

 ASYPMTOTE
The background is a watercolor illustration of a landscape. The sky is a mix of orange and red, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. In the middle ground, there are several structures: two tall, thin, red lattice towers, two large dark blue domes, and a central building with a white arched doorway. The foreground shows dark, layered rock formations or hills in shades of blue and grey, with some white highlights. The overall style is painterly and atmospheric.

A PRIMAL DESIGN

SPRING 2020 EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

Spring 2020 | A PRIMAL DESIGN

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Spring 2020 issue of the *Asymptote* Educator's Guide!

Learning and teaching have undergone dramatic changes with the current pandemic. Many of these changes are here to last. To support educators in this dynamic environment, *Asymptote's* educational team has created lesson plans for remote learning. As always, we have based these lesson plans on content from the current issue of *Asymptote* available here: <http://asymptotejournal.com/apr-2020>. Learning resources vary greatly across institutions, countries and cultures, which is why these lesson plans suggest alternative solutions for online learning ranging from learning management systems such as Canvas or Blackboard to setting up a simple google site to use as a class home base. An appendix explains 'asynchronous communication structures in online communication,' that is, the various ways in which instructor and students can communicate in an online environment without emulating a face-to-face classroom.

The lesson plans in this Educator's Guide are based on pieces published in our Spring 2020 issue, "A Primal Design." The first lesson plan, "Travelogue as Moral Enquiry," presents a self-guided project based on the translation of Durian Sukegawa's journal excerpt "Cycling the Narrow Road to the Deep North." Students read Sukegawa's travelogue where he reflects on the environmental and social aftermath of the nuclear accident in Fukushima. They go on to research local responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and create their own travelogues to document the changes in their communities. The next lesson plan, "From One Storyteller to the Next" uses Tareq Emam's short story "Through Sightless Eyes" to have students investigate the distinction between a character in a story and its author. For comparison, students also read Borges' short story "Borges and I." The lesson plan "Shapeshifters: Translators as Interpreters, Performers and Artists" supplies guided reading assignments for Fiona Bell's essay "The Diva Mode of Translation" that encourage students to explore the ideas in a complex text. To this end, students read the essay repeatedly in order to identify and understand the intellectual themes it alludes to. A range of writing assignments foster further understanding of possible approaches to literary translation. The lesson plan "Between Languages" is based on a translated selection of poems from *Deche Bitoope* (The Crab's Hard Shell) by Natalia Toledo. Students consider the poems in the context of their rich cultural and linguistic origin and explore sensory details to write their own poems about an influential person in their lives. In "Setting the Stage," the fifth lesson plan in this Guide, students research dramatic devices and Russia's society at the turn of the 20th century to supplement their reading of the last act in Anton Chekhov's play *The Cherry Orchard*. Visual mood boards encourage students to document their research and serve as a means to compare the play's setting with their own communities. The lesson plan "What Even We Don't Know" has students observe how Mirza Athar Baig's "Junkshop; or 'Everything Thrown in the Trash is Not Trash'" plays with various points of view. Translated from Urdu, this excerpt from a novel also provides a glimpse of Pakistani culture. The corresponding lesson plan has students engage both with the play on point of view and the text's surrealism. The last lesson plan in this Guide, "Speak. Repeat," asks students to consider the uses of repetition in poetry. Students watch a TED Ed video on various kinds of repetition found in poetry and investigate the function of

repetition in the two poems from *Masters of a Dying Art* by Claudiu Komartin whose translations into English are featured in the Spring 2020 issue of *Asymptote*.

We realize that the age ranges and instructional contexts for each lesson vary, and so we encourage educators to adjust these lessons to meet their needs, and to record these modifications. Your classroom and teaching experience is valuable to us, and hearing it helps us improve our formation of the next guide. Please leave feedback and suggestions here.

