

British Literature

Response and analysis to “Ode to a Nightingale”

I. Read and annotate the author’s biography

II. Read and annotate the poem “Ode to a Nightingale” by:

- Summarizing each stanza in your own words
- Circling unfamiliar words
- Demonstrating your thought process as you read.

III. Respond to the following questions following response to literature guidelines that include answering in complete statements, and including quotes and examples from the poem to support your answers.

1. Is the speaker afraid of death, or he is just afraid of old age? How are death and old age treated differently in the poem?
2. What does he mean by calling the nightingale "immortal"?
3. Why is the speaker "half in love" with death in stanza 6?
4. Is he being serious when he says that he wouldn't mind dying at midnight to the nightingale's song? How can you tell?

Extended Response:

Choose one of the following questions to answer in extended response form. Your answer should be at least three paragraphs long.

1. Aside from your dreams, have you ever felt like you were in a different reality? What inspired this feeling, and what brought you back to the normal world?

2. Have you ever been unable to tell the difference between life and a dream? Have you ever woken up from a dream, and felt that it was real? How do we know that our dreams are not real?
3. Do you think birds have any concept of "beauty"? Do they know that their songs are "beautiful," or is that just a projection of human ideas?

Grading Rubric

Annotations are thorough and follow instructions _____/10

Responses are complete and include the question as a statement _____/5

Responses clearly indicate that you understood the selection _____/10

Quotes and or/examples from the text are used to support your answers ____/5

Grammar and spelling are correct, with few or minimal errors _____/5

Extended response is thorough and demonstrates an understanding of the story ____/5

Total: _____/40