

Dirait-on

Poem by Rainier Maria Rilke

Music by Morten Lauridsen



Introduction

Your German-rooted hometown of Malsberg is preparing for its annual spring fair. You and your team have been elected by the mayor of the city to be the designers for part of an exhibit in honor of the 75th anniversary of poet Rainier Maria Rilke's death. Rilke is generally considered the German language's greatest 20th century poet. However, he also wrote over 400 poems in French, including those used in Morten Lauridsen's song cycle, *Les Chansons des Roses*.

THE TASK

Your mission is to incorporate artwork, dialogue, and/or music into the display based on one of his object poems. After choosing a poem, select one of the following options for your exhibit:

- A. Find a piece of artwork that depicts the object in the poem. Write a 1-2 page description on the meaning of the poem and how the artwork symbolizes the words.
- B. Write a fictional narrative about the meaning of the poem. The work should have a setting, plot, and main characters. Written narratives should be minimum of 4 pages long with a short explanation on the connection to Rilke's poem.

- C. Compose a piece of music depicting the object of the poem within the melody or rhythmic composition. The piece may either be voice with accompaniment or a minimum of two instruments. Length for the piece is a minimum of sixteen measures. Include a short explanation of your choice for instrumentation or compositional technique. You may not use a poem used by Lauridsen in his *Les Chansons des Roses*.

Each group will deliver an oral presentation to the class to explain their poem and chosen task.

RESOURCES

Rilke Biography

<http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/rmilke.htm>

The Rainer Maria Rilke Archive

<http://www.geocities.com/Paris/LeftBank/4027/>

Rilke Audio Discussion of Poems

<http://www.uvm.edu/~sgutman/Rilke.htm>

Rilke Quotes

http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/r/rainer_maria_rilke.html

Art Gallery - Worldwide

<http://www.gallery-worldwide.com/>

Incredible Art Department (Princeton)

<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/links/clipart.html>

Garden Photographs

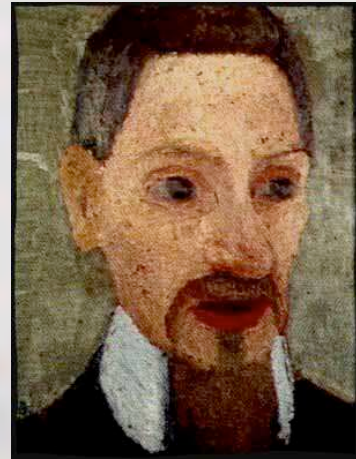
<http://www.rose-roses.com/catalog/rosepictures.html>

How to Write a Narrative Essay

<http://www.bookrags.com/articles/7.html>

Printable Staff Paper

<http://www.blanksheetmusic.net/>



The Process

1. Read biography of Rilke and list of major works or poetry. Select a poem based on personal interest. Websites for his biography and works are found in the Resource section.
2. Choose one of the three task options: A, B, or C.

Follow instructions for each task:

A.

- Determine the style or type of art that the poem evokes in your own mind. It may be watercolor, abstract, photography, impressionistic, portrait, or others. Websites are available to view artwork online, or you may select a piece from a book or museum (if an image is available).
- Confer with teacher over appropriateness of selected piece.
- Include for the exhibit a paragraph about Rilke, a copy of the poem, a paragraph explaining the meaning of the poem, and a paragraph explaining your choice of artwork.
- The written document should be 1-2 pages in length.

B.

- Read the article on how to write a narrative. The link can be found in the Resources section.
- Choose a plot, setting, and characters for the story based on meaning of the poem. Confer with teacher for appropriateness.
- Attach to the narrative a paragraph about Rilke, a copy of the poem, and a paragraph explaining the meaning of the poem and choice of plot.
- Include a Title Page.
- Narrative should be minimum of 4 pages in length.

C.

- Pick instrumentation and timbre for composition. Compose a melodic line first (or rhythmic line if using percussion).
- Confer with teacher over appropriateness.
- Free staff paper is available to download if needed. See link under resources.
- Include for the exhibit a paragraph about Rilke, a copy of the poem, a paragraph explaining the meaning of the poem, and a paragraph explaining your choice of music.

EVALUATION

	10	8	6
Content (20 pts)	Includes all paragraph requirements including poem, poet, and meaning	One requirement is missing from the explanation	More than one requirement is missing.
Appropriateness (10 pts)	Task chosen fits the poem and depicts object being described	Part of the task is not related to the poem.	Task is inappropriate for poem and does not relate to meaning or object
Oral Presentation (10 pts)	All members of group present.	One member did not present.	More than one member did not present.
Conventions (10 pts)	There are no spelling or grammatical errors	There are 1-2 spelling or grammatical errors	There are 3 or more spelling or grammatical errors

Total: 40 pts

CONCLUSION

Congratulations! Because of your hardwork and thoughtful consideration, the display for R.M. Rilke is complete. All in attendance at the fair can enjoy and appreciate the impact a person of our heritage has in the world of literature and fine arts.

Rilke was a man of many words and works. He was most known for depicting images of objects and visual art through his poetry. Throughout time individuals have used his poems in movies, song lyrics, and as inspiration for other forms of art.

Poetry can be expressed in many ways through many different forms of media. The feeling and meaning of a poem can vary greatly from person to person.