Finally, if you like what we do and want to get involved, we would love to hear more from you! We are currently seeking contributors willing to share thoughts and experiences about teaching world literature through the *Asymptote* blog (<http://asymptotejournal.com/blog>). We'd especially love to read and share your anecdotes from the lessons you teach based on this guide or using other *Asymptote* content. Let your stories inspire others! *Asymptote for Educators* is interested in publishing student work as well. If your students have produced excellent responses to the assignments offered in this guide, other work to do with *Asymptote* content, or want to participate in the global conversation about translated literature as it relates to them, we are currently accepting submissions.

If you're interested in contributing, collaborating, or if you'd like to give us additional feedback, please contact us at education@asymptotejournal.com.

Travelogue as Moral Inquiry

“Cycling the Narrow Road to the Deep North” by Durian Sukegawa, translated by Alison Watts

Durian Sukegawa retraces the steps of the famous poet Bashō, cycling to Fukushima to investigate and report on the lingering effects of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster on Japan and the Japanese people.

“Cycling the Narrow Road to the Deep North: Thoughts, Sights and Encounters” by Durian Sukegawa, translated by Alison Watts

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/nonfiction/durian-sukegawa-cycling-the-narrow-road-to-the-deep-north-thoughts-sights-and-encounters/>

Learning Objectives

At the end of this unit, students will be able to

- Identify the main causes and some of the consequent concerns around the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear crisis
- Define pathos as a rhetorical device and identify examples in the text
- Conduct research into local responses to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Incorporate research to compose a travelogue narrative in a series of short vignettes
- Utilize pathos to craft their travelogues to investigate public health policies in their respective town/city/country or the context of a global response

Assessment

Comprehension questions

Peer discussion board posts

Group workshop participation/responses

Completed first draft of travelogue

Completed second draft of travelogue with short reflection explaining the rationale for their revisions

Approximate Grade Level

High school students

University students

Materials Needed

“Cycling the Narrow Road to the Deep North: Thoughts, Sights and Encounters” by Durian Sukegawa

Learning management system software with a discussion board feature, such as Canvas or

Blackboard, or a class blog created using free sites such as WordPress, Wix, etc.

Supplemental Materials

“Inside the Slow and Dangerous Clean Up of the Fukushima Nuclear Crisis”: PBS

A video about the ongoing cleanup process in Fukushima (8:58)

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/fukushima-nuclear-crisis-continues-unfold>

“How to Move a Mountain of Radioactive Soil”: BBC News

A video about the removal of radioactive soil at the site (3:39)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltOLgSYySGg>

Google map of Bashō's journey

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?hl=en&ie=UTF8&msa=0&ll=36.5041656371637%2C140.28937925781247&mid=1Evwh-v0rvKcjtZTXeGCdBu6EjY&z=9>

Definition of 'pathos' with examples

<https://literarydevices.net/pathos/>

Approximate Length

This lesson plan is designed for asynchronous online learning; the writing exercises can all be fashioned as an ongoing, semester-long journaling assignment.

Lesson One: Reading Comprehension (3–5 hours)

Lesson Two: Research/Exploration (10–15 hours)

Lesson Three: Group Workshop of Student Travelogues (30–45 min per travelogue)

Lesson One: Reading Comprehension

Reading: Students read “Cycling the Narrow Road to the Deep North,” then watch “How to Move a Mountain of Radioactive Soil” and “Inside the Slow and Dangerous Clean Up of the Fukushima Nuclear Crisis.”

Discussion Board (3-4 hours):

When finished reading and watching the videos, students post their reactions to the discussion board. The following reading comprehension questions may be used for the discussion board:

Section 1: *Cycling the Narrow Road to the Deep North*

- Why did Sukegawa set out on a bicycle to visit Fukushima?
- What is his central driving question?
- Why does he feel he isn't being true to himself?

Section 2: *Traveling North by Bicycle*

- What were the major issues affecting Japan in 2012 when Sukegawa first set out on his journey?
- Why was he conflicted about going public with the stories of the people he spoke with?

Section 3: *Decontamination*

- What do the authorities consider to qualify for the designation of “decontamination completed”?
- How does Sukegawa react?

