

Unit Plan: Spiritual Journey as Depicted in Seventeenth-century Literature

by

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English 611: Teaching Literature

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| <u>Page Number:</u> | <u>Contents:</u> |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | Title page |
| 2 | Table of contents |
| 3 | List of Artifacts |
| 4 - 5 | Rationale |
| 6 - 31 | Lesson plans |
| 32 | Works Cited |

ARTIFACTS FOR EACH LESSON:

These artifacts can be found at the link provided (I would usually give students a paper copy) or in this unit plan either before or after the lesson in which they are being used. If I expect students to read or examine the artifact before class, I have placed it before the lesson. If I plan to hand out the artifact during class, I have placed it after the lesson.

| <u>Lesson:</u> | <u>Artifact:</u> |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1 | Handout of Genesis 12-15 from www.biblegateway.org |
| 2 | Title page and frontispiece from the third edition of <i>The Pilgrim's Progress</i> . http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Pilgrim %27s_Progress_frontispiece_and_title_page_third_edition_1679.jpg |
| 3 | Two maps of <i>The Pilgrim's Progress</i> Linear map – http://www.jctruth.net/Progress/map.html OR www.photosavvy.com/images/PilgrimsProgressMap.pdf Spiral map – http://viz.cwrl.utexas.edu/files/pilgrims-progress-large.jpg |
| 4 | “A Brief Account of the Author's Imprisonment” (<i>Grace Abounding</i> , 78-86). This also can be found at http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bunyan/grace.vi.html An excerpt from “A Relation of the Imprisonment” (<i>Grace Abounding</i> 105-111) “A Discourse between my Wife and the Judges” (<i>Grace Abounding</i> 116-120) |
| 5 | A handout of Northrop Frye's four narrative patterns (a photocopy of p. 161 in <i>Fresh Takes on Teaching Literary Elements</i> by Smith and Wilhelm). <i>The Pilgrim's Progress</i> Writing Assignment and Grading Rubric |
| 6 | Handout of poems by George Herbert Time line of George Herbert's life |
| 7 | Grading Rubric for George Herbert Poetry Assignment |
| 9 | Handout of poems by John Donne Time line of John Donne's life “Don't Paraphrase” by Matthew Zapruder. http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/21879 |
| 10 | “Good-Friday, 1613, Riding Westward” by John Donne http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/donne/goodfriday.php “A Hymn to Christ, at the Author's Last Going into Germany” by John Donne http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/donne/hymn.php |

RATIONALE

The focus of my unit will be the study of select works of seventeenth-century literature that are related to the topic of spiritual journey and pilgrimage. The unit will be part of a semester-long mid-level undergraduate course taught in the English department at a religiously-affiliated college. In this context I will assume that students have a basic knowledge of the Old and New Testaments and of Christian theology. This particular course will focus on English and American literature about spiritual journey in the Christian religious tradition. My overarching pedagogical or theoretical approach for the course is cross-disciplinary, looking at the relationship and interplay between literature and the Christian tradition, as well as between the literary form and the literary and religious content. Some essential questions for the course are as follows: What is a spiritual journey, and how is it portrayed in literature? How do the physical journeys in these narratives relate to, inform, and influence the characters' spiritual journeys, and vice versa? How is the journey motif used in literature to depict a person's interior, spiritual change or development?

My first objective for the course is to engage students in literature about the Christian spiritual journey from different time periods, genres, and Christian traditions. I would like the students to reflect critically and creatively on the topic of spiritual journey as depicted in this literature, thinking about both the content of the narratives and the form that the narratives take. For the unit on seventeenth-century literature, I would like to focus on setting, authorial perspective, and students' experience of and response to the texts. Borrowing from Smith and Wilhelm's chapters on setting, I would like students to study the texts on the level of microsystem to analyze the physical, temporal, social, and psychological settings of the journeys. Then I would like students to reflect on the allegorical and metaphorical nature of the texts, especially thinking of allegory as a depiction of and commentary on the meso- and macrosystem levels of setting. In terms of the theological and religious setting of the works, I would like students to analyze the texts inductively to discern the Christian beliefs and practices that shape the narratives' journeys. I would also like students to analyze the influence of the cultural and societal aspects of the mesosystem on the depiction of physical and spiritual journey in the works.

Looking at the texts from a literary perspective, I would like students to come to understand the various hermeneutics employed by the authors in their understanding and depiction of the spiritual journeys about which they write. What is the impact of the choices the authors made of what to include in and to exclude from the narrative of the spiritual journey? How do these choices reveal the authors' intentions and perspective, and the religious and cultural influences on the authors? In addition, I would ask students to analyze the works in terms of their genre and form. How does the genre and form of the work impact the journey that the work depicts? How does the nature of the journey shape the form of the narrative? Finally, in agreement with Rosenblatt, I would like students to reflect thoughtfully on the hermeneutic they employ when reading literature about spiritual journeys. Rosenblatt explains, "To help the student critically to understand his own contribution to the literary experience becomes an aspect of helping him do justice to the text" (Rosenblatt 102). Thus, I would like to help students come to understand what they bring to these narratives from their own background and how that shapes their reading of the texts.

I would begin the course with an introduction to the subject of spiritual journey. Then I would teach a unit on pre-modern works about spiritual journey, the pre-modern fourfold method of interpretation, and Joseph Campbell's quest theory. Some works I might teach include Moses' journey

as recorded in Exodus, *The Life of Moses* by Gregory of Nyssa, the *Queste del Saint Graal* in English translation, “Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,” *The Interior Castle* by Teresa of Avila, and *The Book of Margery Kempe*. Then I will teach the unit that I have prepared for this assignment: spiritual journey as depicted in seventeenth-century English literature. The final unit would look first at spiritual voyages in *The Life and Spirituality of John Newton* by John Newton and *The Old Man and the Sea* by Earnest Hemingway. Then I would focus on spiritual journeys of the twentieth century: two short stories by Flannery O'Connor – “A Good Man Is Hard to Find” and “Revelation” – and a couple of autobiographies – *The Sacred Journey* by Frederick Buechner and *Traveling Mercies* by Anne Lamott. I would end the course with a concluding lesson to reflect on the journey through literature that the students and I have taken and the ways in which that journey perhaps has shaped us.

