel, or Napoleon Bonaparte, the mysterious commoner who became emperor of France and whose genius was to transform it into a great European power.

Alienated The Byronic hero disdains society and social conventions. He rejects the assumption that the upper classes, the nobility, or the gentry—people of wealth, rank, and privilege—deserve advantages in life solely because of their ancestry. He is often an outcast or outlaw who supports the democratic ideals of a meritocracy.

Gloomy The Byronic hero is darkly handsome, melancholy, moody, and mysterious. He can never be happy, even when good things happen. He is difficult to portray because the reader must sympathize with him, yet he must be rather unpleasant. One of Byron’s characters, Manfred, carries an air of melancholy that grows out of a mysterious, “half-maddening sin.” Byronic heroes often have unexplained pasts that intensify their air of mystery and hint at great sorrow.

Bold The Byronic hero is arrogant and defiant. He trusts in his superior abilities. Byron’s heroes are effective, almost superhuman leaders who overcome obstacles and formidable, even supernatural, opponents. This confidence helps make the Byronic hero an endearing character to the reader.

Dangerous The Byronic hero is ultimately self-destructive. Unlike traditional heroes, the Byronic hero is unlikely to live happily ever after. That is his charm and his tragedy. Appealing as he may be to the various women who cross his path, he cannot be faithful to them. He is either incapable of such fidelity, or his wandering destiny keeps him from lasting attachments.
The Legacy of the Byronic Hero

Besides the dark, brooding characters that he created, Byron himself left a lasting impact on European culture. His style and persona mirrored the tastes of the day—his portrait in Albanian dress (see page 842) shows the era’s fascination with the exotic. The famed Russian poet Alexander Pushkin, an enthusiastic admirer of Byron’s, had himself painted in a similarly exotic costume. Eugène Delacroix, the French painter, became such a devotee of Byron’s that the topics of several of his large pictures are based on Byron’s poems. As if they were making a pilgrimage, artists followed in Byron’s footsteps, traveling throughout Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa and painting exotic street scenes and portraits of Arab chieftains and commoners.

Composers have immortalized several Byronic heroes as well. The Corsair Overture by Hector Berlioz became a popular ballet based on a Byronic hero, while Berlioz’s Harold in Italy grew out of Byron’s first major work, Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage. Inspired by the Byronic hero Manfred, Robert Schumann wrote the Manfred Overture, and Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky wrote the Manfred Symphony.

Still, the most significant effect of the Byronic hero has been in literature. Many nineteenth-century novels feature brooding, mysterious characters, such as Mr. Rochester in Charlotte Brontë’s Jane Eyre and Heathcliff in Emily Brontë’s Wuthering Heights. In modern times, the Byronic hero has been a regular feature of popular culture, appearing in Harlequin romances, comic books, and detective stories. The Byronic hero has also found his way to the big screen. In spaghetti westerns, Clint Eastwood famously portrayed nameless gunslingers and roving outlaws, characters who embodied the archetype of the Byronic hero. Perhaps pop culture’s most well-known example of the Byronic hero, though, is James Dean’s title role in Rebel Without a Cause.

Responding and Thinking Critically

1. What are the characteristics of a Byronic hero?
2. In what ways is the Byronic hero similar to and different from the traditional hero?
3. Why do you think the Byronic hero has endured in literature, movies, and art?
4. Choose a contemporary character from a comic book, movie, novel, story, or play and discuss how that character exemplifies the Byronic hero.

OBJECTIVES
- Connect literature to historical contexts, current events, and personal experience.
- Evaluate literature for its historical significance and universality.
- Understand the Byronic hero.
Shelley’s Poetry

**MEET PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY**

Many of our modern stereotypes of poets are derived from the life and character of Percy Shelly. He died young; he was politically radical and indifferent to the social norms of his age; he was passionate and often intemperate; and in his poems, he celebrated nature’s transcendence while embracing its inherent gloom.

“Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the World.”

—Percy Bysshe Shelley

**“Mad Shelley”** Born in 1792, Shelley was the son of a country squire and an heir to a wealthy estate. He was the oldest child in a family mostly of girls. He was adored by his sisters and indulged by his father, who was unsure how to manage his unruly son. At age ten, when he attended Syon House Academy, however, he was often ridiculed. When he switched to Eton at twelve, the boys there treated him worse, calling him “Mad Shelley” and playing practical jokes on him. Shelley retreated into fantasy, writing gothic poems and melodramatic romances. He also began to gravitate toward political literature that opposed hypocrisy and injustice.

At eighteen, Shelley entered University College, Oxford, where he met his lifelong friend and biographer Thomas Hogg. The two were expelled only six months later, however, after they circulated and refused to admit authorship of the pamphlet *The Necessity of Atheism*. Shelley then traveled to London, where he met, and eventually eloped with, Harriet Westbrook. Both Shelley’s family and Harriet’s were opposed to the marriage. As a result, the couple had to fend for themselves with little money. After moving from place to place, they went to Dublin, Ireland.

**Emerging Poet** By 1813 Shelley had returned to London, where he published his first major work, *Queen Mab*, a prophetic poem that condemns war, the monarchy, and the church. That same year Harriet gave birth to their first of two children. Shelley, though, was soon to fall in love with Mary Godwin, the daughter of his mentor, radical philosopher William Godwin, and author Mary Wollstonecraft. Just before his twenty-second birthday, Shelley left for Europe with Mary. They spent the summer of 1816 on the shores of Lake Geneva, in Switzerland, where Shelley met and befriended George Gordon, Lord Byron. After two years of traveling and writing, they returned to England. Soon after their return, Harriet drowned herself. Percy and Mary were then married.

In 1818, seeking a more healthful climate, relief from his creditors, and increased proximity to Lord Byron, Shelley moved his household to Italy. In Italy, Shelley wrote some of his best poetry and essays. Yet, tragedy loomed. He and Mary lost two of their own children, and Mary suffered a severe nervous breakdown. Then, just prior to his thirtieth birthday, Shelley drowned in a boating accident. “You were all brutally mistaken about Shelley,” wrote his grief-stricken friend Lord Byron. “[He was] the best and least selfish man I ever knew.”

Percy Bysshe Shelley was born in 1792 and died in 1822.

**LiteratureOnline** Author Search For more about Percy Bysshe Shelley, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Poem

In “Ozymandias,” the remains of an ancient Egyptian statue inspire a meditation on the impermanence of worldly power and the unrelenting passage of time. What do you feel is the most enduring kind of contribution a person can make?

Building Background

Ozymandias is the Greek name for Ramses II, the pharaoh who ruled Egypt during the thirteenth century B.C. Much of our knowledge of Ramses is derived from the large-scale monuments built to glorify his reign.

Shelley wrote “Ode to the West Wind” in 1819 in a forest beside the Arno River near Florence, Italy. “To a Skylark” celebrates the European skylark, a small bird thought to have one of the most beautiful songs of all the larks. What’s more, the skylark sings only in flight—often when it is too high to be seen.

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea The Quest for Truth and Beauty

As you read, consider how Shelley presents Romantic ideas about beauty, nature, and political radicalism.

Literary Element Irony

Irony takes several forms, all arising from a contrast between appearance and reality. In verbal irony, words that appear to mean one thing actually mean the opposite. In situational irony, the outcome of a situation is the opposite of what one expected. Dramatic irony exists when the audience or reader knows something that a character does not know. As you read “Ozymandias,” try to determine what purpose irony is serving in the poem.


Reading Strategy Drawing Conclusions About Meaning

A conclusion is a general statement about a number of specific examples. In a work of literature, these specific examples are the literary elements, rhetorical devices, main ideas, or themes presented by the author. By analyzing these specific examples, a reader can draw a valid conclusion about the meaning of the literary work.

Reading Tip: Taking Notes As you read, note specific examples in the poem that might aid you in drawing a conclusion about its meaning. Write down each example, describe it, and then label the line in which it appears. After recording your examples, draw a conclusion about the poem’s meaning.

Vocabulary

dirge (durj) n. a song sung in grief; a mournful hymn; p. 855 During the ceremony, a dirge was sung in honor of the missing soldiers.

cleave (klēv) v. to tear or rip; to split something apart; p. 856 It was quite easy for the axe to cleave the soft wood.

tumult (toō’ mal’t) n. disorder; an uproar; p. 857 After the show, there was a great tumult outside the theater.

satiety (sə tè’ ā tè) n. a feeling of weariness or even dislike of something caused by satisfying an appetite or desire for it in excess; p. 860 Diners suffered satiety after the enormous meal.

Vocabulary Tip: Synonyms Synonyms are words that have the same or similar meanings. Note that synonyms are always the same part of speech.

Interactive Literary Elements Handbook To review or learn more about the literary elements, go to www.glencoe.com.

OBJECTIVES

In studying these selections, you will focus on the following:

- analyzing literary periods
- analyzing irony
- drawing conclusions about meaning
- analyzing diction
- recognizing author’s purpose
Ozymandias

Percy Bysshe Shelley

I met a traveler from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert . . . Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage\(^1\) lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand\(^2\) that mocked\(^3\) them, and the heart\(^4\) that fed:
And on the pedestal these words appear:
“My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!”
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

1. A visage is a face.
2. Here, hand refers to the hand of the sculptor.
3. Mocked means “imitated” or “derided.”
4. Heart refers to the heart of Ozymandias.

Literary Element: Irony

What is ironic about the statue’s inscription? What does the irony suggest about the theme of the poem?
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond

1. What is your opinion of Ozymandias? Give reasons for your answer.

Recall and Interpret

2. (a) At the start of the poem, what does the traveler describe? (b) What specific details help you visualize what is being described?

3. (a) What words appear on the pedestal? (b) What do these words suggest about Ozymandias’s personality and character?

4. (a) How does the traveler describe the area surrounding the ruins? (b) What does this description suggest about the nature of power and fame?

Analyze and Evaluate

5. (a) In your opinion, for what purposes did Shelley write this poem? (b) How successful was he? Explain.

6. (a) Why do you think Shelley uses “a traveler from an antique land” as the storyteller within the poem? (b) What is the effect of having both a speaker and a storyteller? Explain.

Connect

7. **Big Idea** The Quest for Truth and Beauty
   How are Shelley’s political radicalism and Romantic ideals evident in this poem? Explain.

LITERARY ANALYSIS

**Literary Element** Irony

Irony can be used in many different ways in a literary work. It can be used to support the theme or main idea. It can add humor, increase suspense, or create a surprise. In “Ozymandias,” there are several different examples of irony that help advance the poem’s theme.

1. Find examples of irony in “Ozymandias.” What type of irony is illustrated by each example? Explain.

2. How does the irony support the theme of the poem?

**Literary Criticism**

Scholar Donald H. Reiman, summing up Shelley’s own philosophy, asserts that Shelley “dedicated his efforts to the destruction of tyranny in all its forms.” What evidence can you find of that dedication in “Ozymandias”? Share your thoughts with a partner. Be sure to refer to specific lines or ideas from the poem as you discuss Shelley’s philosophy.

READING AND VOCABULARY

**Reading Strategy** Drawing Conclusions About Meaning

Much of the evidence needed to draw accurate conclusions about a literary work is not explicitly stated. Therefore, it is often necessary for the reader to infer the meaning from various elements within the work.