Section 4: *Is it Right to Make Radiation Levels Public?*

- Find an example of pathos. How is it effective/affecting? (For example, the children who had found refuge at the school are now forced to stay inside.)
- In what ways are the children's human rights being violated?
- Why does Sukegawa begin have doubts about his journey?

Section 5: *No Need to Come Back*

- Why does W- tell his daughter not to return to Fukushima when she leaves for university?

Section 6: *Questioning My Journey Under a Blazing Sun*

- In this section, what prompts Sukegawa to question his goals of the journey?
- How do the details of the setting—the heat, the rising hills—parallel and reflect Sukegawa's inner struggle with his journey?

Section 7: *The Street Portrait Artist and Entertainer*

- How is the street portrait artist honoring the dead?

- Identify an example of pathos. How does it add to the effect of this section on you as a reader? (For example: The portrait for the grieving mother is used to show what her child may have looked like had the child lived).

Section 8: *The Burned-Out School*

- Why does Sukegawa mention [Yoshitsune Minamoto](#)? What parallels between himself and Minamoto might he be trying to draw?
- Why do you think Sukegawa incorporated photos? What is their effect?

Section 9: *What Happened After?*

- Why is W- worried that the “actual damage and loss sustained from the nuclear disaster” might “fade from” people’s memories? How might the work Sukegawa is doing combat this “fading”?
- What might the return of W-’s daughter to Fukushima symbolize?

Section 10: *Can the Forests be Decontaminated?*

- Why does Sukegawa think the black bags will continue to mushroom? Why does he choose the word “mushroom”? (Is it to evoke the land, i.e., a fungus spreading? Or is he trying to connect the waste to the mushroom cloud associated with nuclear explosions? Why else might he choose this word?)
- How does Sukegawa’s account corroborate or differ from the BBC video “How to Move a Mountain of Radioactive Soil”?

Section 11: *To the Fukushima Daiichi Plant*

- How does Sukegawa’s description of his visit compare with the PBS video “Inside the Slow and Dangerous Clean Up of the Fukushima Nuclear Crisis”? What does the sushi-train restaurant symbolize? Is it an example of the use of pathos? How does the irony of the restaurant’s name, Atom, add to the pathos?

Section 12: *The Basis for a Decommissioning Period of 30 to 40 Years*

- What is Sukegawa's reaction to the TEPCO employee's rationale for the decommissioning timeline?
- How much will the decommission process cost the Japanese people? How does the TEPCO employee hope to offset those costs? And what is Sukegawa’s reaction?

Students should be encouraged to post their own reactions and comment on their peers’ responses. As students react to the reading and videos, the instructor can reply to student posts, pointing out additional examples of pathos in the text.

Alternatively, students can be assigned individual sections for which to compose their own comprehension questions, thus becoming the teacher for the assigned section. The instructor can then post follow-up questions to guide the discussion.

Lesson Two: Research/Exploration

Research (10–15 hours): Students conduct research and compose their own journeys as ethical inquiries into their government’s responses to the COVID-19 pandemic on the local, national, or global scale. Students then write their own travelogues as inquiries into how COVID-19 has affected their communities.

Students walk or cycle through their neighborhood, looking at the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on their immediate surroundings. How has their neighborhood changed? (This research can be done digitally if more stringent social distancing/quarantine guidelines are in effect in their respective locales).

Encourage students to take Sukegawa’s travelogue as a model to be emulated. Each stop in the neighborhood can be one entry in the travelogue, a 100–250-word vignette. The total travelogue word count recommendation should be around 1000–1200 words or longer.

As they draft their travelogues, students should reflect on the changes in their communities and use pathos and the research they have conducted to advance an argument regarding their government’s response to the crisis. Students may wish to pursue the following possible lines of inquiry:

- How quickly have your communities and governments responded to the crisis?
- What has been prioritized and why?
- Whose voices are being heard and considered in government? In the media?
- Which communities have been most affected?
- How have everyday activities changed?
- How have individuals and communities adapted?
- How has the environment changed?

Students should be encouraged to describe their setting in detail, to incorporate discussions with friends, family, and neighbors, and to paint a picture of the pandemic’s effects on their community. The incorporation of other media is optional: Photos, links to video clips, or a Google map (like the map of Bashō’s journey) might help students visualize their respective locations and build a sense of community in the online classroom.