In support of Rosenblatt's emphasis on the experiential element of reading literature, I would like students to engage with the texts emotionally and to express their feelings and opinions about the works. To help students to reflect on their experience of the works, I will use Blau's idea of the reading log as the ongoing writing assignment to be done in preparation for each class period. I will ask students to record entries for each work that they read and to bring the reading log to each class period. Usually I will ask students to write down a line or sentence from the text that they find meaningful or especially significant, that they have a question about, or that they especially liked or were bothered by. Then I will ask students to write a brief evaluative comment, response, question, or a connection with another part of the text or another text from the course. In preparation for some of the class periods I will give the students guided inquiry questions to write about in their reading logs. Sometimes I will ask students to share their quotations and comments in small group settings or ask for volunteers to share with the whole class. Following Blau's suggestion for assessment, I will ask the students after each of the first two units of the course to write a one-page reflection on the entries in their reading log and to select 3 entries for me to read (Blau 164-68). I will assess these reflections and log entries for students' engagement with the texts and their meta-analysis of their writing and reading experiences.

I also will assign the students a final paper for the course that should be 5 to 7 pages long. The students will have two options for this paper. First, they can choose to reflect on the ideas and theoretical frameworks discussed throughout the course and use them to analyze in depth one of the works of twentieth-century literature that we read. For this option students can also pick a 20th- or 21st-century literary work outside of the course syllabus that depicts a spiritual journey. The work does not need to be written from a Christian perspective; however, students should check-in with me regarding their selection. The second option for the final paper would be to write a creative paper on the student's journey through the literature we have read. Students should use the ideas and frameworks we have discussed in class to reflect on their reading experiences and what they have written in their reading logs throughout the course.

One large hesitation about this unit is that I have a feeling that at least some of the lessons plans would not fit into a 50-60 minute class period but would run longer. Not having taught before, it is difficult for me to gauge the amount of time the various activities and discussions will take. My other hesitation is how to balance an openness to students' various interpretations with a belief in the greater authority of certain interpretations over other ones. I was very struck by Blau's statement: “[T]he greater the teacher's investment in a particular interpretation, the greater the danger that variant student readings will be suppressed and that alternative perspectives and intelligent readings against the grain will be discounted or marginalized” (Blau 188). How do I effectively and humbly teach material when I am invested in certain meanings of the texts?

LESSON 1: Introduction to the Course

This lesson would be the first lesson for the course rather than the first lesson of the unit. However, I wanted to include this lesson at the beginning of my unit plan assignment as a way to ground the unit in the larger course of which it is a part.

Objectives:

- Students will reflect on their interest in and understanding of spiritual journey and gain an understanding of other students' perspectives.
- Students will develop a definition or definitions of spiritual journey to give them a lens for reflecting on and interpreting the literature we will be reading and discussing in this class.
- Students will gain practice reading and interpreting a story in light of the spiritual journey depicted.
- Students will understand the syllabus and course requirements.

Procedure:

1. Introduce myself to the class.
2. Ask the students to do a quick-write. What attracted you to the topic of spiritual journey in literature? What do you think of when you hear the words “spiritual journey?”
3. Divide students into groups of 3 or 4. Ask the students to share with their group from the quick-write. Then ask the whole class for volunteers to share from what they wrote.
4. Discuss what a journey is. Then discuss: What is a “spiritual journey?” Ask the class for suggestions and also give the following definitions:
 - A physical journey that has a spiritual element or dimension
 - A “journey” of interior, spiritual growth or development
 - A physical journey that shapes someone's spirituality
 - Other options?
5. Provide a handout with the text of Genesis 12-15 from www.biblegateway.org. Explain what a “jump-in” reading is (Blau 128). Together as a class do a “jump-in” reading of Abraham's journey in Genesis 12-15.
6. Ask students: How would you describe or interpret Abraham's journey based on the definitions of spiritual journey that we came up with as a class? What additional insights does this passage give you into the nature of spiritual journey or how you would define it?
7. Explain the syllabus and course requirements.
8. Explain the homework due the following class period.

LESSON 2 – *The Pilgrim's Progress*

Homework that students should complete before the class:

- Examine the title page and frontispiece of the third edition of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Pilgrim%27s_Progress_frontispiece_and_title_page_third_edition_1679.jpg
- In your reading log note and comment on a couple of things (one from the title page and one from the frontispiece) that you find interesting, different from the modern edition, confusing, or helpful in understanding what the story will be about.
- Read “the Author's Apology for His Book.”
- In your reading log write down a line or lines that jumped out at you, that you especially liked, that you found confusing, or that seemed important or insightful. Comment on the lines, what you liked about them, what questions you have about them, or why you selected them.
- Bring your reading log to class.

Objectives:

- Students will be able to analyze an early edition of the title page and frontispiece to glean information about the story and to reflect on how the author or publisher is seeking to shape people's reading and interpretation of the story.
- Students will understand the genre of allegory, why it is used, what Bunyan's intentions were in writing an allegory, and the benefits and difficulties of reading an allegory.

Procedure:

1. Ask for volunteers to share what they wrote in their reading log about the title page and frontispiece. Then together as a class discuss the title page and frontispiece. Looking first at the title page, ask students: What stands out to you and what is significant about what is included on the title page? What does the information on the title page tell you about the story? What does it tell you about how the author or publisher wants you to think about the story before reading it?
2. Ask if anyone looked up the Scripture reference, and what it is. Show students how to look up Hosea 12:10 on www.biblegateway.org to read the entire verse in the King James Version. Ask students: Why is this verse on the title page? What does it tell us about how the author or publisher wants people to read and interpret the story?
3. Ask students to describe the different elements of the picture on the frontispiece. What do think it is a picture of? What clues does the picture give us about the story?
4. As the students have read in the “Apology,” *The Pilgrim's Progress* is an allegory. Ask the students to take 5-7 minutes for a free-write on the following questions: How would you describe or define “allegory?” What is a more contemporary novel or movie that is allegorical, and what makes it an allegory?
5. Ask for volunteers to share their description or definition of allegory. Write down the students' definitions on the board. How do allegories convey a story? Ask for their examples of contemporary allegories. Ask students: What do they like or dislike about the allegorical nature of these novels or films? What are the benefits of using allegory? What is strange or

- off-putting to us as contemporary readers when we encounter allegory?
6. Looking at the “Apology,” ask students the following questions: How does Bunyan describe and define allegory? Why does Bunyan write the story as an allegory? What is Bunyan's purpose or intent in writing the story? What are some of the objections or criticisms that Bunyan anticipates? How does he respond to these, and how does he defend his use of allegory?
 7. Ask students what a pilgrim and a pilgrimage are. Why is it significant that the journey is called a pilgrimage? Give a short explanation of the nature of religious pilgrimage.
 8. Closing activity: Look at the first paragraph of the story, in which the rest of the narrative is set in the context of a dream. How does this relate to the the title page and frontispiece? How does the form of the dream relate to the story being an allegory?
 9. Explain that the frontispiece is just one example of the many illustrations made of scenes in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Explain the homework assignment of having students find an illustration of a different part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* to bring into the next class.

