

Name _____

Period _____

Teacher _____

Date _____

Lesson 1: "Letter One," by Rainer Maria Rilke

Literary Terms:

1. Central Idea-

2. Structure-

3. Rilke's Letters to a Young Poet are under the genre of nonfiction or informational. How are informational texts different from literary texts? List at least two ways.

Guided Question: What is the central idea in Rilke's letter in the first paragraphs?

4. This letter by Rilke is in response to a prior letter from a young poet. How does Rilke's use of the word "confidence" help reveal the contents and purpose of the young poet's letter to Rilke?
5. What does Rilke mean when he says, "Nothing touches a work of art so little as words of criticism"?
6. How does Rilke further develop his views on criticism when he states: "[Words of criticism] always result in more or less fortunate misunderstandings"?
7. Use the context clues to help you determine definition of *transitory*. For example, if the word *endures* means "continues to exist; lasts" how does that help you understand what transitory means?

8. Quick Write (30 points)

Prompt: Write a well-developed claim explaining how Rilke introduces and develop a central idea in the first paragraph of “Letter One.” (7 - 10 sentences)

Guidelines

- Use the wording from the prompt to make your claim (RACES)
- Include the title, author, genre (TAG)
- Identify the central idea
- Cite textual evidence

Lesson 2: “Letter One,” by Rainer Maria Rilke

Literary Terms:

1. Figurative Language-

2. Simile-

3. Metaphor-

4. Imagery-

Guided Question: How does Rilke employ figurative language to develop his central idea?

1. What do you notice about the structure of the sentences that begin, “You ask whether your verses are any good. You ask me. You have asked others before this...? What effect does Rilke create through these structural choices?
2. What does Rilke beg the young poet to give up on?
3. When Rilke says, “There is only one thing you should do,” how does the word “*only*” help reveal the tone of Rilke’s message?
4. What does Rilke mean when he advises the young poet to “go into yourself”?

5. What metaphor does Rilke use to compare the “reason that commands you to write”? For example, what *image* does he describe to compare this desire to write to?

6. What question is Rilke imploring the Young Poet to ask of himself?

7. According Rilke, what answer must an artist give?

8. Reread the lines that begin “*This most of all: ask yourself in the most silent hour of your night: must I write?*” Explain the **literal** and **metaphorical** meaning of these lines.

Lesson 3: “Letter One,” by Rainer Maria Rilke

Literary Term:

1. Theme-

Guided Question: What is the central theme in Rilke’s letter?

2. In the third paragraph of the letter, what kind of poems does Rilke believe the young poet should avoid and why?
3. What kind of poems does Rilke believe the young poet should write instead?
4. What do the following lines mean to you: “If your everyday life seems poor, don’t blame it; blame yourself; admit to yourself that you are not enough of a poet to call forth its riches; because for the creator there is no poverty and no poor, indifferent place”?
5. What metaphor(s) does Rilke use to describe childhood?
6. How does this metaphor about childhood further develop his ideas about writing?
7. What does Rilke suggest the young poet will learn about himself and his writing from “turning within”?

8. Reread the third paragraph of the letter and write down the phrase (words of wisdom) that has the most meaning to you. Why did you find this line important?

9. Why do you think Rilke chooses to lowercase “creator” and capitalize “Nature”?

10. Explain what Rilke is telling the young poet when he says, “Then take that destiny upon yourself, and bear it, its burden and its greatness, without ever asking what reward might come from outside.”

Quick Write: Reread the third paragraph of the letter and write down what you think is Rilke’s golden line. For example, what piece of advice or words of wisdom that Rilke offers the young poet have the most meaning to you? Are there any life lessons you can learn from this passage and apply to your own life?

Lesson 4: “Letter One,” by Rainer Maria Rilke

Literary Terms:

- | |
|-----------------|
| 1. Denotation- |
| 2. Connotation- |

Guided Question: How does Rilke build upon his advice to the young poet through specific word choices and language?

3. How does Rilke’s statement that those who can live without writing “shouldn’t write at all,” refine the central idea of the poem?
4. In the fourth paragraph, what impact does Rilke believe that “self-searching” will have on the young poet, even if he gives up poetry?
5. Paraphrase Rilke’s final piece of advice for the poet in paragraph four.
6. Review “Letter One” and annotate it by marking passages that identify Rilke’s tone/figurative language in the letter.

Central Ideas / Language Tracking Tool

Step 1: What is Rilke's overall central idea or message to the young poet?

<p style="text-align: center;">QUOTE</p> <p><i>Identify 3 phrases, sentences, or words from the entire letter to the young poet that contain powerful language and a strong message to the young poet.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">EXPLANATION/CONNECTION</p> <p><i>Explain how this quote represents significant pieces of advice to the young poet.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Literary Device</p> <p><i>Explain how Rilke's use of language (specific word choices, tone, metaphors, repetitions, imagery) OR structure emphasizes his advice to the young poet.</i></p>

Part 3: Writing (100 points)

Text-Analysis Response

Your Task: Closely read the text and write a well-developed, text-based response of three paragraphs. In your response, identify a central idea in the text and analyze how the author's use of *one* writing strategy (literary element or literary technique or rhetorical device) develops this central idea. Use strong and thorough evidence from the text to support your analysis. Do *not* simply summarize the text.

Guidelines:

Be sure to:

- Identify a central idea in the text
- Analyze how the author's use of *one* writing strategy (literary element or literary technique or rhetorical device) develops this central idea. Examples include: **word choice, tone, metaphors, similes, repetition, imagery, and structure**
- Use strong and thorough evidence from the text to support your analysis
- Organize your ideas in a cohesive and coherent manner
- Maintain a formal style of writing
- Follow the conventions of standard written English
- * **Integrate at least two of the vocabulary words from this unit.**