The assignment can be done in stages over several classes with students sharing their vignettes on the discussion board and commenting on each other’s work. It could also be structured as a semester-long activity by assigning students one vignette a week, as a diary, to track the spread of COVID-19, its impact, the policies put in place to contain it, and their community’s reactions.

Students give and receive feedback to/from at least two other students (depending on class size).

Lesson Three:

Group Workshop of Student Travelogues (30-45 minutes to workshop each travelogue):

The instructor selects completed first drafts for group workshop. Students respond to the travelogue, each other, and the instructor’s comments.

Possible questions for workshop discussion are as follows:

Setting

- Does the writer describe their world in a thorough way? Can you visualize the setting?
- Does the setting parallel any of the writer’s internal thoughts or feelings?
- Is there a sense of movement as the writer/narrator moves through their world?

Pathos

- Are there effective examples of pathos? Are they cliched or original? Why? Which are most affecting and why?

Sense of Purpose

- Is the writer addressing a question or advancing an argument? Is their position clear? Do you have a sense of them grappling with a problem?

Symbols

- Has the writer created any symbols to tie the travelogue together? Are there people or places that work as metaphors addressing a larger question in the text?

(Optional) Group Workshop: Second Round ((30-45 minutes to workshop each travelogue: Students will revise their first drafts by incorporating peer and instructor comments. After they have completed a second draft of their travelogue and a short (250-word) reflection explaining the rationale behind their revisions, the instructor can select completed second drafts for another round of group workshop. Students' workshop comments should focus on how the revisions have changed the travelogue.

From One Storyteller to the Next: Authorship, Homage, and Literary Discourse

“Through Sightless Eyes” by Tareq Emam, translated by Katherine Van de Vate

In many circles, a work of literature, art, or music receives praise for breaking ground, breaking through barriers, and for its originality. However, it is almost impossible to imagine a creative human endeavor of any kind that is isolated from outside influences and bears no artistic debts. Some works are subtle about influences while others are more explicit, drawing active attention to their artistic forebears.

Tareq Emam’s “Through Sightless Eyes” encapsulates the impulse to imitate, pay homage, and recognize the work of the Argentinian short-story writer, poet, and essayist Jorge Luis Borges. In this lesson, students will discuss the ways in which literature functions as “discourse”—in other words, as a conversation in which writers and readers are the participants. Additionally, students will be asked to consider the ways in which an author becomes something of a literary figure and how that shapes our understanding of literature.

“Through Sightless Eyes” by Tareq Emam, translated by Katherine Van de Vate

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/fiction/tareq-emam-through-sightless-eyes/>

Learning Objectives

At the end of this unit, students will be able to

- Identify narrator as distinct from the author giving his or her name to the piece
- Explain the significance of the author figure in terms of influence and legacy
- Could this be recast as: “Describe how an author’s work and the work that has influenced him or her are connected across temporal and geographic barriers
- Understand how these connections undergird the concept of “World Literature”

Assessment

Written response

Discussion board posts

Paragraph on style and voice

One-page creative piece

Approximate Grade Level

University students; adaptable for high school students

Materials Needed

“Through Sightless Eyes” by Tareq Emam

Shared class document formatted to include three columns for recording observations about the text

“To Borges, or About Him”: BBC News

A radio show discussion about the life and legacy of Borges (45 minutes)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0076182>

“Borges and I” from Anagrammatically Correct

<http://anagrammatically.com/2008/01/31/borges-and-i-borges-y-yo/>

Approximate Length

Lesson One (70 minutes), Lesson Two (70 minutes) and Lesson Three (80 minutes)

Lesson One: The Author Figure “Borges”

Student Preparation (25 minutes): Students read Tareq Emam’s “Through Sightless Eyes” and prepare notes. These notes are to be divided into two columns, one that tracks all of the characteristics of the “you” in the story and the other for the “blind writer.” In each column, students should include at least two quotations to show the context that these selections are drawn from. They should also take note of any striking elements from other parts of the text.