LESSON 3 – *The Pilgrim's Progress*

Homework that students should complete before the class:

- Read from the beginning of *The Pilgrim's Progress* until the moment when Christian leaves Palace Beautiful and its inhabitants to enter the Valley of Humiliation by himself (pp. 11-51).
- Find a few lines or a short passage of the story to write about or respond to in a paragraph in your reading log.
- Find an illustration of a scene, place, or episode from *The Pilgrim's Progress* up to the point we have read for class today. Select an illustration that you find especially interesting, moving, disturbing, or that brought the scene to life for you. Some websites with illustrations include:
http://www.coolnotions.com/PDImages/pd_PilgrimsProgress.htm
<http://www.anesi.com/pilgrim.htm>
http://www.bunyanministries.org/?page_id=42
http://www.bunyanministries.org/?page_id=247
- Write a response to the illustration you selected in your reading log. Why did you select that particular illustration? What struck you about it? How does the illustration shape, confirm, or change your understanding of the scene?
- Bring your reading log and illustration to class.

Objectives:

- Students will understand how the images and locations in *Pilgrim's Progress* function to express allegorical meaning.
- Students will understand Smith and Wilhelm's three levels of setting (microsystem, mesosystem, and macrosystem) and apply these to the physical dimension of setting in the first section of *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

Procedure:

1. Have students divide into groups of 3 or 4 students each to share their illustrations and what they wrote about them. Have each group decide on a representative to share their illustration and comments with the entire class. Have the representatives share.
2. Ask the class to tell me the various images or physical locations that make up the first section of the narrative, and write these on the board.
3. Explain that in this class we are going to focus on the physical dimension of setting (Smith and Wilhelm 70). Share with them the following quotations: “Bunyan's style is primarily visual” (Alpaugh “Emblem and Interpretation,” 299) and “The entire book is, in fact, a succession of images” (Batson “Teaching the Pilgrim's Progress,” 107). Ask students: What are the visual images or physical locations that make up the first section of the narrative? How do the physical qualities of the locations or images function to express their allegorical meaning? What conflict does Christian encounter or character development does he undergo because of that physical location? For example, look at the image of the path or way. Ask students: What does it look like? How does it function in the narrative?
4. Together with the class do a close reading of Christian's moment at the cross. Provide an illustration. Ask the class: What did Christian see? What did the angels say to him and give

him? What do these things symbolize? How does this moment fit into the overall plot of the narrative?

5. Explain to the students Smith and Wilhelm's levels of setting: microsystem, mesosystem, and macrosystem. The mesosystem is "society and the culture at large" (Smith and Wilhelm 67). Share with the students the following quotations: "[I]t is sometimes important to pay less attention to the microsystem and more to the meso- or macrosystems, as in the case of an allegory in which bigger context is what counts" (Smith and Wilhelm 68).
6. Ask students to return to their groups. Ask them to look again at their illustrations. How could or do the physical location and its allegorical meaning point to or reflect aspects of the nonconformist Christian society and culture (of which Bunyan was a part) and of English society and culture of the time? How could the images and their allegorical meaning point to or reflect the seventeenth-century nonconformist theological understanding of the macrosystem of life in this world, death and the world to come, and the relationship between the two? Drawing the class together again, ask for volunteers to share from their discussion.
7. Closing activity: Ask the whole class: What prompts Christian to embark on his journey? What is Christian's goal, his anticipated destination? Why does he want to go there? What is the point or purpose of the journey? How would you evaluate Christian motivation and his desired goal from a meso- or macrosystem level?
8. Divide the class into three groups and give each group one selection to read for the following class. (More details in the homework description in lesson 4.)

LESSON 4 – *The Pilgrim's Progress*

Homework that students should complete before the class:

- Read from the moment when Christian leaves Palace Beautiful and its inhabitants to enter the Valley of Humiliation by himself until the moment when Christian and Hopeful part ways with Demas and end their conversation about him (pp. 51-96).
- Find a few lines or a short passage of the story to write about or respond to in a paragraph in your reading log.
- Read your secondary source selection of the three options listed here:
 - “A Brief Account of the Author's Imprisonment” (Bunyan *Grace Abounding*, 78-86). This also can be found at <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bunyan/grace.vi.html>
 - An excerpt from “A Relation of the Imprisonment” (*Grace Abounding* 105-111)
 - “A Discourse between my Wife and the Judges” (*Grace Abounding* 116-120)
- Find a few lines or a short passage from the secondary source selection and reflect on it in your reading log.

Objectives:

- Students will understand the social dimension of setting at the levels of microsystem as well as meso- and macrosystem.
- Students will be able to apply their theoretical understanding of the social dimension of setting to *The Pilgrim's Progress* and to their analysis of Christian's interactions with characters in this section of the narrative.
- Students will analyze and infer how Bunyan's own social setting (the political and religious context and his personal experiences within this context) may have influenced his writing of *The Pilgrim's Progress* (Blau 43).
- Students will reflect thoughtfully on how their knowledge of Bunyan's social setting may shape their perspective on and interpretation of the story.

Procedure:

1. Explain the social dimension of setting as described by Smith and Wilhelm: that the social dimensions of setting “are a function of the systems of relationships among the characters there” (Smith and Wilhelm 70-71). They are the “‘interactive space’ of a setting” (Smith and Wilhelm 71).
2. Ask students to do a 7-minute free-write in which they pick one of the characters from the section of *The Pilgrim's Progress* to be read for today. How does the fact that the character is, on a certain level, allegorical and a personification affect your experience of the character? Do you like or dislike the character, and why? What is that character's relationship to Christian? How does that character seek to influence Christian and his journey?
3. Go around the room to ask students which character they wrote about, and list the characters on the board. Ask the students if we left any characters out who appeared in this section of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Ask for volunteers to share what they wrote about their experience of the character and about that character's relationship with Christian. Share the following quotation: “Instead of merely creating abstract personages, Bunyan used metonymic personification to

transcribe a dominant feature of a character as the particular name by which the character is identified – representing something associated with it, adjective rather than abstraction. . .” (Dimon, “Christian Allegory”). Ask for students to respond to the distinction between characters as personifications versus abstractions.

