



READING 2A Compare and contrast works of literature that express a universal theme.
3 Evaluate the changes in sound, form, figurative language, and graphics in poetry across literary time periods.

Selected Poetry by William Wordsworth

VIDEO TRAILER



KEYWORD: HML12-798A

Meet the Author

DID YOU KNOW?

William Wordsworth ...

- at first supported, but later denounced, the French Revolution.
- refused to publish his autobiographical masterpiece, *The Prelude*, during his lifetime.
- lost two of his five children to early deaths.

(background) Dove Cottage, Wordsworth's Lake District home

William Wordsworth 1770–1850

William Wordsworth, along with his friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge, helped launch the English romantic movement in literature. Rebelling against the formal diction and lofty subject matter favored by poets of the day, Wordsworth used simple language to celebrate subjects drawn mostly from nature and everyday life.

Childhood Turmoil As a child, Wordsworth spent many happy hours exploring the countryside in northwestern England's Lake District. This idyllic period lasted until he was seven, when his mother's death led to the breakup of the Wordsworth household. Unable to raise five children on his own, John Wordsworth sent young William away to school at Hawkshead, where he formed a passionate attachment to the surrounding countryside.

Love in a Time of War A walking tour through revolutionary France in the summer of 1790 was the high point of Wordsworth's college years. Excited by the changes he saw, Wordsworth returned to France in 1791 and soon fell in love with a young woman, Annette Vallon. Lacking money, Wordsworth returned to England in 1792. Almost immediately, war broke out between France and England, preventing Wordsworth from seeing Annette and the child she had recently borne

him. Distraught over his inability to help them and by the growing violence in France, Wordsworth fell into a deep depression.

Creative Partnership Wordsworth's bleak mood subsided in 1795 when he was reunited with his beloved sister Dorothy, from whom he had been separated since childhood. Resolving not to be parted again, he and Dorothy moved to Racedown, Dorset, where they met and grew close to Coleridge. Speaking later of this friendship, Wordsworth would say, "We were three persons with one soul." Working together, Wordsworth and Coleridge produced *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), the book that ushered in the English romantic movement.

Britain's Poet Laureate In 1799, Wordsworth and his sister resettled in the Lake District, with Coleridge residing nearby. Three years later, Wordsworth married a childhood friend, Mary Hutchinson. Over the next two decades, he struggled to find readers and critical acceptance for his work. In the 1820s, his reputation gradually improved, and by the 1830s, he was hugely popular. In 1843, his immense achievement as a poet was recognized with the poet laureateship.

Author Online

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● LITERARY ANALYSIS: ROMANTIC POETRY

In England, **romanticism** was a literary and artistic movement originating in the late 18th century and lasting until the early decades of the 19th century. Unlike their neoclassical predecessors, the romantic poets stressed the importance of the individual's subjective experiences rather than issues that concerned society as a whole. Their philosophy valued emotion, spontaneity, and imagination over reason and orderliness. Most significantly, they rejected the world of industry and science, turning instead to nature as a source of inspiration and solace. Other defining features of romantic poetry are as follows:

- an emphasis on the commonplace
- language resembling natural speech
- elements of the mysterious, exotic, and supernatural

As you read Wordsworth's innovative works, look for details that are characteristic of romantic poetry.

● READING SKILL: ANALYZE STYLISTIC ELEMENTS

Wordsworth's poems contain distinctive **stylistic elements** such as the following:

- long, free-flowing sentences, often with phrases that interrupt main ideas
- **inverted syntax**, where the expected order of words is reversed
- unusual punctuation, such as dashes combined with other punctuation or exclamation points appearing within a sentence rather than at the end, and unusual capitalization

As you read each poem, be aware of these stylistic elements and note how they affect your impression of the speaker's thoughts.



Complete the activities in your **Reader/Writer Notebook**.

Where do we find PEACE?