Students should approach the text without researching Borges (emphasize that you want to limit notes to what can be found in the story itself).

In a shared class document or folder, each student adds one element from their notes. If they find both columns filled or their examples already taken, they can add another miscellaneous detail they noticed to a third column (for example a detail about the library, book).

Student Analysis (25 minutes): At this point, each student should have a personal collection of notes and observations and well as a general class document for reference in case they feel stuck. In either an asynchronous forum or synchronous discussion, students should choose one of their own observations from their notes and one selection from the class document that they felt they missed or are otherwise drawn toward.

Keeping in mind that Emam uses Borges, the writer, as a character in his story, students should respond to the following question:

- What can you infer from Emam's characterization about his opinion about Borges? Give evidence from the text.

Students capture their responses in a prose paragraph and submit it to the teacher. The paragraph should consist of complete sentences rather than bullet points or sentence fragments, and their responses should include the following elements:

- i. A relevant observation and the reason it seemed more important than the other examples they noted down
- ii. An analysis of the example focusing on explaining the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of the selections (for example, why are the pages of the book blank? What does this mean for the story?)
- iii. The significance of the observation and analysis for an understanding of the story as a whole. How does it help you and others understand the story in a new or different way?

Instructor Response: Review individual student submissions and choose a few from each column to add to the common pool of notes. Highlight examples that, for instance, emphasize senses of perception and the craft of representation. The instructor may also provide an example and analysis that the class might have missed.

Lesson 2: Borges, You, and I

Student Reading and Comprehension (45 minutes): Draw students’ attention to the dedication at the beginning of the short story: “To Borges, or About Him,” then direct the students to this 45-

minute radio show discussion about the life and legacy of Borges:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0076182>

Encourage the students to focus on the works and legacy of Borges. In either a discussion or in the shared document have the students share examples from the broadcast that they feel are relevant to the legacy of Borges and why an Arabic-language writer like Tareq Emam might be drawn to Borges. Students should also respond to the following questions:

- How has Borges expanded or changed the confines of Argentine literature? Latin American literature? Spanish-language literature?

Student Blog Post or Discussion (20 minutes): Next, direct the students to the short piece: “Borges and I” (<http://anagrammatically.com/2008/01/31/borges-and-i-borges-y-yo/>). Using three columns, have the students list attributes belonging to Borges, “I,” and both Borges and “I” in a private document. Once the students have taken a few minutes to write out their notes, discuss the following key concepts as a whole group:

- Why does “I” feel at such a remove from Borges when they share many characteristics?
- How do they perceive the world differently?
- To whom does Borges’ literature belong?
- How can we relate this split back to Tareq Emam’s “Through Sightless Eyes”?
- What stylistic parallels can we draw between the two stories?
- In what ways does “Through Sightless Eyes” continue on from Borges? Comment on it? Does it work as a standalone work? How does learning about or reading Borges change our impression of the work?
- Can we think of other works of art (literature, film, visual art, etc.) that draw attention to their connections to artistic predecessors? Are these homages overt or implicit? Why do you think some are more explicit about these parallels?
- Can we draw any parallels between the figures of “Borges” and “I” in “Borges and I” and “the storyteller” and “you” in “Through Sightless Eyes”? What does Tareq Emam isolate to pay tribute to Borges?

Lesson 3: Creative Imitation and Homage

Creative Writing (60 minutes): Students should identify a writer (either one they have encountered in class or one whom they personally enjoy) and write a paragraph or two identifying why they’ve selected that specific author and how they would characterize this writer’s style and voice. Next, using these notes and any pre-existing knowledge of this writer, students write an original one-page creative piece as an homage to this writer, mimicking the author’s style as closely as possible.

Whole-class discussion or informal asynchronous discussion (20 minutes): Ask students to share their choices, discuss what they noticed in terms of voice or style of their chosen writer, and to reflect upon the difficulties they faced in attempting to imitate their author’s voice and style.