4. Tell the class that now we are going to use the additional readings I gave them to look at Bunyan's social setting. Divide students into groups according to the secondary source selection that I assigned to them. Ask students to share their observations and reflections on the selection. Then tell the students that Bunyan wrote *The Pilgrim's Progress* during the twelve years that he was in prison. Ask each group to discuss the following questions: How do you think Bunyan's experience of imprisonment affected him in his writing of the story? How do you think it might have shaped the content and form of the narrative? Does learning about Bunyan's experience in prison change your perception of him or of *The Pilgrim's Progress*? If so, in what way?
5. Ask a representative from each group to give a brief summary of that group's selection and the group's reflections. Then ask the whole class: What meso- and macrosystem levels of the social dimension of Bunyan's own setting are revealed in the secondary source selection? (I.e. In what ways is Bunyan's imprisonment, and his (and his wife's) interactions with people while he is in prison, an expression of society and culture at the time? How did societal and cultural influences shape Bunyan's interactions with people while in prison and his wife's conversation with the judges?)
6. As a class, do a close reading of the episode at Vanity Fair (pp. 78-86). Discuss what happened. Give the class the quotation from Smith and Wilhelm: “[C]onflict is a function of setting” (Smith and Wilhelm 71). Ask the class: How does the social dimension of setting at Vanity Fair impact Christian's journey? What conflict does Christian experience because of encountering the characters at Vanity Fair? In what way does your reading of the secondary source texts shape your interpretation of the characters and events at Vanity Fair?
7. Closing activity: Returning to the students' free-writes and to the list of characters on the board, ask the students: What meso- and macrosystem levels of the social setting can you see in Christian's interaction with the character you wrote about and in the influence that character seeks to have over Christian?
8. Briefly describe the homework assignment of looking for examples of Northrop Frye's narrative patterns in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. In class ask students to pick which narrative pattern they will look for, trying to get an equal number of students to look for each of the four patterns.

LESSON 5 – *The Pilgrim's Progress*

Homework that students should complete before the class:

- Read from when Christian and Hopeful walk along the River of the Water of Life to the end of the narrative (pp. 97-143).
- Find a few lines or a short passage of the story to write about or respond to in a paragraph in your reading log.
- Read the handout on Northrop Frye's four narrative patterns: romance, tragedy, satire/irony, and comedy (a photocopy of p. 161 in *Fresh Takes on Teaching Literary Elements* by Smith and Wilhelm).
- In your reading log describe an episode or a character from any section of the narrative that reflects one of the four narrative patterns described by Frye. Explain what elements of the narrative pattern that you see in the episode or character you selected.

Objectives:

- Students will understand Frye's four basic narrative patterns and be able to apply these patterns to *The Pilgrim's Progress*.
- Students will understand the concept of authorial perspective, seek to understand Bunyan's perspective, and reflect critically on their stance regarding his perspective.
- Students will understand the concept of “transactional strategies” and reflect on Bunyan's or their own transactional strategies in the writing assignment.

Procedure:

1. Ask students if they have any questions about Frye's four basic narrative patterns. Briefly go over the four patterns.
2. Have the students divide into four groups based on which of the four patterns they chose to look for in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Ask the students to share with their group the example they found and what aspects of the narrative pattern they saw in that example. Ask the group to discuss the questions: What do your examples have in common, and how are they different? How do the examples of this narrative pattern fit into or impact the larger plot of Christian's journey toward the Celestial City? Is there a common theme that is expressed in these examples?
3. Have a representative from each group share one or more of the group's examples with the class and explain how they reflect the narrative pattern. Ask the class: Which narrative pattern is the story as a whole? What themes in *The Pilgrim's Progress* can we deduce from thinking about these narrative patterns? (In other words, what is the point of the story?)
4. Have the students do a 5-minute free-write on the question: What did you especially like and/or dislike about *The Pilgrim's Progress*?
5. Discuss authorial perspective. Share with the students the following quotation: “[O]nce we've understood an author's perspective, we may choose to resist it. But whether we accept, adapt, or resist an author's perspective, we must first understand it” (Smith and Wilhelm 121). Ask the class: What is Bunyan's point? Looking back at the apology to the story, what was Bunyan's purpose for writing the story? How would you describe the perspective from which Bunyan is

writing? Do you have to share Bunyan's perspective to enjoy or like the book? Or if you do not share his perspective, will you inevitably find the book irrelevant or offensive?

6. Discuss the concept of “transactional strategies” – “[C]onsider the impact of the choices an author makes and contrast these choices with the potential impact of the choices an author chose not to make” (Smith and Wilhelm 160-61). Ask students for examples of the choices that Bunyan made in his narrative and the impact those choices had on the students' experience of the story.
7. Explain the writing assignment. The assignment will be due a week from today.
8. Closing activity: ask students to meet in pairs to brainstorm some ideas for the assignment. Ask them to discuss how these ideas reflect what they wrote in their free-write regarding what they liked or disliked about *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

***The Pilgrim's Progress* Writing Assignment and Grading Rubric**

Assignment:

Students have two options for their writing assignment on *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Write a 3-4 page paper in response to one of the following prompts.

- 1) “Now, if rhetorical or figurative language is our key to discovering allegorical quality, what are some of the literary figures which Bunyan employs? And how does he control them so that the allegory becomes *his* story and not the familiar journey tale, told poorly or well by any number of his predecessors or contemporaries?” (Baton 106).
What elements of the Christian spiritual journey does Bunyan highlight or leave out of *The Pilgrim's Progress*? How do Bunyan's choices make the allegory “*his* story?” How are Bunyan's choices in his depiction of Christian's spiritual journey (the microsystem level of setting) reflective or representative of his theological and cultural context (the meso- and macrosystem levels of setting)?

- 2) “I found it much more enjoyable once I reminded myself to look upon it not like a tract, but rather like *The Odyssey*, which was also the fantastical story of a journey, fraught with many dangers such as giants and maliciousness intent upon keeping the hero from his ultimate destination”
<http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/29797.The_Pilgrim_s_Progress#other_reviews>
If you could, how would you modify *The Pilgrim's Progress*? Are there parts that you would change or take out? Or would you add something to the story? What impact would these modifications have on the narrative (the plot, characters, theme, etc.)? How would you explain or defend your changes? How would your modifications affect your enjoyment of or perception of the story?

Grading Rubric:

- Does the essay respond to one of the two writing prompts?
- Does the essay have an introductory paragraph that clearly explains the topic and focus of the rest of the paper?
- Does the entire essay adhere to the topic or focus explained in the introduction?
- Does the essay present a specific opinion or stance on *The Pilgrim's Progress*?
- Does the essay demonstrate that the student has reflected creatively and analytically on *The Pilgrim's Progress*?
- Does the essay develop specific examples to support the general ideas or claims?
- Are the ideas and examples presented in an order that is logical and easy to follow?
- Is the essay free of spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors?