1. What do you think is the meaning of the poem “Ozymandias”?

2. In support of your opinion, list three specific examples from the poem.

**Academic Vocabulary**

Here are two words from the vocabulary list on page R82.

utilize (u’liz) v. to put to practical use or service.

brief (brēf) adj. short in length; abrupt

Practice and Apply

1. How does Shelley utilize irony in the poem?

2. What is Shelley saying about the brief nature of human life?
Ode to the West Wind

Percy Bysshe Shelley

1

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn’s being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow and black and pale and hectic red,

Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O Thou,
Who chariost to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

4 hectic red: like the flushed cheeks that are symptomatic of tuberculosis and other wasting diseases
5 chariost: conveys in a chariot
6 azure: sky blue sister of the Spring: the south wind

Literary Element  Diction  If Shelley had used “sky blue” instead of “azure,” would line 9 sound more formal or more like everyday speech?
10 Her clarion° o’er the dreaming earth and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odors plain and hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh, hear!

2
15 Thou on whose stream, ’mid the steep sky’s commotion,
Loose clouds like Earth’s decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,°

Angels° of rain and lightning: there are spread
On the blue surface of thine aery surge,
20 Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Maenad,° even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith’s height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night
25 Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,°
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapors, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain and fire and hail will burst: oh, hear!

3
30 Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean where he lay
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,

Beside a pumice° isle in Baiae’s bay,°
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave’s intenser day,

35 All overgrown with azure moss and flowers
So sweet the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic’s level powers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literary Element</th>
<th>Diction</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diction</td>
<td>What tone does this metaphor help create?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dirge</td>
<td>dirj n. a song sung in grief; a mournful hymn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10 clarion: trumpet call
17 the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean: a metaphor for the way in which clouds are formed by a suspension of water (Ocean) in air (Heaven)
18 Angels: messengers
21 Maenad (mē’ nad): in Greek mythology, a female worshiper of Dionysus, the god of wine and wild revelry
25 sepulchre (se’ pal kar): a tomb
32 pumice (pa’ mas): a light, porous volcanic rock Baiae’s (bī’ ēz) bay: a small seaport in a volcanic area near Naples, Italy, which had been a tourist resort in ancient Roman times. Shelley had taken a boat trip there in 1818 and observed its underwater ruins.
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know

Thy voice and suddenly grow grey with fear
And tremble and despoil themselves: oh, hear!

39–42. The sea-blooms . . . despoil themselves: the vegetation at the bottom of the sea changes with the seasons
despoil: to undress; here, referring to a loss of vegetation

Diction Why might Shelley have chosen the word oozy?

Vocabulary cleave (klēv) v. to tear or rip; to split something apart
If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power and share
The impulse° of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O Uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood and could be
The comrade of thy wanderings over Heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
Scarce seemed a vision, I would ne’er have striven
As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!
A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee: tameless and swift and proud.

Make me thy lyre,° even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies
Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,
Sweet, though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!
Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!
And by the incantation° of this verse,
Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened Earth
The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

46 impulse: a sudden force that causes motion, such as a push

57 lyre (līr): a harp, in this case probably an Aeolian harp, a stringed instrument that produces musical sounds when the wind passes over its strings

65 incantation: a ritual recitation or chanting, usually of a magic charm or spell

Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tumult</td>
<td>(tōōt̬̊) n. disorder; an uproar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hail to thee, blithe° Spirit!
    Bird thou never wert,
    That from Heaven, or near it,
    Pourest thy full heart
5   In profuse° strains of unpremeditated° art.

Higher still and higher
    From the earth thou springest
    Like a cloud of fire;
    The blue deep thou wingest,
10  And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

Percy Bysshe Shelley
In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O’er which clouds are bright’ning,
Thou dost float and run—
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even°
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of Heaven,
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight,
Keen° as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,°
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see—we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and Heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:°

16 even: evening
21 Keen: sharp
22 silver sphere: the planet Venus, also called the morning star because it is visible just before or at sunrise
45 bower: a private room or bedroom

Big Idea  The Quest for Truth and Beauty  How does Shelley’s description of the skylark in this line mimic the Romantic quest for truth and beauty?
Like a glowworm golden
   In a dell° of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
   Its aerial hue
50  Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view!

Like a rose embowered
   In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
   Till the scent it gives
55  Makes faint with too much sweet those heavy-wingèd thieves:

Sound of vernal° showers
   On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
   All that ever was
60  Joyous and clear and fresh, thy music doth surpass:

Teach us, Sprite or Bird,
   What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
   Praise of love or wine
65  That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymeneal,°
   Or triumphal chant,
Matched with thine would be all
   But an empty vaunt,°
70  A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains°
   Of thy happy strain?°
What fields or waves or mountains?
   What shapes of sky or plain?
75  What love of thine own kind? What ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance°
   Languor° cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
   Never came near thee:
80  Thou lovest—but ne’er knew love’s sad satiety.
Waking or asleep,
   Thou of death must deem°
Things more true and deep
   Than we mortals dream,
85 Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
   And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
   With some pain is fraught;
90 Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
   Hate and pride and fear;
If we were things born
   Not to shed a tear,
95 I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
   Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
   That in books are found,
100 Thy skill to poet were, thou scorn̄er of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
   That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
   From my lips would flow
105 The world should listen then—as I am listening now.

Reading Strategy Recognizing Author’s Purpose In what ways do lines 101–104 suggest both Shelley’s Romanticism and his purpose for writing this poem?

82 deem: to think, believe, or judge
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. Which of these poems more effectively invokes the natural world? Explain.

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) Sections 1–3 of “Ode to the West Wind” describe how the wind affects three aspects of nature. What are those aspects? (b) What do these descriptions reveal about the speaker’s view of the West Wind?
3. (a) What does the speaker suggest in the final line of “Ode to the West Wind”? (b) What do you think the West Wind symbolizes, or represents for the speaker?
4. (a) In lines 1–30 of “To a Skylark,” what words or images help you imagine the skylark’s flight and song? (b) Describe the speaker’s attitude toward the skylark.

Analyze and Evaluate
5. (a) To what people or things does the speaker compare the skylark in lines 31–60? (b) What qualities of the skylark do these comparisons suggest?
6. (a) What effect does Shelley create with his use of apostrophe in “Ode to the West Wind”? (b) Do you think this technique makes the poem more powerful? Explain.
7. In “To a Skylark,” what effect does the rhyme scheme create?

Connect
8. Big Idea  The Quest for Truth and Beauty
   What ideas about truth and beauty do these poems convey?

YOU’RE THE CRITIC: Different Viewpoints

Are Shelley’s Ideas Juvenile?
Read the two excerpts of literary criticism below. T. S. Eliot was one of the most important twentieth-century poets and critics. J. B. Priestley was a popular twentieth-century British novelist, dramatist, and essayist. Eliot and Priestley disagree about the merits of the ideas Shelley presents in his poetry. As you read, try to determine your position on the issues they raise.

“Shelley’s views I positively dislike. . . . When the doctrine, theory, belief, or ‘view of life’ presented in a poem is one which the mind of the reader can accept as coherent, mature, and founded on the facts of experience, it interposes no obstacle to the reader’s enjoyment, whether it be one that he accept or deny, approve or deprecate. When it is one which the reader rejects as childish or feeble, it may, for a reader of well-developed mind, set up an almost complete check.”

—T. S. Eliot

“[W]hen he is in full flight . . . his poetry is marvelous in its innocence and loveliness . . . as if it belonged to—and is indeed celebrating—some future Golden Age . . . What any generous youth, preferably in rebellion against tyranny and injustice, imagines for a few minutes . . . goes soaring and glittering and singing through volume after volume of Shelley.”

—J. B. Priestley

Group Activity Discuss the following questions with classmates. Refer to the excerpts and cite evidence from Shelley’s poems for support.
1. (a) Why does Eliot argue that Shelley’s views prevent enjoyment of the poems? (b) How might Priestley respond to Eliot’s criticism?
2. With which critic do you agree more? Explain.
**Literary Element**  
**Diction**

The *diction* used by a poet is closely connected to the mood that is created in the poem. For example, writers who choose plain, unadorned, straightforward language may create an unromantic, matter-of-fact mood. Writers who use florid, dense language or a great deal of figurative or connotative language will create a far different tone in their writing. In poetry, diction creates the rhymes, rhythms, and other sound devices that can contribute to the mood.

1. (a) How would you describe the diction in “Ode to the West Wind” and “To a Skylark”? (b) In your opinion, what effect does the diction have on the mood of each poem?

2. In each poem, how does Shelley’s use of rhythm and rhyme affect the mood?

**Review: Rhyme Scheme**

As you learned on page 266, the *rhyme scheme* of a poem is the pattern that is formed in a stanza by the rhymes at the end of each line. “Ode to the West Wind” is written in the terza rima form. Shelley borrowed this poetic form from Dante and other Italian literary sources.

**Partner Activity** Meet with another classmate and explore the rhyme scheme of terza rima. The rhyme scheme is designated by assigning a different letter of the alphabet to each new rhyme. Make a note of any other patterns or poetic forms that you notice.

**Reading Strategy**  
**Recognizing Author’s Purpose**

Often the author’s purpose is directly related to the theme of a poem. Identifying the theme of a literary work can help you recognize the author’s purpose. To determine the theme, pay close attention to the main ideas, supporting details, rhetorical strategies, and any literary elements the writer uses.

1. What do you think Shelley’s purpose was for writing each of these poems?

2. What is the theme, or message about life, of each poem? How does the theme of each relate to Shelley’s purpose? Explain.

**Vocabulary Practice**

**Practice with Synonyms** Choose the synonym for each vocabulary word below.

1. dirge  
   a. hymn  
   b. funeral  
   c. barge

2. cleave  
   a. fall  
   b. split  
   c. join

3. tumult  
   a. peace  
   b. calm  
   c. disorder

4. satiety  
   a. hollowness  
   b. glut  
   c. emptiness

**Academic Vocabulary**

Here are two words from the vocabulary list on page R82.

*displace*  
(dis plās’) *v.* to replace; to take the place of something

*thereby*  
(thār bī’) *adv.* by the means of; in that way

**Practice and Apply**

1. In “Ode to the West Wind,” what does the speaker say displaces his “dead thoughts” in line 63?

2. If the speaker of “To a Skylark” learned “half the gladness” (line 101) of the lark, what would he gain thereby?
Writing About Literature

Evaluate Author’s Craft Not all readers have admired Shelley’s poetry. Some critics have found his work to be too sentimental. Do you agree or disagree? In a few paragraphs, support or challenge the notion that Shelley’s poems are too sentimental. Draw upon your knowledge of Romanticism as well as your own personal taste. Give examples from the poems to support your view.