Instructor Response: Choose two or three student examples to share (with permission) with the class. Select examples that demonstrate that skillful analysis was elicited during the creative assignment. The instructor should also highlight other elements or examples that are pleasurable, playful, unusual, or in other ways noteworthy.

Shapeshifters: Translators as Interpreters, Performers and Artists

“The Diva Mode of Translation” by Fiona Bell

The lesson plan "Shapeshifters: Translators as Interpreters, Performers and Artists" supplies guided reading assignments for Fiona Bell's essay "The Diva Mode of Translation" that encourage students to explore the ideas in a complex text. To this end, students read the essay repeatedly in order to identify and understand the intellectual themes it alludes to. A range of writing assignments foster further understanding of possible approaches to literary translation.

“The Diva Mode of Translation” by Fiona Bell

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/nonfiction/fiona-bell-the-diva-mode-of-translation/>

Learning Objectives

At the end of this unit, students will be able to

- Read and annotate a complex text
- Understand what Bell refers to as the "diva method" of translation
- Analyze the analogy between opera singers and translation
- Understand and discuss Bell's [Champlain's] gendered approach
- Appreciate Bell's critique of traditional translation concepts

Assessment

Responses to questions

Peer discussion

Response papers

Approximate Grade Level

University students

Materials Needed

"The Diva Mode of Translation"

Learning management system software or a class home base (a Google site, blog, or similar) for posting assignments and curated student responses.

Resources for the Instructor

["Questioning to Check for Understanding"](#) from *Guided Instruction* by Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey, particularly the section "What do you do with their answers"

Available here: <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/111017/chapters/Questioning-to-Check-for-Understanding.aspx>

Quick introduction on [how to create a Google survey](#)

Available here: <https://youtu.be/fXQDFhKFuTU>

Optional Materials

"Vissi d'Arte," [recording with English subtitles](#)

Available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLc6nfvgN8A&feature=youtu.be>
Lori Chamberlain, "[Gender and the Metaphors of Translation](#)"

Available here:

https://www.academia.edu/37845514/Lori_Chamberlain_Gender_and_the_Metaphors_of_Translation

Approximate Length

Lesson One, Lesson Two, Lesson Three, Lesson Four

Depends on students' reading skills and intellectual maturity. At least 2 hours per lesson.

Note to the instructor

This lesson is aimed at undergraduate university students. The idea is to have students explore the topics and arguments in a complex text. Students read for multiple levels of comprehension, analyze the text on a rhetorical level, and write a final response paper.

This lesson is divided in four parts, which should be spaced out, ideally over a four-week period. Each week, the instructor summarizes students' work and gives out further instructions. Students are divided into pairs and discuss questions.

A longer response paper serves as final assessment.

Pre-Lesson Activity (60 minutes)

Before beginning the first lesson, students reflect and respond to a series of preparatory questions. These questions could be formatted and collated as a Google survey; see "Resources for the Instructor," above. If you are using a learning management system, you may wish to provide the questions as a quiz, not as a discussion, to encourage students to think and work independently.

Questions to think about before reading; respond in 100 words or more:

1. Have you ever heard the word "diva"? If yes, what do you associate with the word? If no, research it and provide a definition in your own words. Include ideas about the [connotation](#) of the word.
2. What do you know about literary translation? Have you ever read a literary work in translation? What do you think are the challenges in translating a literary work? How can we think about the quality of a literary translation?
3. We are about to read an essay, "The Diva Mode of Translation," by Fiona Bell, a translator and scholar of Russian literature. What do you think the essay might be about?

After writing responses to the above questions, students read the essay "The Diva Mode of Translation." Make a copy or printout and number the paragraphs for a deeper reading.

Lesson One: Reading and Comprehension

Student-Generated Content: The instructor posts a curated selection of student responses to the preliminary questions on the class website. These responses may be posted with or without student names. The instructor might point out particularly interesting responses.

Reading assignment (to be posted on class website) (90minutes): The purpose of lesson one is to support students in understanding the text on a non-trivial level. Students should send their

responses to the instructor via email or through another **private** communication channel (for example, a Google survey or quiz) prior to the next lesson. Alternatively, students can create private Google documents and share them with the instructor.