Poems by George Herbert

For Lesson 6:

“The Pilgrimage”

<http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/herbert/pilgrimage.htm>

“Affliction (I)”

<http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/herbert/affliction1.htm>

Poems for the group assignment during lessons 7 and 8:

Group 1 – “Easter Wings”

<http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/herbert/easterwings.htm>

Group 2 – “The Collar”

<http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/herbert/collar.htm>

Group 3 – “A Wreath”

<http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/herbert/wreath.htm>

Group 4 – “Redemption”

<http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/herbert/redempt.htm>

Group 5 – “The Pulley”

<http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/herbert/pulley.htm>

LESSON 6 – George Herbert “The Pilgrimage” and “Affliction (I)”

Homework that students should complete before the class:

- Read “The Pilgrimage” and “Affliction (I).”
- For “The Pilgrimage:” Write a phrase or line in your reading log that stood out to you as different from or similar to something in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Explain the significance of the difference or similarity.
- For “Affliction (I):” (I will have explained that the poem is autobiographical.) Write down in your reading log experiences or events that you think happened in Herbert's life based on what he wrote in the poem. (Write down line numbers so that you can remember where you got your ideas.) In which parts of the poem is it unclear what experience Herbert is describing? Try to come up with a guess, and note the textual clues that led you to your inference.

Objectives:

- Students will understand the psychological dimension of setting. Students will be able to apply the concept by finding and explaining examples in the poems, and by comparing and contrast the psychological dimension of “The Pilgrimage” with that of *The Pilgrim's Progress*.
- Students will gain knowledge of the significant aspects of Herbert's background by inductively analyzing “Affliction (I)” and then confirming their ideas with the chronology that I give them. Students will reflect on the confessional nature of the poems and on how knowledge of Herbert's life helps them to understand the meaning of the poems (Blau 69 and 89).

Procedure:

1. I will read “The Pilgrimage” out loud.
2. Have the students divide into groups of 3 or 4 students each. Ask them to discuss: What are the allegorical elements of the journey depicted in “The Pilgrimage?” What is the goal of the journey? How does the allegorical meaning shape or determine the physical terrain of each part of the journey? Are there words that could have more than one meaning, and how does this influence the reading of the poem? (Explain to the students the example of “one good Angel.”)
3. Ask for volunteers to share what their groups talked about. Discuss as a class the relationship between the physical dimension of the setting/journey and the allegorical meaning of the setting/journey.
4. Explain the psychological dimension of setting, such as “how the characters feel about what happens” (Smith and Wilhelm 71). “What kind of feeling or mood is created?” (Smith and Wilhelm 81).
5. Have the students work individually to highlight “moody” words and the resulting emotion or mood that Herbert is trying to convey or that he wants the reader to perceive. (I am borrowing this idea from Smith and Wilhelm 99).
6. Ask the class: What are the “moody” words? What psychological setting (i.e., what tone) do they create? What are the meaning and tone of the last two lines of the poem? How do they shape our understanding of the journey?
7. Shifting to a juxtaposition of “The Pilgrimage” and *The Pilgrim's Progress*, ask for volunteers

to share from their reading log the similarities or differences they noticed between the poem and the narrative. How are the journeys overall similar or different?

8. Looking again at the psychological setting, ask the class to juxtapose Christian's *experience* of the journey with that of the "I" in the poem. Ask the class: What differences or similarities do you notice in their attitude or mood? Which character do you find more sympathetic, and why?
9. Moving on to "Affliction (I)": I will read "Affliction (I)" out loud. Ask students to meet briefly in groups of 3 or 4 to help one another figure out the parts that they did not understand. Then give the students a handout of a chronology of the major events in Herbert's life. Have the students compare the chronology of events to the poem and discuss within their groups.
10. As a class, go over the poem to determine what Herbert is describing in each stanza.
11. Ask the class: How does Herbert describe God's role in his life? How would you describe Herbert's feelings or attitude toward God? Why does he feel this way? What is the tone of the poem? How would you describe Herbert's feelings about his experiences? How does the title of the poem shape your understanding of the poem's meaning and tone?
12. Ask students to do a quick-write: Looking at the last two stanzas, how does Herbert respond to what he has experienced? With what attitude or tone does the poem end? In what ways does this poem depict a spiritual journey?
13. Ask for volunteers to share with the class from their quick-write. Ask students to look back at "The Pilgrimage" and to reflect on the ways in which it expresses or depicts his personal experience or his spiritual journey.
14. Closing activity: Explain the context of "The Pilgrimage" and "Affliction (I)" in *The Temple*, written during the three years in which Herbert was a rector at Bemerton. Explain the literary context of Herbert as a metaphysical poet. Explain what a metaphysical poem and metaphysical conceit are, and give an example of a metaphysical conceit.
15. Explain the homework assignment. Divide students into groups of three or four and assign each group a poem.

Time Line of George Herbert's Life

- 1593 Herbert born (3 April) in [Montgomery](#) in Wales, the fifth son of Richard and Magdalen Herbert.
- 1596 Herbert's father dies; survived by his wife Magdalen, seven sons, and three daughters.
- 1603 Death of [Elizabeth I](#); accession of [James I](#).
- 1605 Herbert attends [Westminster School](#).
- 1608 Herbert's mother marries Sir John Danvers.
- 1609 Herbert matriculates at [Trinity College, Cambridge](#)
- 1612 Death of the heir apparent [Prince Henry](#); Herbert contributes two memorial poems in Latin, his first verses to be published.
- 1616 Herbert elected major fellow of [Trinity College, Cambridge](#).
- 1618 Herbert appointed Reader in Rhetoric at Cambridge.
- 1620 Herbert elected Public Orator at Cambridge (to 1628).
- 1624 Herbert elected to represent Montgomery in Parliament (also in 1625).
- 1625 Death of James I; accession of [Charles I](#) who marries [Henrietta Maria](#) of France. Outbreak of Plague. Nicholas Ferrar settles at Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire. Bacon dedicates his *Translation of Certaine Psalmes* to Herbert.
- 1626 Herbert presented to a prebend in Huntingdonshire; four miles from Little Gidding. Death of Bacon; Herbert contributes a memorial poem in Latin.
- 1627 Death of Herbert's mother; the funeral sermon, delivered by Donne, was accompanied when published by commemorative poems including Herbert's *Memoriae Matris sacrum*.
- 1629 Marriage of Herbert to his stepfather's cousin Jane Danvers.
- 1630 Herbert instituted to the rectory at Bemerton near Salisbury in April; ordained priest in September.
- 1633 1 March: Herbert's death, of consumption, just before his fortieth birthday.

The Temple was published posthumously in 1633; Herbert's translation of Luigi Cornaro's *Trattato de la vita sobria*, in 1634 (appended to Leonardus Lessius's *Hygiasticon*); his 'Briefe Notes' on Juan de Valdés's *Hundred and Ten Considerations*, in 1638 (appended to its translation by Nicholas Ferrar); *Outlandish Proverbs*, in 1640 (enlarged edition as *Jacula prudentum*, 1651); *A Priest to the Temple*, in 1652 (as part of *Herbert's Remains*); and *Musae responsoriae*, in 1662 (as part of James Duport's *Ecclesiastis Solomonis*).