Before you begin writing, be sure to determine the position you will take and to find evidence in support of that position. Use a chart like the one below to organize your main ideas and supporting evidence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduce the issue</th>
<th>State your opinion</th>
<th>Support your position</th>
<th>Draw your conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe the issue, and supply any background needed to help readers understand it.</td>
<td>Take your stand in a clear, direct thesis statement.</td>
<td>Present your evidence—facts, opinions, or both—responding to opposing viewpoints.</td>
<td>End by summarizing your ideas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After you complete your draft, meet with a peer reviewer to evaluate each other’s work and to suggest revisions. Then proofread and edit your draft for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Literature Groups

Each of Shelley’s poems examines someone’s desire or attempt to create something meaningful. In your group, review what Ozymandias wanted to build and what the speakers of “Ode to the West Wind” and “To a Skylark” want to create. Discuss what Shelley says about each of their desires, motivations, and attempts, and determine the poet’s attitude toward each. Then develop a statement about creativity that you think sums up the message in these poems. Share your ideas with other groups.

Shelley’s Language and Style

Using Exclamation Points In “Ozymandias,” “Ode to the West Wind,” and “To a Skylark,” Shelley uses exclamation points to show strong feeling, to indicate a forceful command, and to add variety to his poems. Consider how his use of exclamation points increases the intensity and the declarative force of the following lines from “Ode to the West Wind”:

Line 14: “Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh, hear!”
Line 36: “So sweet the sense faints picturing them!”
Line 54: “I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!”

Notice Shelley’s purposes for using exclamation points in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exclamation</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Line 14</td>
<td>command</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line 36</td>
<td>strong emotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line 54</td>
<td>strong emotion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity Create a chart of your own, listing more examples of exclamation points in these three poems. For each exclamation, determine the purpose it serves in the line in which it appears.

Revising Check

Exclamation Points The use of exclamation points in formal writing should be kept to a minimum. There are very few instances when this type of punctuation is needed. However, there are times when it can be effective. For example, exclamations can create a humorous effect, draw the reader’s attention to an idea introduced by a quotation, or strengthen the response to a counterargument. With a partner, go through your persuasive essay about Shelley’s sentimentality. Note places where an exclamation point might be useful and remove any unnecessary examples.
MEET JOHN KEATS

Mortality,” wrote John Keats, “weighs heavily on me like unwilling sleep.” Keats wrote these words at age twenty-one, soon after launching his poetic career. Within five years, he was dead. To say he made the most of his time would be an understatement. No other poet—not even Chaucer, Shakespeare, or Milton—progressed so far by the age of twenty-five.

“O for ten years, that I may overwhelm Myself in poesy; so I may do the deed That my own soul has to itself decreed.”
—John Keats, from “Sleep and Poetry"

Young Keats  Keats was affected by death at an early age. When he was eight, his father died after falling from a horse; when he was fourteen, his mother died of tuberculosis. He took no special interest in literature until he was fifteen. With the encouragement of his mentor, Charles Cowden Clarke, Keats immersed himself in reading.

No sooner had Keats awakened to literature than he was pulled out of school by his practical-minded guardian and apprenticed to the pharmacist-surgeon Thomas Hammond, with whom Keats studied medicine. Keats continued to read and study with Clarke, however, and at age twenty-one Keats abandoned medicine for poetry.

The Soul’s Decree  Up to that time, Keats had written few poems—and certainly none of artistic importance. Then, after spending an entire night with Clarke reading from the poet George Chapman’s lively translation of Homer, Keats produced his first major poem: “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer.” Leigh Hunt, a political radical, successful author, and friend of Keats's, published the poem and others by Keats in his journal, the Examiner. With Hunt’s help, Keats found a publisher for his first book when he was only twenty-one. It sold poorly and received mixed reviews.

In the summer of 1818, Keats embarked on a walking tour of the northern British Isles. After slogging for days in pouring rain, he came down with the first symptoms of tuberculosis and returned to London. There he found that his brother Tom was gravely ill with the disease. Keats became Tom’s devoted caregiver until Tom died that December. About the same time, Keats met and fell in love with Fanny Brawne. They became engaged, but their relationship was tormented by Keats’s illness, poverty, and strict devotion to his work.

1819 came to be known as Keats’s Great Year as a poet. Despite physical and emotional strain, Keats wrote the greatest works of his career: The Eve of St. Agnes, “La Belle Dame sans Merci,” the great odes, and Lamia, among others. Within five years after he had begun writing poetry, Keats was a master. Nonetheless, time was running out. By the fall, Keats’s tuberculosis made it impossible for him to sustain his creative momentum. In a desperate attempt to prolong his life, he sailed the next September for Italy. Just six months later, he died in Rome and was buried there. At his request, his marker bears no name—just this epitaph: “Here lies one whose name was writ in water.”

John Keats was born in 1795 and died in 1821.

Author Search  For more about John Keats, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Poems
Do you ever worry that life is too short for you to fulfill all your goals and aspirations? As you read, think about the following questions:

- How might an illness or family hardship prevent you from fulfilling your goals?
- How might a heightened awareness of your mortality help you fulfill your goals and aspirations?

Building Background
Keats’s letters reveal his evolving struggle with the problem of evil and suffering in the world and show his refusal to be comforted by religious absolutes or abstract philosophy. In a letter from 1817, Keats used the term “negative capability” to describe the necessity of the poet to be objective by restraining the urge to define and control his or her subject. Negative capability allowed one to exist within “uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact & reason.” In such instances, said Keats, “Beauty overcomes every other consideration.”

Reading Strategy Applying Background Knowledge
When you apply background knowledge, you use what you already know about an author to help you understand his or her writing. As you read the poems, think about the biographical and background information about Keats that you read earlier.

Reading Tip: Drawing Conclusions Use a graphic organizer like the one below to draw conclusions about Keats’s poems based on your background knowledge.

| Passage: “When I have fears that I may cease to be / Before my pen has gleaned my teeming brain” | Background: Keats contracted tuberculosis at the age of twenty-four and knew he didn’t have much longer to live. His father, mother, and brother died during his lifetime. |
| Conclusion: Despite his youth, it is understandable that Keats was obsessed with the subject of mortality. |

Vocabulary

- loitering (lō’tar·ing) adj. standing or lingering idly about a place; p. 868 The shop owner did not like people loitering around his entrance if they were not going to buy anything.
- glean (glen) v. to collect slowly and carefully; to gather crops left on a field after reaping; p. 869 Although he sometimes thought his coursework was irrelevant, Jared had gleaned more useful knowledge than he realized.
- teeming (tē’ming) adj. full; at the point of overflowing; p. 869 The teeming river was in danger of flooding the town.

Vocabulary Tip: Context Clues Context clues are the words and phrases surrounding an unfamiliar word. You can use these clues to figure out the meaning of the unfamiliar word.

Interactive Literary Elements Handbook To review or learn more about the literary elements, go to www.glencoe.com.

OBJECTIVES
In studying these selections, you will focus on the following:
- analyzing poetic forms
- applying background knowledge
La Belle Dame sans Merci

John Keats
O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms, 
Alone and palely loitering? 
The sedge has wither’d from the lake, 
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms, 
So haggard, and so woe-begone? 
The squirrel’s granary is full, 
And the harvest’s done.

I see a lily on thy brow, 
With anguish moist and fever dew, 
And on thy cheeks a fading rose 
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads, 
Full beautiful—a fairy’s child, 
Her hair was long, her foot was light, 
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head, 
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone; 
She look’d at me as she did love, 
And made sweet moan.

I set her on my pacing steed, 
And nothing else saw all day long, 
For sidelong would she bend and sing 
A fairy’s song.

She found me roots of relish sweet, 
And honey wild, and manna dew, 
And sure in language strange she said 
“I love thee true.”

She took me to her elfin grot, 
And there she wept and sigh’d full sore, 
And there I shut her wild wild eyes 
With kisses four.

And there she lulled me asleep, 
And there I dream’d—Ah! woe betide! 
The latest dream I ever dream’d 
On the cold hill side.

I saw pale kings and princes too, 
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all; 
They cried, “La Belle Dame sans Merci 
Hath thee in thrall!”

I saw their starved lips in the gloam, 
With horrid warning gaped wide, 
And I awoke, and found me here, 
On the cold hill’s side.

And this is why I sojourn here, 
Alone and palely loitering, 
Though the sedge is wither’d from the lake, 
And no birds sing.
When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has gleaned my teeming brain,
Before high-piled books, in charactery,
Hold like rich garners the full-ripened grain;

When I behold, upon the night's starred face,
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
And think that I may never live to trace
Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance;

And when I feel, fair creature of an hour,
That I shall never look upon thee more,
Never have relish in the fairy power
Of unreflecting love—then on the shore
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think
Till love and fame to nothingness do sink.

John Keats

1. Charactery means “characters” or “symbols,” in other words, letters of the alphabet.
2. Garners are storehouses for grain.

Reading Strategy: Applying Background Knowledge. What is the speaker afraid of losing here? How does your background knowledge help you interpret these lines?

Vocabulary:
- glean (glen) v. to collect slowly and carefully; to gather crops left on a field after reaping
- teeming (tēm′ing) adj. full; at the point of overflowing
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. (a) Which poem did you prefer? (b) What did this poem leave you thinking or wondering?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) In “La Belle Dame sans Merci,” what does the speaker ask the knight-at-arms in the first two stanzas? (b) How does the time of year reflect the knight’s physical and emotional state?
3. (a) Summarize the story the knight tells in reply. (b) What do the knight’s words reveal about him?
4. (a) Summarize the speaker’s main fears in “When I Have Fears . . .” (b) What do these fears reveal about the speaker’s values and goals?

Analyze and Evaluate
5. (a) How do you interpret the knight’s dream in “La Belle Dame sans Merci”? (b) In your opinion, why does the knight stay “on the cold hill’s side”?
6. (a) What happens to the speaker’s fears in “When I Have Fears . . .”? (b) What tone is established in the concluding couplet?

Connect
7. Big Idea The Quest for Truth and Beauty (a) How does “La Belle Dame sans Merci” exemplify the Romantic quest for beauty? (b) How does “When I Have Fears . . .” exemplify the Romantic quest for truth?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Form
The forms of “La Belle Dame sans Merci” and “When I Have Fears . . .” contribute to the meaning of each poem.
1. (a) How is the ballad form appropriate to the subject and theme of “La Belle Dame sans Merci”? (b) How do the first and last stanzas contribute to the poem?
2. (a) In “When I Have Fears . . .,” what is the focus of each quatrain? (b) How does the final couplet resolve the issues in the three quatrains?

Literary Criticism
Scholars have variously interpreted “La Belle Dame sans Merci” as a poem about (1) the enslavement of the poet by his muse, or source of inspiration, (2) Keats’s concern that his love for Fanny Brawne was lessening his poetic powers, and (3) the seductive power of beauty and literary fame. In a brief essay, explain your interpretation of the poem.

READING AND VOCABULARY

Reading Strategy Applying Background Knowledge
Use your background knowledge about Keats to answer the following questions.
1. How does the sonnet “When I Have Fears . . .” illustrate Keats’s principle of negative capability?
2. What aspect of Keats’s life is it possible to see in “La Belle Dame sans Merci”?

Vocabulary Practice
Practice with Context Clues Identify the context clue that best helps you determine the meaning of the underlined vocabulary word.
1. Mr. Thomas liked his workers to be busy; he never tolerated loitering if there was work to do.
   a. busy    b. tolerated
2. During autumn, the farmer gleaned corn from his fields.
   a. autumn    b. corn
3. When I began writing my essay, my brain was teeming with so many ideas.
   a. essay    b. many
Connecting to the Poem
How can you capture a moment in time? In Keats’s poem, young lovers painted on a vase are forever caught in a merry chase. As you read, think about the following questions:

- Have you ever admired a work of art in which a moment in time has been captured and suspended?
- Have you ever felt a sense of sadness and anticlimax after a pleasurable experience?