When filled with the stresses and strains of everyday life, people sometimes visit a particular place to regain a sense of peace. A person may, for example, spend time in a church or temple, while others may seek out the comfort of a grandparent's home. Still other individuals, like Wordsworth, find peace in nature.

DISCUSS Working with two or three classmates, create a list of the places you regularly turn to when you seek relief from life's problems. Discuss each place, then circle the one that seems the most satisfying. Compare the results of your discussion with those of other groups.



Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey



William Wordsworth

BACKGROUND In many of his poems, Wordsworth describes a specific setting and conveys his thoughts and feelings about it. In “Tintern Abbey,” he captures an outdoor scene in the Wye River valley, near the ruins of a Gothic abbey. “Composed upon Westminster Bridge” expresses his feelings on seeing the city of London early one morning from a bridge spanning the river Thames. In “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud,” Wordsworth describes the scenery of England’s picturesque Lake District, near his home in Grasmere.

- Five years have passed; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a soft inland murmur. Once again
5 Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
10 Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage ground, these orchard tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
15 These hedgerows, hardly hedgerows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farms,
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
20 Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
The Hermit sits alone. **A**

Analyze Visuals ►

What elements in this painting help give it a sense of grandeur?

9 **repose:** lie at rest.

14 **copses** (kŏp'sīz): thickets of small trees.

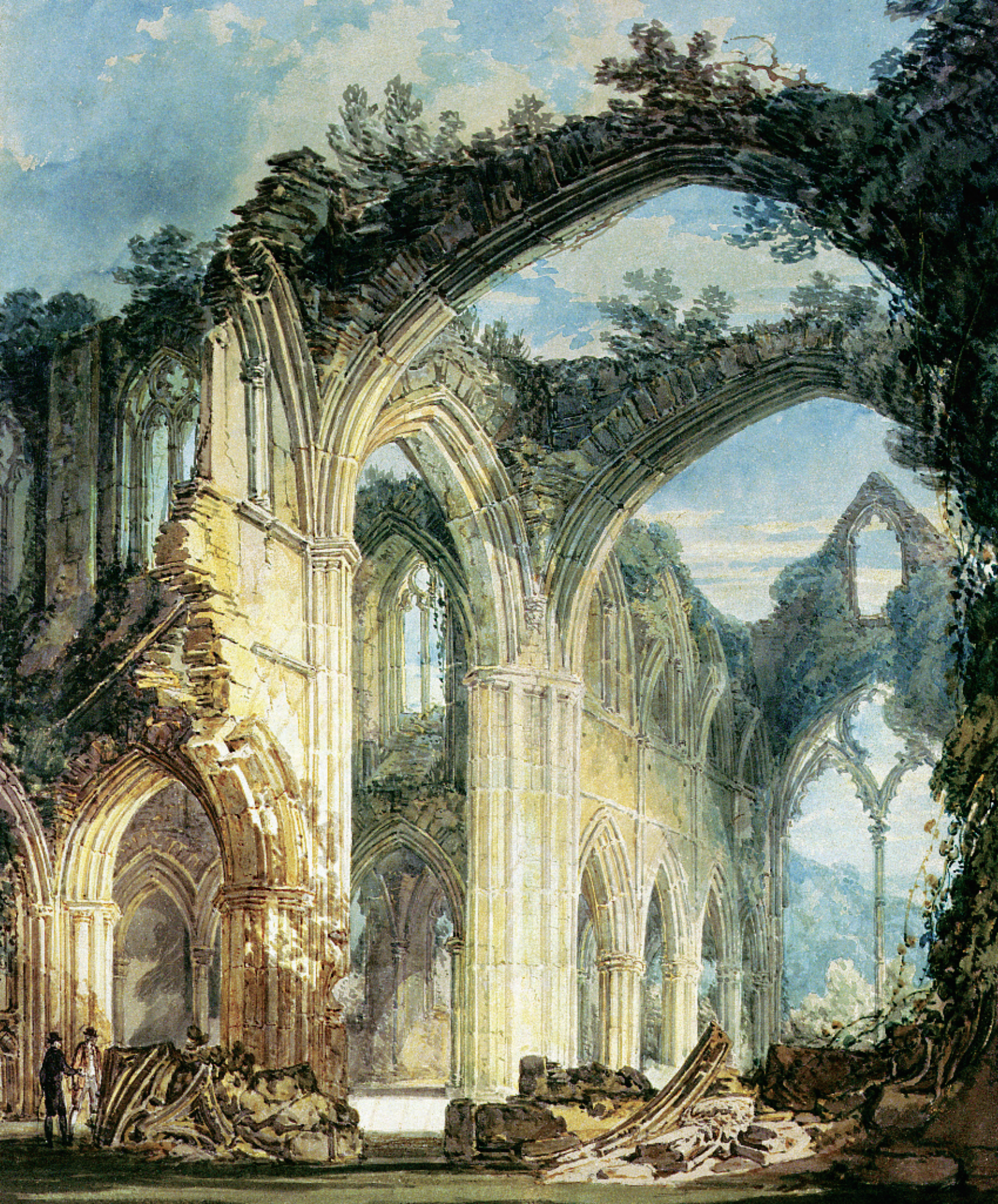
16 **pastoral** (pās'tər-əl): rural and serene.