Excerpted from

Herbert, George. [The English Poems of George Herbert](#). C. A. Patrides, ed. London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1974. Repr. 1991. 4-5.

For this handout I modified the link below to include only the events that pertained directly to George Herbert's life. <http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/herbert/herbtime.htm>

LESSON 7 – George Herbert

Homework that students should complete before the class:

- Read all of the poems: “Easter Wings,” “The Collar,” “The Pulley,” “A Wreath,” and “Redemption.”
- Read your assigned poem out loud.
- Write one entry in your reading log about your poem. Select a phrase or line that you liked or that struck you, and explain why.
- Write down a paraphrase for each line or sentence of the poem of what you think it is literally saying. Write down any words, phrases, or lines that you do not understand. (I will tell students that I am interested in their ideas, so they should not look up the poems on the internet.)

Objectives:

- Students will improve at the fundamental skills of “(1) *reading*, addressing the question, What does it say? (2) *interpretation*, addressing the question, What does it mean? And (3) *criticism*, addressing the question, What is its value? Or So what?” (Blau 51).
- Students will gain confidence in their own abilities to decipher and interpret a poem by themselves without the expertise of the teacher.
- Students will gain experience at collaborating with other students and helping one another to understand and interpret a common text. “Having students work in groups helping each other solve the textual and conceptual problems that difficult texts pose for them turns out to be the most practical way available to put students into something like one of the roles that teachers usually occupy. . .” (Blau 56).
- Through writing “a collection of loosely connected notes or comments on a text,” students will develop skills at close analysis of the words of a poem as well as reflection on the larger meaning and significance of the poem as a whole (Blau 180). Through their reflection on the presentation and assignment, students will gain insight into the benefits of reading and interpreting texts with other students.

Procedure:

1. Explain the agenda for the class: students will be spending the entire class period working in groups on their assigned poem. They will analyze the poem as a group, and then each group will present their poem to the rest of the class during a subsequent class period. I will rotate among the groups throughout today's class.
2. In groups: Tell students that during the presentation, one group member will read the poem out loud to the class, so that person should practice reading the poem out loud to the group.
3. In groups: Have students discuss what the poem says and share what they did and did not understand. Provide dictionaries so that students can look up any words that they do not know. Have the students pool together their paraphrases to come up with a group paraphrase of the poem. Have one member of the group write this down and be the person later to share this with the class. Have that person also write down any words or phrases that the group is still unsure of.

4. In groups: Ask the groups to reflect on what the poem means and on how it means. Explain that Herbert intentionally gave the poems a certain shape or poetic form, and that this shape or form is significant. Give students the following questions to guide their discussion. Ask one person to take notes for the group and to be the person later to explain the meaning of the poem to the class.
 - What is the conceit? What are the metaphors or allegory in the poem? What do they mean?
 - Are there any words or phrases that could have multiple meanings? If so, what are those meanings? What is their significance?
 - What words point to the mood or tone of the poem?
 - How does the title of the poem reveal or inform the poem's meaning?
 - What is the physical shape or poetic form of the poem? What does Herbert do with the length and indentation of lines?
 - How are the meaning and the form of the poem related? How does the form support the meaning?
5. Individually: Ask the students to spend about 7 minutes on a quick-write: What is the most significant or important line of the poem? Why? What does this line reveal or point to as Herbert's "big idea" for the poem?
6. In groups: Have students share what they wrote and discuss together the value or significance of the poem. Give the students the following questions to guide their discussion. Ask one person to take notes for the group and to be the person later to explain the value of the poem to the class.
 - What is the point of the poem? What "big idea" does the poem convey?
 - How does the poem relate to or depict a spiritual journey? What does the form or shape of the poem reveal about the journey taken within the course of the poem, or the journey described in the poem?
 - What is the value or significance of the poem in Herbert's life?
 - How can we apply the poem "to our lives and the world beyond the story?" (Smith and Wilhelm 185).
7. Briefly explain the procedure for the next class period and the writing assignment.

Writing Assignment:

Using the notes taken in class and emailed to you by the members of your group, write a commentary for your poem by writing end notes to define and explain any words that are difficult to understand or had a different definition in the 17th century; have multiple meanings; express a metaphor, allegory, or metaphysical conceit; convey the mood of the poem; or require an explanation of something from Herbert's personal life or an explanation of the theological or cultural background in order to be understood. Write a paragraph on how the title of the poem and the physical shape or poetic form of the poem relate to or express the poem's meaning. Write a paragraph on the "big idea" of the poem and how it relates to the trope of spiritual journey. Write a paragraph reflecting on your experience of this group project and writing assignment, and how these shaped your understanding of the poem. (I will give students an example paper of what this assignment looks like.) The assignment will be due a week after lesson 7.

Grading Rubric for George Herbert Poetry Assignment

For the in-class presentation:

- Does the student's presentation show that s/he prepared beforehand and thought through what s/he was going to say?
- Does the presentation as a whole indicate that the students in the group reflected thoughtfully on what the poem says, what it means, and what its greater significance is?

For the writing assignment:

- Do the footnotes define and explain any difficult vocabulary or words that had a different meaning in the seventeenth century?
- Do the footnotes explain the multiple meanings and significance of any word that has more than one meaning?
- Do the footnotes point out and explain any metaphors, allegory, or metaphysical conceit in the poem?
- Do the footnotes highlight “moody” words that reveal the mood or tone of the poem?
- Do the footnotes explain any necessary details from Herbert's personal life that help explain the meaning of a word or phrase?
- Do the footnotes explain any theological concepts or cultural background necessary to understand a word or phrase?

- Does the paragraph on the meaning of the poem explain, with examples, how the title of the poem and the physical shape or poetic form of the poem relate to or express the poem's meaning?
- Does the paragraph on the “big idea” of the poem answer at least one of the questions asked in class?
 - What is the point of the poem? What “big idea” does the poem convey?
 - How does the poem relate to or depict a spiritual journey? What does the form or shape of the poem reveal about the journey taken within the course of the poem, or the journey described in the poem?
 - What is the value or significance of the poem in Herbert's life?
 - How can we apply the poem “to our lives and the world beyond the story?” (Smith and Wilhelm 185).
- In the final paragraph does the student reflect thoughtfully and with specific examples on his/her experience of analyzing a poem as a group, presenting the poem to the class, and writing about the poem?

LESSON 8 – George Herbert

Homework that students should complete before the class:

- Email to the other members of your group the notes that you took in class.
- Rehearse what you are going to tell the class about your poem.

Objectives:

- Students will gain experience and confidence in being the authority on a piece of literature and in presenting their analysis to a group of peers.
- Students will gain experience at public speaking and explaining a work of literature orally (rather than just in written form).