Building Background
The artistic tradition of painted pottery in ancient Greece can be traced back to the city of Corinth in the seventh century B.C. There, painters began to cover vases with black silhouetted shapes, often the forms of animals. As the style spread to Athens, it evolved to include narrative scenes based on Greek mythology. The appearance of an Athenian vase—black figures on a red clay background—became famous. In Keats’s day, archeological excavations in the Mediterranean region produced many examples of painted urns, creating interest throughout Europe in all things classical. “Ode on a Grecian Urn” may have been inspired by such an urn.

Setting Purposes for Reading
**Big Idea** The Quest for Truth and Beauty
As you read, notice how Keats finds the Romantic ideals of truth and beauty in the Grecian urn.

**Literary Element** Ode
An ode is a long, serious lyric poem that is elevated in tone and style. Some odes celebrate a person, quality, or object, while others are private meditations. Nearly all odes use apostrophe, or the poetic figure of speech in which an idea, inanimate object, or absent person is directly addressed. As you read, note how Keats addresses the Grecian urn and the figures painted on it.


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**Reading Strategy** Evaluating Rhetorical Devices
Rhetorical devices are techniques writers use to manipulate language for effect or to evoke an emotional response in the reader. Rhetorical devices include questions, exclamations, and repetition. A rhetorical question is one to which no answer is expected because the answer is obvious. Exclamations and repetition call attention to particular ideas. Parallelism is the repetition of words, phrases, or sentences that have the same grammatical form. As you read, notice how these rhetorical devices enhance the poem.

**Reading Tip: Taking Notes** Use a chart similar to the one below to record the rhetorical devices in the poem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Rhetorical Device</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Line 9 “What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?”</td>
<td>rhetorical question</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vocabulary**
- **deities** (dē′ tēz) n. gods or goddesses; divinities; p. 872 The streets downtown are named after ancient Greek and Roman deities.
- **desolate** (des′ o lat) adj. destitute of inhabitants; deserted; p. 873 After the hurricane, John returned to find his hometown desolate.

**Vocabulary Tip: Word Origins** Dictionary entries often include the etymology of a word, which is its history and origin.

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**OBJECTIVES**
In studying this selection, you will focus on the following:
- analyzing an ode
- evaluating rhetorical devices
Ode on a Grecian Urn

John Keats

1

Thou still unravished bride of quietness,
Thou foster child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan° historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about° thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?°
What men or gods are these? What maidens loath?°
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels?° What wild ecstasy?

2

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual° ear, but, more endear’d,
Pipe to the spirit ditties° of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
Forever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

---

Literary Element  Ode  To whom does “Thou” refer? What figure of speech common to odes is Keats using in the first two lines of the poem?

Reading Strategy  Evaluating Rhetorical Devices  What rhetorical devices does Keats use in these lines? What is the purpose of these devices?

Vocabulary  deities  (dé’ a téz) n. gods or goddesses; divinities

---

3  Sylvan means “of the woods.”

5  Haunts about means “surrounds.”

7  Tempe is a beautiful valley. Arcady (Arcadia) is a mountainous region. Both are in Greece and have traditionally been considered ideal rustic landscapes.

8  Loath means “reluctant.”

10  Timbrels are ancient percussion instruments similar to tambourines.

13  Sensual means “physical or bodily.”

14  Ditties are short, simple songs.

---

Women carrying water, 6th century B.C.  Black figure Attic hydria from Vulci.
3
Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
Forever piping songs forever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
Forever warm and still to be enjoyed,
Forever panting, and forever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloyed,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

4
Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands dressed?
What little town by river or seashore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets forevermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e’er return.

5
O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say’st,
“Beauty is truth, truth beauty”—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

Big Idea The Quest for Truth and Beauty How does Keats’s equation of truth and beauty represent a principle of Romantic idealism?

Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>desolate</td>
<td>(des’ə lit) adj. destitute of inhabitants; deserted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

29 Cloyed means “oversatisfied; burdened by excess.”

36 A citadel is a fortress.

41 Attic refers to the simple, graceful style characteristic of Attica, or Athens, Greece. Brede refers to an interwoven or braided design.

42 Here, overwrought means “with the surface decorated.”

45 Pastoral refers to an artwork depicting the life of a shepherd or simple rural life in general.
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) What metaphors does the speaker use to describe the urn in lines 1–3? (b) What do the metaphors reveal about the speaker’s view of the urn?
3. Why might an “unheard” melody be sweeter than a “heard melody” (see lines 11–12)?
4. (a) What people and things does the speaker address in the second and third stanzas? (b) Why does the speaker envy them? Cite evidence from the poem.

Analyze and Evaluate
5. An oxymoron is a figure of speech in which contradictory ideas are combined for effect, as in the phrase “wise fool.” Explain the oxymoron in the final stanza. What is its effect?
6. (a) Why do you think Keats found comfort and solace by contemplating the figures painted on the urn? (b) What can you infer about Keats’s views concerning the purpose of art?

Connect
7. Big Idea The Quest for Truth and Beauty How have later artists and thinkers reacted to the Romantic idealism of Keats’s identification of truth with beauty?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Ode
A Horatian ode, named for the Roman poet Horace, has a regular pattern of stanzas and a rhyme scheme. “Ode on a Grecian Urn” is considered a Horatian ode. Keats believed that the poet should subordinate his own identity in order to enable the ode’s subject to emerge fully. He called this quality “negative capability.”

1. (a) What are the structure and rhyme scheme of “Ode on a Grecian Urn”? (b) How does Keats create variations on the form?
2. How does Keats achieve negative capability in “Ode on a Grecian Urn”?

Reading Strategy Evaluating Rhetorical Devices
In poetry, rhetorical devices, such as rhetorical questions, parallelism, and exclamation, can enhance the lyric quality and the sound of a poem, especially when it is read aloud.

1. Explain the use of parallelism in stanza 3 and describe its effect.
2. What is the effect of the rhetorical questions in stanza 4?

Vocabulary Practice

Practice with Word Origins Match each vocabulary word with its corresponding Latin root word. Use a dictionary for assistance.

1. deities a. sōlus, meaning “alone”
2. desolate b. deus, meaning “a god”

LiteratureOnline Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Reading Selections

The cyclical nature of the seasons inspires the four works compared here—an English Romantic poem, a series of Japanese haiku, a poem by a writer of the Harlem Renaissance, and a memoir by a contemporary American writer. Together, they show an awareness of how a few small details in nature can lead to broader reflections on life.

John Keats

To Autumn .......................................................... poem .................. 876

Vitality in the third season

Matsuo Bashō

Haiku for Four Seasons ......................................... haiku .................. 880

Seasons—each a self-contained world

Countee Cullen

To John Keats, Poet, At Springtime ....................... poem .................. 882

Thawing of winter; explosion of spring

Annie Dillard

Untying the Knot from Pilgrim at Tinker Creek ................ reflective narrative .......... 884

Locating oneself in the circle of life

COMPARING THE Big Idea The Quest for Truth and Beauty

Poets from around the world have conveyed a sense of rapture and ecstasy in exploring natural beauty. They have found transcendent power in small details, often drawing connections between humanity and the weather, the animal kingdom, and physical landscapes.

COMPARING Nature Imagery

 Scenes from nature can focus on the energetic and colorful, or the bleak and unforgiving. Images, or word pictures, that describe concrete sensory details in nature also function as springboards to larger meanings in these selections by Keats, Bashō, Cullen, and Dillard.

COMPARING Literary Traditions

Nature has been the theme and inspiration for works throughout history. It provides a dramatic backdrop to evaluate the place of humans in the world. As civilization becomes more technological and urban, writers continue to explore the way nature coexists and contrasts with these developments.
Connecting to the Poem
Do certain seasons inspire certain moods? For example, consider the way you might feel during the first few days of spring after a long, cold winter. In “To Autumn,” Keats describes the ripe fullness of autumn. As you read, think about the following questions:

- Which moods and feelings do you commonly associate with autumn?
- How might a season indicate both growth and decay?

Building Background
Keats wrote “To Autumn” in September 1819 and described it in a letter to J. H. Reynolds a few days later: “How beautiful the season is now. . . . I never lik’d stubble fields so much as now—Aye better than the chilly green of the spring. Somehow a stubble plain looks warm—in the same way that some pictures look warm—this struck me so much in my Sunday’s walk that I composed upon it.”

Setting Purposes for Reading

**Big Idea**  The Quest for Truth and Beauty
Note how this poem reflects the Romantic focus on the beauty of the natural world.

**Literary Element**  Imagery

Imagery refers to the word pictures that writers create to evoke an emotional response in the reader. In creating effective images, writers use sensory details, or descriptions that appeal to one or more of the five senses. As you read “To Autumn,” note the vivid images Keats presents and the sensory details that appeal to the reader’s sense of sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell.


**Reading Strategy**  Analyzing Sound Devices

Sound devices are the techniques used to appeal to the ear—that is, to enhance rhythm, to emphasize particular sounds, or to add to the musical quality of the writing. When you analyze sound devices, you examine specific sound devices independently in order to better understand a poem as a whole. Assonance is a sound device in which the same or similar vowel sounds are repeated. Consonance occurs when consonant sounds are repeated, typically at the ends of non-rhyming words. Alliteration is the repetition of consonant sounds at the beginnings of words. Onomatopoeia is the use of a word or phrase to imitate or suggest the sound of the word it describes.

**Reading Tip: Determining Patterns**  In order to determine the pattern of a poem’s sound effects, note individual examples of different effects as you read. Organize your findings in a chart like the one below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound Device</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assonance</td>
<td>line 7: “the hazel shells”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consonance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliteration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onomatopoeia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vocabulary**

**conspiring** (kən spîr’ ing) adj. planning or plotting secretly; p. 877 Maria saw her brothers whispering behind the shed, and she knew they were conspiring against her.

**furrow** (fur’ ō) n. a long, narrow trench in the ground made by a plow; a rut, groove, or wrinkle; p. 878 When my father is in a serious mood, a deep furrow lines his forehead.

**Vocabulary Tip: Synonyms** Synonyms are words that have the same or similar meanings.
Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o’er-brimmed their clammy cells.

Vocabulary

Conspiring (kən spîr’ ing) adj. planning or plotting secretly
2

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twinèd flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.

3

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music, too—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

1. A granary is a storehouse for grain.
2. Winnowing is a process of separating wheat grain from chaff, or husks, by blowing away the chaff, which is lighter.
3. A hook is a curved blade used to cut grain.
4. A swath is a row or area of grain to be cut.
5. A gleaner is one who gathers grain left in the field by the reapers.
7. Sallows are low-growing willow trees.
8. Bourn means “region.”
9. A croft is a small piece of enclosed land, often near a house.
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. Which images remain in your mind after reading the poem?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) In the first stanza, what have autumn and the sun conspired to do? (b) List examples of personification in the second stanza. (c) In what ways do these images differ from those in the first stanza?
3. (a) Cite three instances in which the spirit of autumn is personified as a farm girl. (b) What view of autumn does this personification suggest?
4. (a) According to the speaker, who sings the songs of autumn, and when do they sing? (b) Why might this be an appropriate time for autumn’s music?