20 **vagrant:** wandering.

A POETRY

What details in lines 14–22 suggest that Wordsworth preferred to celebrate the individual rather than society in his work?

Inside of Tintern Abbey, Monmouthshire (1794), Joseph Mallord William Turner. Pencil and water color on paper, 32.1 cm × 25.1 cm.
© British Museum, London/Bridgeman Art Library.



These beauteous forms,
 Through a long absence, have not been to me
 As is a landscape to a blind man's eye;
 25 But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
 Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
 In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
 Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
 And passing even into my purer mind,
 30 With tranquil restoration—feelings too
 Of unremembered pleasure; such, perhaps,
 As have no slight or trivial influence
 On that best portion of a good man's life,
 His little, nameless, unremembered, acts
 35 Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
 To them I may have owed another gift,
 Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,
 In which the burthen of the mystery,
 In which the heavy and the weary weight
 40 Of all this unintelligible world,
 Is lightened—that serene and blessed mood,
 In which the affections gently lead us on—
 Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
 And even the motion of our human blood
 45 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
 In body, and become a living soul;
 While with an eye made quiet by the power
 Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
 We see into the life of things. **B**

If this
 50 Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft—
 In darkness and amid the many shapes
 Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
 Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
 Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—
 55 How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
 O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer through the woods,
 How often has my spirit turned to thee! **C**

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought
 With many recognitions dim and faint,
 60 And somewhat of a sad perplexity,

38 burthen: burden.

43 corporeal (kôr-pôr'ê-əl): bodily.

B ROMANTIC POETRY

Reread lines 22–49. When he was living in towns and cities, in what ways was the speaker affected by his past experiences in the countryside near Tintern Abbey?

56 sylvan: located in a wood or forest; **Wye:** a river near Tintern Abbey.

C ROMANTIC POETRY

What feelings does the speaker express in lines 49–57 about his everyday life? Cite details.

The picture of the mind revives again;
 While here I stand, not only with the sense
 Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
 That in this moment there is life and food
 65 For future years. And so I dare to hope,
 Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
 I came among these hills; when like a roe
 I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
 Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
 70 Wherever nature led—more like a man
 Flying from something that he dreads than one
 Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
 (The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
 And their glad animal movements all gone by)
 75 To me was all in all.—I cannot paint **D**
 What then I was. The sounding cataract
 Haunted me like a passion; the tall rock,
 The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
 Their colors and their forms, were then to me
 80 An appetite; a feeling and a love,
 That had no need of a remoter charm,
 By thought supplied, nor any interest
 Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,
 And all its aching joys are now no more,
 85 And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
 Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
 Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
 Abundant recompense. For I have learned
 To look on nature, not as in the hour
 90 Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
 The still, sad music of humanity,
 Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
 To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy
 95 Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
 Of something far more deeply interfused,
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
 And the round ocean and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
 100 A motion and a spirit, that impels
 All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
 And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
 A lover of the meadows and the woods,

67 roe: deer.