Procedure:

This procedure will probably take 2 class periods with 3 groups presenting during each class period. Each group will have 10 minutes to read and present their poem. Then the other students will have 5 minutes to ask the group questions about their poem.

1. Give students 5 minutes to meet with their groups to finalize what they will present.
2. The group to present will do the following:
 - Read the poem out loud to the class
 - Paraphrase what the poem says. Note any especially confusing or difficult words, lines, or phrases.
 - Explain what the poem means. Explain how this meaning is revealed in the metaphors, conceit, or allegory; the title of the poem; and the shape or form of the poem.
 - Explain the value or significance of the poem. Explain how the poem relates to, or what the poem reveals about, the trope of spiritual journey.
3. Ask the rest of the class if they have any questions for the group about the poem. Have the group members respond to students' questions.

Poems by John Donne

HOLY SONNETS

I.

THOU hast made me, and shall Thy work decay ?
 Repair me now, for now mine end doth haste ;
 I run to death, and Death meets me as fast,
 And all my pleasures are like yesterday.
 I dare not move my dim eyes any way ;
 Despair behind, and Death before doth cast
 Such terror, and my feeble flesh doth waste
 By sin in it, which it towards hell doth weigh.
 Only Thou art above, and when towards Thee
 By Thy leave I can look, I rise again ;
 But our old subtle foe so tempteth me,
 That not one hour myself I can sustain.
 Thy grace may wing me to prevent his art
 And thou like adamant draw mine iron heart.

<http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/donne/holysonnet1.php>

IV.

O, my black soul, now thou art summoned
 By sickness, Death's herald and champion ;
 Thou'rt like a pilgrim, which abroad hath done
 Treason, and durst not turn to whence he's fled ;
 Or like a thief, which till death's doom be read,
 Wisheth himself deliver'd from prison,
 But damn'd and haled to execution,
 Wisheth that still he might be imprisoned.
 Yet grace, if thou repent, thou canst not lack ;
 But who shall give thee that grace to begin ?
 O, make thyself with holy mourning black,
 And red with blushing, as thou art with sin ;
 Or wash thee in Christ's blood, which hath this might,
 That being red, it dyes red souls to white.

<http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/donne/sonnet4.php>

VI.

This is my play's last scene ; here heavens appoint
My pilgrimage's last mile ; and my race
Idly, yet quickly run, hath this last pace ;
My span's last inch, my minute's latest point ;
And gluttonous Death will instantly unjoint
My body and soul, and I shall sleep a space ;
But my ever-waking part shall see that face,
Whose fear already shakes my every joint.
Then, as my soul to heaven her first seat takes flight,
And earth-born body in the earth shall dwell,
So fall my sins, that all may have their right,
To where they're bred and would press me to hell.
Impute me righteous, thus purged of evil,
For thus I leave the world, the flesh, the devil.

<http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/donne/holysonnet6.php>

The Holy Sonnets were written in 1609 and 1610.

LESSON 9 – John Donne

Homework that students should complete before the class:

- Read the three assigned Holy Sonnets.
- Write one entry in your reading log for each sonnet about a line or phrase that you liked, that you did not understand, that you thought was significant, or that you thought conveyed the mood or tone of the poem.
- Read the essay “Don't Paraphrase” by Matthew Zapruder.
<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/21879>
- Write an entry in your reading log in response to the essay. What is one sentence or idea that you would like to remember from this essay? Why?

Objectives:

- Students will apply their knowledge of the physical, temporal, social, and psychological dimensions of setting to the analysis of Donne's sonnets.
- Students will reflect thoughtfully on the confessional nature of the sonnets and on how Donne's life experiences shape his understanding of death and his depiction of death in the sonnets (Blau 69).
- Students will balance analyzing the meaning of the sonnets with reflecting on the unspeakable and indescribable toward which they point.

Procedures:

1. Free-write: Pick the sonnet that you liked the best. Write about what you find compelling or attractive about it.
2. I will read the three sonnets out loud.
3. Have the students work individually to highlight “moody” words and the resulting emotion or mood that Donne is trying to convey or that he wants the reader to perceive. (I am borrowing this idea from Smith and Wilhelm 99).
4. Ask the class to analyze the psychological setting of the poems: What are the “moody” words? What is the resulting emotion or mood that Donne is trying to convey or that he wants you to perceive? What psychological setting do the words create?
5. Discuss the “voice” of the poems. Ask the class: How does the fact that the poems are written in the first person affect the feeling of the poems and how they come across to the reader? Does the “I” of Donne's poems seem different to you than the “I” of Herbert's poems? In what ways are the personae similar to or different from one another?
6. Shifting now to the social dimension of setting, discuss “Death,” the other character in all three of the sonnets. Ask the class: How does Donne depict Death? What does Donne do to personify it? What influence does Death have on the speaker? What are Donne's feelings about death, as expressed in the poems?
7. Hand out the chronology of Donne's life. Ask students to spend a couple of minutes individually looking for experiences in Donne's life that would have shaped his perception of death. Then ask the class: What do you notice in Donne's life and in society that would have influenced his thoughts and feelings about death?

8. Have students meet with one or two others who wrote about the same sonnet in their free-write. Have each person share from what they wrote. Then have each group discuss the following questions: What is the physical (or metaphysical) and temporal setting of the sonnet? What is the journey? What is the conflict or problem in the sonnet? What is the solution? What is the metaphysical conceit, and what function or purpose does it have in the sonnet? What does the final couplet of the sonnet mean?
9. As a class discuss one sonnet at a time. Ask for students to share what they talked about in their groups.
10. Closing activity: Read to the class this quotation from the essay by Matthew Zapruder: “Only poetry tries to take us together on a journey towards that which cannot be said, but which we are driven to understand.” What do the sonnets point to that cannot be said or fully explained? In what ways do the sonnets invite you to participate in that journey? Ask students to share other parts of the essay that they wrote down in their reading logs.