Analyze and Evaluate
5. (a) What are some of the descriptive details that help create a sense of abundance? (b) Why might Keats have used these images?
6. (a) What examples of imagery do you find in “To Autumn”? (b) What do these details contribute to your appreciation of the poem?

Connect
7. Big Idea The Quest for Truth and Beauty
Keats wrote that “if poetry comes not as naturally as the leaves to a tree, it had better not come at all.” In other words, human creations such as poetry should be modeled on the effortless beauty of nature. In your opinion, does “To Autumn” fulfill this Romantic ideal? Explain.

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Imagery
The imagery, or word pictures, a writer creates includes sensory details and figurative language that evoke an emotional response.

1. What types of figurative language does Keats use in “To Autumn”? Give examples from the text.
2. How does Keats’s use of imagery match your expectations of a description of autumn? How is it different?

Reading Strategy Analyzing Sound Devices
Sound devices—such as alliteration, assonance, consonance, and onomatopoeia—are the techniques in poetry used to appeal to the ear. Refer to the chart you made on page 876, and then answer the following questions.

1. In the second stanza, which sound devices reinforce the image of autumn (as a farm girl) sleeping? Explain.
2. Line 24 responds to the question in line 23. How might the sound devices in line 24 contribute to the tone and meaning of the response?

Vocabulary Practice
Practice with Synonyms Choose the synonym that best replaces the underlined vocabulary word in each sentence below.

1. She saw the girls conspiring against her.
   a. wondering b. plotting c. attempting
2. The tractor wheel left a deep furrow in the rain-soaked cornfield.
   a. wrinkle b. hole c. trench

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
Building Background

Matsuo Bashō is considered the master of the haiku—a Japanese poetic form that traditionally draws a comparison between two images and consists of seventeen syllables spread out over three lines—five syllables in the first, seven in the second, and five in the third.

Born in 1644 in the Iga province of Japan, Bashō originally led the life of a samurai. But when his master died suddenly in 1666, Bashō changed paths, leaving his samurai training to travel and pursue writing, eventually moving to the capital city Edo, now Tokyo.

In 1684 Bashō set out on foot and, with the barest essentials, hiked across Japan, recording his experiences in nature in journals. Bashō suggested, “Learn about a pine tree from a pine tree, and a bamboo plant from a bamboo plant.” In 1694 Bashō died in Osaka while on a journey.

Haiku for Four Seasons

Matsuo Bashō
Translated by Makoto Ueda

Spring

Ran no ka ya
Chō no tsubasa ni
Takimono su

The fragrant orchid:
Into a butterfly’s wings
It breathes the incense.

Summer

Hi no michi ya
Aoi katamuku
Satsuki-ame

Toward the sun’s path
Hollyhock flowers turning
In the rains of summer.
Autumn

Kareeda ni
Karasu no tomarikeri
Aki no kure

On a bare branch
A crow is perched—
Autumn evening.

Winter

Fuyu no hi ya
Bajō ni kōru
Kagebōshi

The winter sun—
Frozen on the horse,
My shadow.

Quickwrite

Study the images in one of Bashō’s haiku. Then write a paragraph comparing or contrasting these images about the season. How did the poem make you rethink one of the seasons? Discuss the insights you gained from the comparison.
Building Background
Born in 1903, Countee Cullen embodied the ideals of the Harlem Renaissance while writing poetry that connected with English Romanticism. In 1925 Cullen published Color, his first volume of poems, which included “To John Keats, Poet, At Springtime.” Cullen wrote the bulk of his most powerful work during the 1920s. In his early writings, Cullen strove to be considered a great poet rather than a black poet. Writers have argued on both sides of this question—some believe that literary criticism should not consider race, while others believe a writer’s work should not be removed from his or her racial identity. Cullen sought to prove that blacks could write as well as whites in the same poetic forms. He died in 1946.

Author Search For more about Countee Cullen, go to www.glencoe.com.

To John Keats, Poet, At Springtime

I cannot hold my peace, John Keats;
There never was a spring like this;
It is an echo, that repeats
My last year’s song and next year’s bliss.

I know, in spite of all men say
Of Beauty, you have felt her most.
Yea, even in your grave her way
Is laid. Poor, troubled, lyric ghost,
Spring never was so fair and dear
As Beauty makes her seem this year.

As Beauty makes her seem this year.

I cannot hold my peace, John Keats;
I am as helpless in the toil
Of Spring as any lamb that bleats\(^1\)
To feel the solid earth recoil

Beneath his puny legs. Spring beats
Her tocsin\(^2\) call to those who love her,
And lo! the dogwood petals cover
Her breast with drifts of snow, and sleek
White gulls fly screaming to her, and hover

About her shoulders, and kiss her cheek,
While white and purple lilacs muster
A strength that bears them to a cluster
Of color and odor; for her sake
All things that slept are now awake.

\(^1\) Bleats refers to the cries of a lamb.
\(^2\) Tocsin means “a bell that sounds an alarm.”
25 And you and I, shall we lie still,
John Keats, while Beauty summons us?
Somehow I feel your sensitive will
Is pulsing up some tremulous Sap road of a maple tree, whose leaves
30 Grow music as they grow, since your Wild voice is in them, a harp that grieves For life that opens death's dark door. Though dust, your fingers still can push The Vision Splendid to a birth,
35 Though now they work as grass in the hush Of the night on the broad sweet page of the earth.

“John Keats is dead,” they say, but I Who hear your full insistent cry In bud and blossom, leaf and tree,
40 Know John Keats still writes poetry. And while my head is earthward bowed To read new life sprung from your shroud, Folks seeing me must think it strange That merely spring should so derange My mind. They do not know that you, Johns Keats, keep revel with me, too.

3. Tremulous means “trembling or shaking.”
4. Revel means “unrestrained joy or celebration.”

Discussion Starter

Countee Cullen expresses his enthusiasm for both the writings of Keats and spring in this poem. How well does he express his feelings? How do the poem’s form and language add to or detract from Cullen’s message? Discuss these questions with a group of classmates.
Yesterday I set out to catch the new season, and instead I found an old snakeskin. I was in the sunny February woods by the quarry; the snake-skin was lying in a heap of leaves right next to an aquarium someone had thrown away. I don’t know why that someone hauled the aquarium deep into the woods to get rid of it; it had only one broken glass side. The snake found it handy, I imagine; snakes like to rub against something rigid to help them out of their skins, and the broken aquarium looked like the nearest likely object. Together the snakeskin and the aquarium made an interesting scene on the forest floor. It looked like an exhibit at a trial—circumstantial evidence—of a wild scene, as though a snake had burst through the broken side of the aquarium, burst through his ugly old skin, and disappeared, perhaps straight up in the air, in a rush of freedom and beauty.

The snakeskin had unkeeled scales, so it belonged to a nonpoisonous snake. It was roughly five feet long by the yardstick, but I’m not sure

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1. Unkeeled scales means that the snake does not have a ridge down the center of its scales. Unkeeled scales appear shiny and smooth.
because it was very wrinkled and dry, and every time I tried to stretch it flat it broke. I ended up with seven or eight pieces of it all over the kitchen table in a fine film of forest dust.

The point I want to make about the snakeskin is that, when I found it, it was whole and tied in a knot. Now there have been stories told, even by reputable scientists, of snakes that have deliberately tied themselves in a knot to prevent larger snakes from trying to swallow them—but I couldn’t imagine any way that throwing itself into a half hitch would help a snake trying to escape its skin. Still, ever cautious, I figured that one of the neighborhood boys could possibly have tied it in a knot in the fall, for some whimsical boyish reason, and left it there, where it dried and gathered dust. So I carried the skin along thoughtlessly as I walked, snagging it sure enough on a low branch and ripping it in two for the first of many times. I saw that thick ice still lay on the quarry pond and that the skunk cabbage was already out in the clearings, and then I came home and looked at the skin and its knot.

The knot had no beginning. Idly I turned it around in my hand, searching for a place to untie; I came to with a start when I realized I must have turned the thing around fully ten times. Intently, then, I traced the knot’s lump around with a finger; it was continuous. I couldn’t untie it any more than I could untie a doughnut; it was a loop without beginning or end. These snakes are magic, I thought for a second, and then of course I reasoned what must have happened. The skin had been pulled inside-out like a peeled sock for several inches; then an inch or so of the inside-out part—a piece whose length was coincidentally equal to the diameter of the skin—had somehow been turned right-side out again, making a thick lump whose edges were lost in wrinkles, looking exactly like a knot.

So. I have been thinking about the change of seasons. I don’t want to miss spring this year.

I want to distinguish the last winter frost from the out-of-season one, the frost of spring. I want to be there on the spot the moment the grass turns green. I always miss this radical revolution; I see it the next day from a window, the yard so suddenly green and lush I could envy Nebuchadnezzar\(^2\) down on all fours eating grass. This year I want to stick a net into time and say “now,” as men plant flags on the ice and snow and say, “here.” But it occurred to me that I could no more catch spring by the tip of the tail than I could untie the apparent knot in the snakeskin; there are no edges to grasp. Both are continuous loops.

I wonder how long it would take you to notice the regular recurrence of the seasons if you were the first man on earth. What would it be like to live in open-ended time broken only by days and nights? You could say, “it’s cold again; it was cold before,” but you couldn’t make the key connection and say, “it was cold this time last year,” because the notion of “year” is precisely the one you lack. Assuming that you hadn’t yet noticed any orderly progression of heavenly bodies, how long would you have to live on earth before you could feel with any assurance that any one particular long period of cold would, in fact, end? “While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease”: God makes this guarantee very early in Genesis to a people whose fears on this point had perhaps not been completely allayed.

It must have been fantastically important, at the real beginnings of human culture, to conserve and relay this vital seasonal information, so that the people could anticipate dry or cold seasons,

William Blake’s famous illustration on page 766).
and not huddle on some November rock hoping pathetically that spring was just around the corner. We still very much stress the simple fact of four seasons to schoolchildren; even the most modern of modern new teachers, who don’t seem to care if their charges can read or write or name two products of Peru, will still muster some seasonal chitchat and set the kids to making paper pumpkins, or tulips, for the walls. “The people,” wrote Van Gogh in a letter, “are very sensitive to the changing seasons.” That we are “very sensitive to the changing seasons” is, incidentally, one of the few good reasons to shun travel. If I stay at home I preserve the illusion that what is happening on Tinker Creek is the very newest thing, that I’m at the very vanguard and cutting edge of each new season. I don’t want the same season twice in a row; I don’t want to know I’m getting last week’s weather, used weather, weather broadcast up and down the coast, old-hat weather. But there’s always unseasonable weather. What we think of the weather and behavior of life on the planet at any given season is really all a matter of statistical probabilities; at any given point, anything might happen. There is a bit of every season in each season. Green plants—deciduous green leaves—grow everywhere, all winter long, and small shoots come up pale and new in every season. Leaves die on the tree in May, turn brown, and fall into the creek. The calendar, the weather, and the behavior of wild creatures have the slimest of connections. Everything overlaps smoothly for only a few weeks each season, and then it all tangles up again. The temperature, of course, lags far behind the calendar seasons, since the earth absorbs and releases heat slowly, like a leviathan breathing. Migrating birds head south in what appears to be dire panic, leaving mild weather and fields full of insects and seeds; they reappear as if in all eagerness in January, and poke about morosely in the snow. Several years ago our October woods would have made a dismal colored photograph for a sadist’s calendar: a killing frost came before the leaves had even begun to brown; they drooped from every tree like crepe, blackened and limp. It’s all a chancy, jumbled affair at best, as things seem to be below the stars.