D STYLISTIC ELEMENTS

Reread lines 72–75. Identify the subject and the verb of this sentence. What phrases interrupt the main idea?

76 cataract (kăt'ə-răkt'): waterfall.

86 Faint I: I lose heart.

88 recompense (rĕk'əm-pĕns'): compensation.

93 chasten (chă'sən): scold; make modest.

Language Coach

Etymology A word's etymology is its history. The word *impels* (line 100) comes from the Latin prefix *in-* ("on") and the root *pellere* ("to push"). What do you think *impels* means? What other words contain this root?



Tintern Abbey (1800s), Frederick Waters Watts. Private collection. © Bridgeman Art Library.

And mountains; and of all that we behold
 105 From this green earth; of all the mighty world
 Of eye, and ear—both what they half create,
 And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
 In nature and the language of the sense
 The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
 110 The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
 Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,
 If I were not thus taught, should I the more
 Suffer my genial spirits to decay:
 For thou art with me here upon the banks
 115 Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend,
 My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice I catch
 The language of my former heart, and read
 My former pleasures in the shooting lights
 Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
 120 May I behold in thee what I was once,
 My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,
 Knowing that Nature never did betray **E**
 The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
 Through all the years of this our life, to lead
 125 From joy to joy: for she can so inform
 The mind that is within us, so impress
 With quietness and beauty, and so feed
 With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,

111 perchance: by chance; perhaps.

113 genial (jēn'yəl): relating to genius; creative.

115 thou my dearest Friend: Wordsworth's sister, Dorothy.



TEKS 3

E GRAPHICS

Wordsworth uses unusual capitalization and punctuation in his poems, employing typographic elements of text that draw his reader's attention to certain words or ideas. Why does he capitalize *Sister* in line 121 and *Nature* in line 122? Why does he include an exclamation point in line 119?

Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
 130 Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
 The dreary intercourse of daily life,
 Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
 Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
 Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon **F**
 135 Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
 And let the misty mountain winds be free
 To blow against thee: and, in after years,
 When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
 Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
 140 Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
 Thy memory be as a dwelling place
 For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,
 If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief
 Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
 145 Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
 And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance—
 If I should be where I no more can hear
 Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
 Of past existence—wilt thou then forget
 150 That on the banks of this delightful stream
 We stood together; and that I, so long
 A worshiper of Nature, hither came
 Unwearied in that service; rather say
 With warmer love—oh! with far deeper zeal
 155 Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
 That after many wanderings, many years
 Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
 And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
 More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake!

F STYLISTIC ELEMENTS

Paraphrase lines 119–134, breaking the information into two or more sentences. What does the speaker's “prayer” or hope for his sister reveal about him?

146 exhortations: words of encouraging advice.

149 past existence: the speaker's own past experience five years before (see lines 116–119).

Literary Analysis

- 1. Make Inferences** Compare the speaker's youthful experiences of the natural world with his present experiences. In what ways has his understanding of nature changed?
- 2. Draw Conclusions** Describe the speaker's attitude in each of the following passages. Do you think that he regrets his loss of youth? Explain your response.
 - “The sounding cataract. . . dizzy raptures.” (lines 76–85)
 - “Nor perchance. . . Of thy wild eyes.” (lines 111–119)

Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802



William Wordsworth

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty; **G**
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
5 The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theaters, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
10 In his first splendor, valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

G STYLISTIC ELEMENTS

Rewrite lines 1–3, reordering the **syntax**. What does this passage exaggerate?

9 steep: soak; saturate.

12 the river: the Thames (tĕmz)—the principal river in London.