Time Line of John Donne's Life (1572 - 1631)

| Timeline | |
|----------|---|
| 1572 | Born in Bread Street, London. The third of six children of his father John Donne. |
| 1576 | Father dies suddenly. His mother marries Dr. John Syminges later that year. |
| 1577 | His older sister Elizabeth dies. |
| 1578 | His younger sisters Katherine and Mary die. |
| 1583 | Enters at Hart Hall, University of Oxford - He studies there for three years. |
| 1586 | Spends three years at the University of Cambridge, takes no degree because he refuses to take the Oath of Supremacy. Because he is Catholic, he refused to testify that the queen "is the only supreme governor of this realm." < http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oath_of_supremacy > |
| 1588 | His stepfather John Syminges dies. |
| 1591 | Admitted to study law as a member of Thavies Inn. |
| 1592 | Transfers from Thavies Inn to Lincoln Inn. |
| 1593 | Donne's brother Henry arrested for harbouring a priest. Henry dies of a fever in prison. |
| 1596 | Volunteers to join the naval expedition that Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex, led against Cádiz, Spain. |
| 1598 | Returns to England and appointed private secretary to Sir Thomas Egerton, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. |
| 1601 | Secretly marries Lady Egerton's niece, seventeen-year-old Anne More. Her father, Sir George More has Donne thrown to Fleet Prison for some weeks. |
| 1602 | Dismissed from Egerton's service after Egerton finds out about the marriage to Anne. Practiced law but in constant financial insecurity and need. |
| 1603 | Outbreak of plague that killed 30,000 Londoners. |
| 1606 | Donne becomes a Protestant. |
| 1607 | Applies unsuccessfully for a post in the Queen's household. By now he and Anne have four children: Constance, John, George, and Francis. |
| 1608 | Applies unsuccessfully for employment as a secretary in Ireland. Has a fifth child, Lucy. |
| 1609 | Confined in bed with neuritis during the winter. Sixth child, Bridget, born. |
| 1611 | Has a seventh child, Mary. |
| 1612 | His eighth child is stillborn. |
| 1613 | Tenth child, Nicholas, born but died when he was a few months old. |
| 1614 | He and his family are stricken with illness; his daughter Mary and son Francis die. |
| 1615 | At the wishes of James I, Donne was ordained deacon and priest in the Anglican Church. Appointed a royal chaplain. Conferred the degree of Doctor of Divinity at Cambridge by royal mandate. Eleventh child, Margaret, born. |

| | |
|------|--|
| 1616 | Appointed Reader of Divinity at Lincoln's Inn. Has a twelfth child, Elizabeth. |
| 1617 | Anne Donne gives birth to a stillborn daughter on August 10 and dies August 15. |
| 1619 | Journeys as chaplain with Viscount Doncaster in his embassy to the German princes. |
| 1620 | Returns to London. |
| 1621 | Appointed Dean of Saint Paul's Cathedral in London, a position he had until his death. |
| 1623 | Donne is seriously ill. |
| 1624 | Appointed vicar of St Dunstan's-in-the-West. |
| 1625 | Death of James I. Outbreak of plague that killed 35,000 people. The first of several times that Donne preaches at Court. |
| 1627 | His daughter Lucy dies. |
| 1631 | His mother dies. Donne dies in London on March 31. |

Some of Donne's Works First Published:

- 1607 *Divine Poems*
- 1610 *Pseudo-Martyr and A Funerall Elegie*
- 1611 *Ignatius His Conclave, The First Anniversary, and An Anatomy of the World*
- 1612 *The Second Anniversary and Of the Progress of the Soul*
- 1618 *Holy Sonnets*
- 1623 *Three Sermons upon Special Occasions*
- 1624 *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*
- 1625 *The First Sermon Preached to King Charles. Four Sermons upon Special Occasions*
- 1626 *A Sermon Preached to the King's Majesty. Five Sermons upon Special Occasions.*
- 1627 *A Sermon of Commemoration of the Lady Danvers*
- 1633 *Songs and Sonnets*

Chart and information found at the following sites:

<http://www.humanitiesweb.org/human.php?s=t&p=l&ID=42>

<http://www.britainunlimited.com/Biogs/Donne.htm>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Plague_of_London

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Donne

Donne, John, and John Caey. *John Donne: The Major Works*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

LESSON 10 – John Donne

Homework that students should complete before the class:

- Read “Good-Friday, 1613, Riding Westward”
<http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/donne/goodfriday.php>
- In your reading log write down a line or phrase that you thought was significant or important to the meaning of “Good-Friday, 1613, Riding Westward.” Explain why you picked it.
- Read “A Hymn to Christ, at the Author's Last Going into Germany”
<http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/donne/hymn.php>
- In your reading log write down a line or phrase that you found puzzling or confusing, or that you did not understand in “A Hymn to Christ.” What questions do you have about the line or phrase? What makes it difficult to understand?
- Tell students to look at their chronology of Donne's life and try to figure out when in his life he wrote “A Hymn to Christ.” In your reading log write down the year in which you think the poem was written. What personal experiences do you think shaped Donne's writing of the poem? (Tell students not to look up this information on the internet. I am interested in their thoughts, not in the “right” interpretation.)

Objectives:

- Students will reflect on their experience of the poem and how that experience changes after the group work and class discussion of the poem. Students will understand the value both of a “first experience” of the poem and of a “second experience” after having analyzed the poem in greater depth (Blau 142-43).
- Students will become more comfortable with feelings of confusion and more willing to work through their confusion as they discover that other students are also confused and that confusion is a means toward greater understanding (Blau 21).

Procedure:

1. I will read “Good-Friday, 1613, Riding Westward” out loud in class. Then ask the students to go around the room reading the line or phrase that they wrote down in their reading log. Tell students that they should not comment on the quotation; just read it. (This is a modification of Blau's “pointing” exercise – Blau 128.)
2. Ask the class: What is your experience of reading and listening to this poem, in contrast to your experience of the Holy Sonnets?
3. Divide students into groups of 3 or 4. Ask the students to discuss: What is the physical journey being taken? What is the significance of the title? What conceits or metaphors does Donne employ? What words or lines point to a spiritual journey? Ask students to share from what they wrote in their reading log about the significant line that they selected.
4. Go through the poem as a class, asking for volunteers to explain the title and the lines of the poem. Read the poem out loud again. Ask the students in what ways their experience of the poem has changed now that we have discussed the poem as a class.
5. I will read “A Hymn to Christ, at the Author's Last Going into Germany” out loud in class.
6. Ask students to share when they think Donne wrote the poem and why. What clues did they

find in the poem to lead them to this conclusion?

7. Ask the students to write down the line or phrase they did not understand on a scrap piece of paper. Ask the students to crumple up the papers and throw them into the middle of the room. Ask the students to pick up a paper, and then have the students take turns reading out loud the lines that other students did not understand or found confusing. On a projected image of the poem highlight these lines. Ask the class: What makes these lines confusing or difficult to understand? Ask for volunteers to share from their reading log.
8. Have the students do a free-write: Tell the students to pick one of the highlighted lines that they think they understand at least in part. Explain the line. How does it relate to or reveal the physical journey and spiritual journey depicted in the poem?
9. As a class go through the poem stanza by stanza. Ask for volunteers to share from their free-write to explain each stanza. Looking at the poem as a whole, what is the relationship between the physical journey and the spiritual one?
10. Closing activity: Ask students to look over both poems, thinking about the fact that both are addressed to Christ. How does the speaker's experience of thinking about and speaking to Christ influence his journey?

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