Time is the continuous loop, the snakeskin with scales endlessly overlapping without beginning or end, or time is an ascending spiral if you will, like a child’s toy Slinky. Of course we have no idea which arc on the loop is our time, let alone where the loop itself is, so to speak, or down whose lofty flight of stairs the Slinky so uncannily walks.

The power we seek, too, seems to be a continuous loop. I have always been sympathetic with the early notion of a divine power that exists in a particular place, or that travels about over the face of the earth as a man might wander—and when he is “there” he is surely not here. You can shake the hand of a man you meet in the woods; but the spirit seems to roll along like the mythical hoop snake with its tail in its mouth. There are no hands to shake or edges to untie. It rolls along the mountain ridges like a fireball, shooting off a spray of sparks at random, and will not be trapped, slowed, grasped, fetched, peeled, or aimed. “As for the wheels,” it was cried unto them in my hearing, O wheel.” This is the hoop of flame that shoots the rapids in the creek or spins across the dizzy meadows; this is the arsonist of the sunny woods: catch it if you can.

Dillard uses an image of a curled-up piece of snakeskin as a springboard to discuss the continuity of life. Essay writers often identify an engaging image or anecdote from their experience and then develop it into a broader reflection on life. How does Dillard develop the metaphor of the snakeskin? Write a paragraph on this topic, citing details from the text.

Quickwrite

Dillard uses an image of a curled-up piece of snakeskin as a springboard to discuss the continuity of life. Essay writers often identify an engaging image or anecdote from their experience and then develop it into a broader reflection on life. How does Dillard develop the metaphor of the snakeskin? Write a paragraph on this topic, citing details from the text.

3. Leviathan means something “very large, as a whale,” and is an allusion to a monstrous sea creature mentioned in the Bible.

4. A sadist derives gratification from being cruel to others.

5. “As for the wheels . . .” is a passage from the Bible, Ezekiel 10:13, addressing a vision of God on Earth.
Wrap-Up: Comparing Literature Across Time and Place

- **To Autumn** by John Keats
- **Haiku for Four Seasons** by Matsuo Bashō
- **To John Keats, Poet, At Springtime** by Countee Cullen
- **Untying the Knot** from *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* by Annie Dillard


**COMPARING THE** Big Idea The Quest for Truth and Beauty

**Group Activity** Keats, Bashō, Cullen, and Dillard express sentiments about nature that range from breathless enthusiasm to quiet, sober meditation. Read the quotations below. In a group, discuss the following questions.

1. How do you think each of these writers would define truth and beauty? Which writer’s outlook is most compelling to you? Explain.

2. What do each of these writers search for through their writings on nature?

---

- "Hedge crickets sing; and now with treble soft
  The redbreast whistles from a garden croft,"
  —Keats, “To Autumn"

- "On a bare branch
  A crow is perched"
  —Bashō, “Haiku for Four Seasons”

- "... whose leaves
  Grow music as they grow, since your
  Wild voice is in them, a harp that grieves"
  —Cullen, “To John Keats, Poet, At Springtime"

- "Everything overlaps smoothly for only a few weeks each season, and then it all tangles up again."
  —Dillard, “Untying the Knot” from *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*

**COMPARING** Nature Imagery

**Writing** Write a brief essay in which you compare the imagery in two or more of the selections. Base your comparison on the sensory qualities of the images and how they contribute to the work’s message about life. Refer to evidence from the selections you chose in your response.

**COMPARING** Literary Traditions

**Speaking and Listening** Research a tradition of nature writing in nonfiction or poetry. You may choose journals and reflective narratives, or poetry. Research the forces that influenced the writing and present your findings to the class in an oral presentation.

**OBJECTIVES**
- Compare works about nature from different genres and cultures.
- Analyze imagery and sensory details.
- Research literary traditions.
Reflecting on a Poetic Theme

“I never saw daffodils so beautiful. They grew among the mossy stones about and about them; some rested their heads upon these stones as on a pillow for weariness.”

—Dorothy Wordsworth, from The Journals of Dorothy Wordsworth

Connecting to Literature  In her journal, Dorothy Wordsworth reflects on an enjoyable walk that she took through a field of daffodils and offers an insight about her observations. In a reflective essay, a writer describes an experience or observation to better understand what it means personally and what it might teach others. A reflective essay may also describe a personal response to literature and explore the meaning of a reading experience. To write an effective essay, you will need to learn the goals of reflective writing and the strategies to achieve those goals.

Rubric: Features of Reflective Essays About Poetic Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
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</table>
| To share your personal reflections about the meaning of a poem | ✓ Draw comparisons between specific personal experiences and universal literary themes  
✓ Quote lines from the poem as evidence to support your ideas |
| To explain your observations and ideas in a logical order | ✓ Clearly organize your ideas from beginning to end |
| To present a vivid description | ✓ Use concrete details to describe personal responses and observations and to make an experience come alive |
| To connect with an audience | ✓ Use first-person point of view  
✓ Use a thoughtful, conversational tone to develop a personal writing voice |
Assignment

Write a reflective essay in which you interpret the meaning of a poem, explore its personal significance, and connect that significance to a broader theme or belief. As you move through the stages of the writing process, keep your audience and purpose in mind.

Audience: teacher, classmates, and peers familiar with the chosen poem
Purpose: to explain an interpretation of a poem and support it with personal experience

Analyzing a Professional Model

In the essay below, poet Robin Becker reflects on the significance of her experience as an adolescent reading William Wordsworth’s “Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey.” As you read the passage, pay close attention to the comments in the margin. They point out features you might want to include in your own reflective essay.

From “Wordsworth” by Robin Becker

Wordworth is full of loss. So are adolescents. At thirteen, before I’d thought much about poetry, Miss Bickley asked us to feel the undertow of longing in the first-person voice. Reading aloud, she instructed us to listen to the unrhymed iambic pentameter, the word and phrasal repetitions, and the syntax of “Tintern Abbey.” (Lousy in math and science, I thought, I can do this.) I learned to listen for “Once again” and “How oft,” the moody signals and backward-looking words that triggered descriptions of Wordsworth’s countryside and of the “lonely rooms” in which he sought consolation. With his semicolons and dashes, he built winding sentences, and though I couldn’t always follow the grammar (“Oh yeah?” was penciled in a margin of my old Norton anthology), I liked the sound, the poem’s steady iambic music. What I understood of “voice” I gathered from trying to leap—with Wordsworth—from concrete (“A lover of the meadows and the woods”) to abstract (“soul / Of all my moral being”) and to follow the poem’s argument, which I felt, at the time, was a parable for how to grow up.

As a city kid, I knew only two rural landscapes: my beloved Camp Greylock in the Adirondacks and Wordsworth’s rustic woodland. Onto his
sensuous descriptions of childhood (“when like a roe / I bounded o’er the mountains”) I transposed my own tomboyhood: perishable, vagabond. I identified with the poet’s fall from “thoughtless youth,” and I remember liking “the still, sad music of humanity” for its mournfulness. Did we discuss the sibilance? The assonance? I don’t recall. But certain phrases—“the din / Of towns and cities” and “greetings where no kindness is” and “The dreary intercourse of daily life”—pleased me enormously, for they evoked my own scorn for the hypocrisy and tedium of grown-ups and gave me an ally in literature.

Another surprise: The poem turned out to have a love interest! Chaste but not austere, Wordsworth’s affection for his sister, Dorothy, provided the second half of the poem with memorable metaphors:

. . . when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies . . .

Wordsworth’s great fortune in having an intimate friend (“For thou art with me here upon the banks / Of this fair river; thou, my dearest Friend, / My dear, dear Friend”) with whom to share his thoughts did not escape me; I, too, longed for a companionable pal. . . . At thirteen, I was consoled.

**Reading-Writing Connection** Think about the writing techniques that you just encountered and try them out in the reflective essay you write.
Prewriting

Explore Ideas  Your essay is more likely to turn out well if you choose a poem that is interesting and meaningful. Think about which poem from this unit made the deepest impression on you. Consider connections you might draw between the poem and your own experience.

Reflect on Poetic Themes  Writing a reflective essay about a poetic theme involves more than describing the experience of reading a poem. As you reflect on a poem, consider the following questions:

• What Does the Poem Mean? Become familiar with the poem’s main ideas and images. Picture what the poem is saying.

• Why Is It Significant to Me? Think about your personal responses to the poem. How does understanding the poem help you better understand yourself, your beliefs, and the human experience in general?

• How Does the Poem Connect to a Broader Theme? What insight about human experience did you learn from your reflection?

Gather Details  Note the images, phrases, and lines in the poem that express the theme or message you will focus on. Examine the poetic elements that also contribute to the theme, such as meter, rhyme, and other sound devices. Then explore how the poem relates to your own observations and experience and use vivid details to develop your description.

Make a Plan  As you plan your essay, keep in mind that you will need to connect the poem to personal observation and experience. You may find it helpful to explore the poem’s meaning chronologically, moving through the poem from beginning to end. Here is a chart one student used to outline a reflective essay about the poem “Ozymandias” by Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Introduction  Capture reader’s attention—reflect on vanity of self-importance of the rich and famous (and among some students at Tyler High); show how “Ozymandias” reminds us that we cannot escape the same fate (death), no matter how important we are in life.

Paragraph 2: Discuss first eight lines of the poem (Ozymandias’s vanity and arrogance); connect this to observations on current society.

Paragraph 3: Focus on Ozymandias’s obscurity now and relate this to current society.

Paragraph 4: Discuss last six lines of poem (Ozymandias’s initial pride and the erosion of his significance); relate the irony of Ozymandias’s situation to that of modern celebrities.

Conclusion  Sum up main points; explain the broader insight using the sand image from the poem to reinforce the idea.

Test Prep

When you take an essay test, allow some time in the beginning to outline your ideas and figure out the best organization.
Drafting

**From Plan to Paper** When you begin your first draft, use your outline as a guide to help you balance your specific reflections on the poem with more general conclusions and insights. As you write, however, be open to new observations about the poem and your personal responses.

**Analyzing a Workshop Model**

Here is a final draft of a reflective essay. Read the essay and answer the questions in the margin. Use the answers to these questions to guide you as you write.

**The Eroding Sands of Time**

Some people matter and some people don’t—or so many would have us believe. Nothing is easier to overestimate than the importance of one’s own existence on Earth. In our culture today, that sense of importance is frequently based on how much wealth or fame someone has: celebrities, in particular, often act superior to others. They also tend to confuse their current status with some kind of lasting fame or immortality. I’ve also seen this exaggerated sense of importance reflected in the attitudes and actions of high-profile politicians and even some students at Tyler High. These people think they are much more influential than they really are in the long run.