13 houses: possibly a pun on the Houses of Parliament, near Westminster Bridge.

Literary Analysis

- 1. Examine Personification** Find three examples of personification, or figures of speech in which human qualities are attributed to an object, animal, or idea. In what ways do these examples enhance the description of the scene?
- 2. Analyze Tone** What is Wordsworth's tone, or attitude, toward the scene? Cite specific words and phrases to support your response.

The World Is Too Much with Us



William Wordsworth

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
5 This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon,
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers,
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
10 A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

4 **sordid boon**: tarnished or selfish gift.

10 **Pagan** (pā'gən): someone who is not Christian, Jewish, or Muslim; **suckled in a creed outworn**: raised in an outdated faith or belief system.

11 **lea**: meadow.

13–14 **Proteus** (prō'tē-əs) . . . **Triton** (trīt'n): sea gods of Greek mythology.

Literary Analysis

1. **Clarify Ideas** Reread lines 1–4. What do you think the speaker means by the phrase “The world is too much with us”?
2. **Make Inferences** Why would the speaker rather be a “Pagan” (line 10) than live in his present state? Support your response with details from the poem.

I Wandered Lonely As a Cloud



William Wordsworth

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
5 Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
10 Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee;
15 A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company;
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
20 In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils. **H**



Butterfly on Daffodils, Karen Armitage. Watercolor.
Private collection. © Bridgeman Art Library.

2 vales: valleys.

Language Coach

Roots and Affixes The suffix *-ly* often signals an adverb, which modifies a verb, adjective, or other adverb; *-ly* can also form an adjective, which modifies a noun. Which type of word is *sprightly* (line 12)? How can you tell? What does *sprightly* mean?

16 jocund (jök'ənd): merry.

H ROMANTIC POETRY

According to lines 19–24, what has the speaker been able to accomplish by using his memory and imagination?

JOURNAL Many of Wordsworth's poems were inspired by his frequent walks with his sister Dorothy in the English countryside. This excerpt from Dorothy's journal records the same scene that inspired Wordsworth's "I Wandered Lonely As a Cloud."

from the
Grasmere Journals
Dorothy Wordsworth

Apr. 15.

It was a threatening misty morning—but mild. We [Dorothy and William] set off after dinner from Eusemere.¹ Mrs. Clarkson went a short way with us but turned back. The wind was furious and we thought we must have returned. We first rested in the large Boat-house, then under a furze Bush opposite Mr. Clarkson's. Saw the plough going in the field. The wind seized our breath the Lake was rough. There was a Boat by itself floating in the middle of the Bay below Water Millock. We rested again in the Water Millock Lane. The hawthorns are black and green, the birches here and there greenish but there is yet more of purple to be seen on the Twigs. We got over into a field to avoid some cows—people working, a few primroses by the roadside, wood-sorrel flower, the anemone, scentless violets, strawberries, and that starry yellow flower which Mrs. C. calls pile wort. When we were in the woods beyond Gowbarrow park we saw a few daffodils close to the water side. We fancied that the lake had floated the seeds ashore and that the little colony had so sprung up. But as we went along there were more and yet more and at last under the boughs of the trees, we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore, about the breadth of a country turnpike road.² 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 and the rest tossed and reeled and danced and seemed as if they verily laughed at the wind that blew upon them over the lake, they looked so gay ever glancing ever changing. This wind blew directly over the lake to them. There was here and there a little knot and a few stragglers a few yards higher up but they were so few as not to disturb the simplicity and unity and life of that one busy highway. We rested again and again. The Bays were stormy, and we heard the waves at different distances and in the middle of the water like the sea.

1. **Eusemere:** the home of Thomas and Catherine Clarkson, friends living near the Wordsworths on the banks of Lake Ullswater in the Lake District.

2. **breadth . . . road:** width of one of the narrow, centuries-old English roads that pedestrians once had to pay tolls to use.