In “Ozymandias,” Percy Bysshe Shelley shows how even one of the greatest pharaohs of ancient Egypt comes to ruin and nothingness. The poem’s theme is still relevant today; whether one is a pharaoh or a peasant, a president or a prom queen, we cannot escape the same fate.

Shelley devotes the first eight lines of his sonnet to describing the statue of Ozymandias, which is actually the Greek name for the Egyptian pharaoh Ramses II. The speaker in the poem, who is observing the statue, can still see the passions, power, and majesty of this great ruler reflected in the ruins of the statue. The speaker notices especially the “frown” and “sneer of cold command” carved on the ruler’s face. This sneer represents the attitude of Ramses when he was at the height of his power. He, like the wealthy person in a new sport-utility vehicle or the successful politician of the moment, was riding high—building, creating, transforming, and feeling invincible.

Yet the statue is broken in two parts. Only the legs of stone still stand upright, and, “Near them, on the sand, / Half sunk, a shattered visage lies . . .”

First-Person Point of View

How does using first-person point of view affect the tone of this essay?

Literary Interpretation

How does interpreting the poetic theme here make the introduction more effective?

Organization

Why might the writer choose to focus on the beginning of the poem in the first body paragraph?

Supporting Evidence

How do the quotations from the poem strengthen the writer’s personal insights?
Shelley’s choppy description broken by commas emphasizes the image of Ozymandias’s shattered face. Despite his former power, Ozymandias now lies in pieces. His commanding sneer and “wrinkled lip” have crumbled, and the once imposing statue threatens to turn back to dust. However mighty he was at one time, Ramses’ power and influence were only temporary. He is no longer important, just as today’s celebrities will soon be forgotten.

The last six lines of the poem emphasize the irony of the situation. Beginning with “My name is Ozymandias,” an inscription on the pedestal warns everyone about the greatness of this man. I can’t help thinking this is a bit like the proclamations of famous people who walk into a restaurant and tell their name to the host, as if that gesture alone should allow them to skip the line formed by everyone else who is waiting for a table. The inscription goes on to tell others to look on the mighty works of Ozymandias and “despair,” as though his works will forever dwarf those of anyone else. Similarly, rappers today often boast of their success in their songs, only to fall out of the spotlight a short time later. This poem makes it clear that the inscription and Ozymandias’s fate are two different things. Thousands of years later, Ozymandias is just a broken statue. His success was a fleeting thing. The “lone and level sands”—or death and oblivion—are the fate that lies ahead for everyone. Time reduces, erodes, and obscures all human achievements, whether they are the accomplishments of a political figure, a celebrity, or an ordinary person.

If Ozymandias could have known the fate of his statue, would he have boasted? Perhaps everyone should look at Ozymandias and rethink his or her own importance. Worldly fame and importance do not last; the sands of time run out for all.
Revising

Peer Review  E-mail the draft of your essay to one or more peer reviewers. They can provide comments in a separate document and offer suggestions for revisions.

Use the rubric below to evaluate and strengthen your essay.

Rubric: Writing a Reflective Essay

- Do you present your personal reflections about the meaning of a poem?
- Do you connect with your audience through first-person point of view and a conversational tone?
- Do you present your observations in a logical order?
- Do you use descriptive details and cite lines from the poem?
- Do you draw comparisons between personal experience and broader themes?

Focus Lesson

Varying Sentence Structure

Vary the length and structure of your sentences to make your writing more lively and rhythmical. Simple sentences are sometimes short and sound direct and straightforward. Compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences are often longer and may alter the pace of your writing. An interrogative sentence can heighten the dramatic effect. See the sentence draft and revision from the student workshop model below.

Draft: The sentences of the paragraph have very similar structures and lengths and create a dull, predictable rhythm.

If Ozymandias had known his statue’s fate, he would not have boasted. If people looked at Ozymandias, they would rethink their own importance.

Revision: Vary sentence length and structure to enliven the writing.

If Ozymandias could have known the fate of his statue, would he have boasted? Perhaps everyone should look at Ozymandias and rethink his or her own importance.

1: Use an interrogative sentence for variation and heightened dramatic effect.
2: Use a simple sentence to sound straightforward.

For more information on using the Traits of Strong Writing, see pages R33–R34 of the Writing Handbook.
Focus Lesson

Using Active and Passive Voice

A sentence in the active voice shows the subject acting. The action of the sentence flows forward: The traveler describes the ruins of an ancient statue. A sentence in the passive voice “hides” the actor in the sentence and makes the action weak and indirect: The ruins of an ancient statue were described. To make passive-voice sentences clearer and more dramatic, rewrite them in the active voice as you edit. You will need to rearrange the word order so that the noun in the subject position is the actor in the sentence.

Original: The passive voice diminishes the impact of the sentence. All human achievements are reduced, eroded, and obscured by time.

Improved: Use the active voice to make the sentence more direct and powerful.

Time reduces, erodes, and obscures all human achievements.

Presenting

Final Details Is your essay inviting to read? Make handwritten papers neat and legible. If you are working on a computer, follow your teacher’s guidelines for formatting your final draft. For example, check that you are using the appropriate type size and spacing. Remember, appearance counts.
Delivering a Reflective Presentation on a Poetic Theme

Connecting to Literature  “The idea of talking about poetry is not to get to the bottom of it, but to clarify it, to make it more a part of what you and other people know and will remember. . . . What a poem makes you feel helps you make sense of it by making the poem part of your own experience. . . . Go slow, be simple and clear, and say how it seems to you and what exact words and lines in the poem your ideas and feelings come from.”

—Kenneth Koch and Kate Farrell, from Talking about Poetry

Poets Kenneth Koch and Kate Farrell offer some sound strategies for sharing your reflections on a poem in an oral presentation. When you reflect on a poem or other literary work, you think about what the poem means to you and explore how the literature has shaped your thoughts and beliefs. As you deliver a reflective presentation on a poetic theme, you tell these ideas to others—a live audience—in order to explain what that poem has taught you and what it might teach others.

Assignment  Plan and deliver a reflective presentation based on a poetic theme from Unit Four.

Ozymandias
I met a traveler from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs
of stone
Stand in the desert . . . Near them, on
the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies,
whose frown
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold
command,
Planning Your Presentation

When you reflected on a poetic theme in your Writing Workshop essay, you were addressing an audience of readers. However, when you deliver your reflective presentation, you will be addressing an audience of listeners. Adapt your essay into a presentation by following these guidelines:

- Read your reflective essay aloud to a peer. Discuss which ideas you should keep or delete. What thoughts and feelings will your audience find most memorable?
- Do not rely on your written essay to deliver your reflective presentation. Instead, jot down key words and ideas on index cards. Refer to your notes as a speaking prompt.
- Include quotations and visual images in your presentation to illustrate key ideas and to make your topic lively and interesting. If you are reflecting on a short poem such as “Ozymandias” by Percy Bysshe Shelley, you might write the entire poem on an index card and read it aloud at the start of your presentation.

Presenting Visual Media

Visual media, such as photographs, a collage, drawings, or a computer slide show, can explain ideas to your audience and make your presentation more interesting. Check to be sure that your visual media enhance your presentation by practicing with your props beforehand. Use the checklist below as a guide:

- Have I remembered not to block the visuals while presenting?
- Do I use color in my presentation?
- Do I face the audience and not the visuals?
- Have I used at least twenty-four point font for any text on slides and overheads?
- Do I vary the tone of my visual media, incorporating both humor and serious images when appropriate?

Techniques for Delivering a Reflective Presentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal Techniques</th>
<th>Nonverbal Techniques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✔ Pace Speak at a moderate speed but vary the rate and use pauses to convey your meaning.</td>
<td>✔ Eye Contact Make frequent eye contact with the audience; if you are nervous, you may look slightly above the crowd instead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Pronunciation Speak clearly, pronouncing all the words precisely.</td>
<td>✔ Facial Expressions Vary your facial expressions to reflect the tone and mood of what you are saying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Tone Speak in an animated voice to entertain your listeners and keep everyone interested.</td>
<td>✔ Visual Aids Use photographs, collages, drawings, or computer presentations to enhance your speech.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Active Listening Tips

Invite your audience to follow these guidelines for effective listening:

- Prepare to listen.
- Note the topic and recall what you already know about it.
- Pay attention to the structure of the message.
- Take notes.
- Ask questions, aloud or silently.
- Listen for feelings as well as thoughts.

Rehearsing

One way to become a better speaker is to watch others present. Borrow techniques that seem effective and adapt them for your own presentation. If possible, browse video and audio clips of famous speeches or literary presentations.

OBJECTIVES

- Deliver a reflective presentation to an audience.
- Speak effectively to explain and justify ideas to peers.
For Independent Reading

Despite some initial criticism, the novel became widely accepted during the Romantic period, inspiring a dramatic increase in fiction writing in the 1800s. Though authors used a wide range of styles, including gothic, historical, and Romantic, the basis of the novel was reality. In fact, Sir Walter Scott in 1824 defined the novel as “a fictitious narrative . . . accommodated to the ordinary train of human events.”

Frankenstein
by Mary Shelley (1818)

In his attempt to create a human being, Victor Frankenstein assembles body parts from corpses and ultimately gives life to a monster. This epistolary novel (or novel of letters) about the experiments of Dr. Frankenstein combines romance and science fiction to create one of the most famous gothic novels of the time. Frankenstein, however, transcends the gothic fascination with the supernatural to explore the nature of evil and the possible consequences of mechanization in the new industrial age. Mary Shelley, the wife of the Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, conceived the idea for the story after reading ghost stories and experiencing a terrifying nightmare.

Emma
by Jane Austen (1815)

In her time, Jane Austen was nearly alone in writing the novel of manners, a realistic, usually satiric novel that examines the behavior and outlook of a particular social class. Emma is generally considered her most accomplished work, masterfully focusing on village life. The main character, Emma Woodhouse, amuses herself by making matches between her friends. With many humorous twists, this novel of manners charts Emma’s journey toward greater self-awareness and, ultimately, love.
“Scott’s main achievement was to get people to realize that history was not just a list of political and religious dates denoting events that seemed to have happened of their own accord; instead he showed how history was the product of human decisions, human drama. Scott knew that his historical novels were nothing but educated guesses at what those human choices and human dramas really involved, but he persuaded us that the properly educated guess was the lesser lie than the flat denial of the human element.”

—Nathan Uglow

Ivanhoe
by Sir Walter Scott (1819)

Sir Walter Scott’s novels were immensely popular during his lifetime. After completing a series of Scottish historical novels, he turned his focus to England in Ivanhoe, his tale of a Saxon knight who returns home from the Crusades to marry his love, Rowena. A true product of the Romantic age, Scott incorporated his fascination with the marvelous and uncommon into his work. Because of his emphasis on history, Scott is often regarded as the inventor of the historical novel. His work later influenced Charles Dickens and James Fenimore Cooper.

Sense and Sensibility
by Jane Austen

This classic novel tells the story of the Dashwood sisters, Elinor and Marianne, who face romantic adventures and misfortunes and try to protect each other as only sisters can.

Pride and Prejudice
by Jane Austen

Austen’s novel tells the story of Elizabeth Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy and the stubborn pride and foolish prejudice that threaten to keep them apart.
Carefully read the following passage. Use context clues to help you define any words with which you are unfamiliar. Pay close attention to the author's purpose and her use of figurative language and argument. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, answer the questions.

—from A Vindication of the Rights of Woman by Mary Wollstonecraft

I once knew a weak woman of fashion, who was more than commonly proud of her delicacy and sensibility. She thought a distinguishing taste and puny appetite the height of all human perfection, and acted accordingly. I have seen this weak sophisticated being neglect all the duties of life, yet recline with self-complacency on a sofa, and boast of her want of appetite as a proof of delicacy that extended to, or, perhaps, arose from, her exquisite sensibility; for it is difficult to render intelligible such ridiculous jargon . . . .

Women are everywhere in this deplorable state; for, in order to preserve their innocence, as ignorance is courteously termed, truth is hidden from them, and they are made to assume an artificial character before their faculties have acquired any strength. Taught from their infancy that beauty is woman’s scepter, the mind shapes itself to the body, and roaming round its gilt cage, only seeks to adore its prison. Men have various employments and pursuits which engage their attention, and give a character to the opening mind; but women, confined to one, and having their thoughts constantly directed to the most insignificant part of themselves, seldom extend their views beyond the triumph of the hour . . . .

This argument branches into various ramifications. Birth, riches, and every extrinsic advantage that exalt a man above his fellows, without any mental exertion, sink him in reality below them. In proportion to his weakness, he is played upon by designing men, till the bloated monster has lost all traces of humanity . . . . Educated in slavish dependence, and enervated by luxury and sloth, where shall we find men who will stand forth to assert the rights of man, or claim the privilege of moral beings, who should have but one road to excellence? Slavery to monarchs and ministers, which the world will be long in freeing itself from, and whose deadly grasp stops the progress of the human mind, is not yet abolished.

Let not men then in the pride of power, use the same arguments that tyrannic kings and venal ministers have used, and fallaciously assert that woman ought to be subjected because she has always been so . . . .

If women be educated for dependence, that is, to act according to the will of another fallible being, and submit, right or wrong, to power, where are we to stop? Are they to be considered as vicegerents allowed to reign over a small domain, and answerable for their conduct to a higher tribunal, liable to error?
It will not be difficult to prove that such delegates will act like men subjected by fear, and make their children and servants endure their tyrannical oppression. As they submit without reason, they will, having no fixed rules to square their conduct by, be kind, or cruel, just as the whim of the moment directs; and we ought not to wonder if sometimes, galled by their heavy yoke, they take a malignant pleasure in resting it on weaker shoulders. . . .

For man and woman, truth, if I understand the meaning of the word, must be the same; yet the fanciful female character, so prettily drawn by poets and novelists, demanding the sacrifice of truth and sincerity, virtue becomes a relative idea, having no other foundation than utility, and of that utility men pretend arbitrarily to judge, shaping it to their own convenience.

1. From the context, what do you conclude that the word want in line 4 means?
   A. need
   B. lack
   C. plan
   D. desire

2. Which of the following best describes the tone of the phrase as ignorance is courteously termed, in lines 7–8?
   F. sad
   G. sympathetic
   H. ironic
   J. bitter

3. Which type of figurative language is Wollstonecraft using in the phrase beauty is woman’s scepter in lines 9–10?
   A. simile
   B. personification
   C. metaphor
   D. metaphysical conceit

4. What does Wollstonecraft claim “seeks to adore its prison” in lines 10–11?
   F. the ignorant woman’s mind
   G. a beautiful woman’s scepter
   H. a gilt cage
   J. an artificial character

5. According to Wollstonecraft in lines 12–14, what is the effect of women’s having only one employment?
   A. They direct their thoughts to insignificant things.
   B. They open their minds and develop character.
   C. They develop insignificant character traits.
   D. They seldom extend their views past the present.

6. According to Wollstonecraft, what sinks a man below his fellows?
   F. advantage without mental exertion
   G. riches and every advantage
   H. the ramifications of argument
   J. weakness

7. From the context, what do you conclude that the word enervated, in line 18, means?
   A. strengthened
   B. frightened
   C. excited
   D. weakened

8. To whom does the word delegates, in line 30, refer?
   F. husbands
   G. women
   H. kings
   J. tyrants
9. Which of the following is the main idea of the paragraph that begins on line 30?
   A. Men and women are naturally tyrannical.
   B. Tyranny is unavoidable in the household.
   C. Women are not capable of tyrannical behavior.
   D. The effects of tyranny are never isolated.

10. From the context, what do you conclude that the word *drawn*, in line 36, means?
    F. created
    G. closed
    H. drained
    J. confused

11. On the basis of this passage, with which of the following statements do you think Wollstonecraft would be most likely to agree?
    A. Equality between the sexes is impossible.
    B. Truth is based on utility.
    C. Arbitrary power cannot be justified.
    D. Innocence is the most desirable condition.

12. On the basis of this passage, what do you think the overall tone of this essay is?
    F. ironic
    G. authoritative
    H. humorous
    J. sarcastic

13. From your reading of this selection, what do you think the author’s main purpose was?
    A. to persuade
    B. to instruct
    C. to inform
    D. to entertain

14. What is the main idea of this passage?
    F. Men and women must be treated differently.
    G. There is no such thing as truth.
    H. Inequality and tyranny are needless evils.
    J. Women are more adept than men.
Vocabulary Skills: Sentence Completion

For each item in the Vocabulary Skills section, choose the word or words that best complete the sentence.

1. During the Romantic period, writers chose to ______ the _____ mind embraced by the Enlightenment in favor of the imagination and intuition.
   A. relinquish . . . dismal
   B. spurn . . . rational
   C. cleave . . . acute
   D. repose . . . congenial

2. During the 1700s, England’s _____ over the Americas came to an end.
   F. dirge
   G. faculty
   H. penance
   J. dominion

3. Many of the Romantic writers at first embraced the political and cultural _____ and revolution of their day.
   A. tumult
   B. satiety
   C. teeming
   D. foresight

4. Romantic poets, including Keats and Shelley, believed in the _____ but transcendent power of the natural world.
   F. hypocritical
   G. bleak
   H. conspiring
   J. transient

5. William Blake’s unconventional poetics, behavior, and religious beliefs confounded many of his _____.
   A. arbiters
   B. faculties
   C. furrows
   D. acquaintances

6. The radicalism of many of the Romantics ______ anger and indignation among _____ traditional thinkers and critics.
   F. incited . . . emphatically
   G. imparted . . . pomp
   H. loitered . . . deities
   J. relinquished . . . desolate

7. Many historians think that the American and French revolutions were the _____ outcome of royal mismanagement.
   A. uncouth
   B. inevitable
   C. illustrious
   D. kindred

8. The Romantics believed that the imagination was the most judicial and accurate _____ of the world.
   F. piety
   G. dirge
   H. arbiter
   J. indignation

9. There was _____ discontentment among the poor in response to the conditions of the Industrial Revolution.
   A. genial
   B. illustrious
   C. sordid
   D. acute

10. Mary Shelley’s most famous fiction presents a disturbing and _____ view of humanity.
    F. bleak
    G. congenial
    H. transient
    J. kindred
How can the world be made up of contradictions? Good and evil, light and dark, and
tragedy and comedy are all at odds, and yet exist as parts of a greater whole! These contradictions
are what William Blake was wrestling with as he wrote “The Tyger.” This poem depicts the
violence and power of a Tyger, and the awe the speaker feels for it. Enthralled by the Tyger’s force,
the poem is propelled by an electric and rhythmic cadence. The poet also intended the piece as a
contrast and complement to the delightful and innocent Lamb, from his Songs of Innocence. The
contrast of these elements—innocence and experience, as embodied by these animals—is a
compelling symbol for the world in which we live.

In the first stanza, a question is posed by the speaker. This question, the backbone of the
poem’s theme, animates the whole purpose of both innocence and experience: “What immortal
hand or eye / Could frame thy fearful symmetry?” Here Blake is asking, “What could produce
such a frightening thing?” He is also asking, “How can the Tyger’s nature, which contradicts that of
the Lamb’s, exist?” This is the “fearful symmetry” to which Blake is referring. In fact, symmetry
is employed throughout the Songs of Innocence and Experience with complex echoes and
counterargument. The interaction between the worlds of innocence and experience evokes many
thoughts. It prompts exploration. It prompts the kinds of questions that only I ask when I see
violence, or unhappiness, or when I consider natural disasters or calamities caused by human
beings. I wonder how these things can exist in a world with so much potential for good.
1. A. NO CHANGE
   B. Good and evil, light and dark, and tragedy and comedy are all at odds, and yet exist as parts of a greater whole!
   C. Good and evil, light and dark, and tragedy and comedy are all at odds and yet exist as parts of a greater whole.
   D. Good and evil; light and dark; tragedy and comedy; are all at odds, and yet exist as parts of a greater whole.

2. F. NO CHANGE
   G. Enthralled by the Tyger's force; the poem is propelled by an electric, rhythmic cadence.
   H. Enthralled by the Tyger's force. The poem is propelled by an electric and rhythmic cadence.
   J. Enthralled by the Tyger's force, Blake made the poem seem propelled by an electric and rhythmic cadence.

3. A. NO CHANGE
   B. delightful and innocent Lamb from his Songs of Innocence.
   C. delightful, innocent Lamb, from Songs of Innocence.
   D. “delightful” and “innocent” Lamb—from his Songs of Innocence.

4. F. NO CHANGE
   G. innocence and experience as embodied by these animals. Is a compelling symbol for the world in which we live.
   H. innocence and experience as embodied by these animals—is a compelling symbol for the world in which we live.
   J. innocence and experience, as embodied by these animals—is a compelling symbol for the world in which we live.

5. A. NO CHANGE
   B. A question is posed in the first stanza.
   C. In the first stanza, the speaker poses a question.
   D. In the first stanza: a question is posed.

6. F. NO CHANGE
   G. animated the whole purpose of both innocence and experience:
   H. animates a purpose of innocence and experience:
   J. animates the whole purpose of both “innocence” and “experience.”

7. A. NO CHANGE
   B. Nevertheless, Blake is asking,
   C. Actually here Blake is asking.
   D. Here, actually, Blake is asking;

8. F. NO CHANGE
   G. In fact, with complex echoes and counterargument, symmetry is employed throughout the Songs of Innocence and Experience
   H. In fact, symmetry is employed throughout the Songs of Innocence and Experience
   J. symmetry is employed throughout the Songs of Innocence and Experience with complex echoes and counterargument.

9. A. NO CHANGE
   B. Only it prompts the kinds of questions that I ask when I see violence
   C. It prompts the kinds of questions that I ask only when I see violence
   D. It prompts the questions that only I ask when I see violence

10. Which of the following would be the most logical topic for paragraph 3?
    F. Blake's poetic influences
    G. discussion of stanzas after the first stanza
    H. examination of the relationship between “The Tyger” and “The Lamb”
    J. examination of symbolism in “The Lamb”

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**Essay**

Which poem from this unit affected you most? Write a reflective essay in which you discuss how the poem changed you, how it relates to your personal experience, and what the universal themes in the poem are. As you write, keep in mind that your essay will be checked for ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions, and presentation.