Comprehension

- Clarify** The last poem begins: “I wandered lonely as a cloud / That floats on high o’er vales and hills.” What is the meaning of this statement?
- Summarize** Reread lines 3–12 of the poem. In your own words, describe the scene the speaker encounters.
- Clarify** In line 21, what does the phrase “flash upon that inward eye” mean?



READING 2A Compare and contrast works of literature that express a universal theme. **3** Evaluate the changes in sound, form, figurative language, and graphics in poetry across literary time periods.

Literary Analysis

- Make Inferences About Setting** In “Tintern Abbey,” why do you think the speaker says so little about the ruined abbey named in the poem’s title?
- Analyze Stylistic Elements** In his Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth defines poetry as “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.” Review the list of Wordsworth’s stylistic elements on page 799. How do the stylistic elements help him achieve this state in “Tintern Abbey”?
- Examine Romantic Poetry** Select one of the four poems in the lesson. For each convention of romantic poetry listed on page 799, provide an example from one of Wordsworth’s poems. What overall effect do these conventions help create?
- Draw Conclusions** What connection does Wordsworth make between the speakers’ memories of the past and their ability to experience peace in the present? Cite evidence from all four poems to support your response.
- Evaluate Sonnets** Both “Composed upon Westminster Bridge” and “The World Is Too Much with Us” are Petrarchan sonnets. For each poem, identify the speaker’s situation or problem in the octave and his comments in the sestet. Which sonnet provides a more satisfying resolution?
- Compare Texts** Review “I Wandered Lonely As a Cloud” and Dorothy Wordsworth’s journal entry on page 809. How does Dorothy’s response to the daffodils compare with her brother’s? Explain any similarities in the images and feelings expressed.

Literary Criticism

- Critical Interpretations** Some literary critics have argued that Wordsworth presents an idealistic, and therefore unrealistic, portrait of childhood. Based on “Tintern Abbey,” do you agree with this argument? Support your opinion with details from the poem.

Where do we find **PEACE**?

Why do we associate peace with the natural world? Are there times when nature is not serene or tranquil? Explain your response.

Conventions in Writing

◆ GRAMMAR AND STYLE: Add Emphasis

One of the many delights of Wordsworth's style is his use of **repetition** and **exclamation points** to emphasize different thoughts and emotions. In "Tintern Abbey," for instance, he repeats phrases, such as "lofty cliffs" and "blessed mood," to underscore the feelings of joy that nature arouses in him. Notice how, in the excerpt below, Wordsworth repeats the adjective "dear" and uses exclamation points to express his affection for his sister Dorothy.

*My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! . . . (lines 116–121)*

PRACTICE Write your own sentences about a topic you feel strongly about, imitating Wordsworth's use of repetition and exclamation points to create emphasis.

EXAMPLE

Five years have passed; five summers, with the length / Of five long winters!

One week has passed; seven slow days with seven slow nights! So many hours of waiting in the hospital to see if his condition had improved.

1. These hedgerows, hardly hedgerows, little lines / Of sportive wood run wild;
2. In hours of weariness, sensations sweet, / Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
3. How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee, / O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer through the woods, / How often has my spirit turned to thee!

READING-WRITING CONNECTION



Expand your understanding of imagery by responding to this prompt. Then, use the **revising tips** to improve your essay.

WRITING PROMPT

ANALYZE AUTHOR'S STYLE Wordsworth is widely praised for his use of **imagery**, or details that appeal to the senses. Identify several examples of visual and auditory imagery in "Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey." Then write a **three-paragraph essay** in which you explain how this imagery enriches the poem.

REVISING TIPS

- Discuss what the poem would lose if the imagery were removed from it.
- Include direct quotations from the poem to show how imagery enriches its themes.



WRITING 15C Write an interpretation of a literary text. **ORAL AND WRITTEN CONVENTIONS 18** Correctly and consistently use conventions of punctuation and capitalization.

Interactive
Revision



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