After reading the essay, students should consider and write responses (50 words or more) to the following questions:

- What is the main idea of Bell's essay?
- What is the "Diva Mode of Translation"?
- How is it different from traditional approaches to literary translation?

Lesson Two: Reading and Responses

Student-Generated Content: The instructor posts a selection of student responses to the preliminary questions on the class website. These responses may be posted with or without student names.

The instructor comments on the responses, provides clarifications and addresses misconceptions.

Reading Comprehension (2 to 3 hours): Students are asked to consider a more complex set of reading comprehension questions in lesson two. These questions require a close reading of the text, paragraph by paragraph. Students answer these questions through a private communication channel (such as a quiz or similar; see above).

However, it might be interesting and productive to have students collaborate on a few of these questions. Such collaboration could happen *synchronously* in a google chat or *asynchronously* via email. If you decide to set this up as a peer learning activity, divide the students into (heterogenous) pairs, ask them to decide on a communication mode, and to record and edit their discussion. The edited scripts serve as an assessment. Depending on the number of students in the class, you may post student scripts on the class website in their entirety, or use interesting excerpts.

Questions for reading:

1. How is the diva in paragraph one similar to Thetis in paragraph two—apart from the fact that “diva” is the Italian word for “goddess”?
2. In paragraph three, how does Fiona Bell expand on the comparison she has set up in paragraphs one and two? (Does that surprise you?)
3. “Interpreters shapeshift between different source authors, but they also shapeshift between functions, starting as readers and ultimately becoming musicians, performers, or writers” (paragraph five). Use one of these examples of interpreters and explain this “shapeshifting between functions” using a concrete example.
4. *How does Bell illustrate the “static identity” of the diva in paragraph six? How is the [“Vissi d'arte” aria](#) an “autobiographical meditation on what it is to be a singer”?
5. How does, according to Bell, the identity of the literary translator differ from the “static identity” of the diva? (read paragraphs seven through nine to respond to this question)
6. *(optional) Can you think of “a typical Ovidian lover’s narrative: love at first sight, pursuit, and rape”? Give an example from Greek myth.
7. Paraphrase paragraph 11. How does paragraph 12 support the claim made in paragraph 11?
8. In paragraphs 13 and 14, Bell draws an analogy between the importance of the opera singer and that of the translator. She also makes a distinction regarding the historical relevance of both. What does she base that distinction on?

9. *Why might it be important that “[t]he first translation of a work into the target language [...] calls for a translator's evenhanded reservation”? Similarly, why would a translator want to “choose to prioritize the author's expression over their own” if the author is one of “less privilege”?
10. *How does your analysis of paragraph 16 relate to the idea that “the difference between production and reproduction is essential to the establishment of power” (paragraph 11)?
11. *In paragraphs 17 through 22, Bell develops her notion of the “diva mode of translation” as distinct from a merely “technical, rational, and scholarly task” (paragraph 19). What can you infer about Bell's position regarding literary translation? Use evidence from the text.
12. What do you think about these different approaches to translation? Have you ever read a translated literary text with an explicit awareness that it had been translated? If yes, how did that awareness affect your reading? If no, how do you think such an awareness would change your reading?

*Denotes a more difficult question.

Lesson Three: Reading & Questioning

Student-Generated Content: The instructor posts a selection of student responses to the preliminary questions on the class website. These responses may be posted with or without student names.

The instructor comments on responses, provides clarifications and addresses misconceptions.

Students are to read these responses and go back to their own work to add what they have understood now that they did not understand before.

Re-Reading (60 minutes): Students are to read Fiona Bell's essay again and formulate three questions that explore one of the themes Bell touches on. The questions should be based on students' analysis of Bell's text, but they should *go beyond the idea of the literary translator*. They should also be *questions that students do not know the answer to* and that cannot be answered with a simple “yes” or “no.”

Themes that students may want to explore could include the following:

- Gender and power
- Gender and authorship
- Shapeshifting
- The primacy of authorship
- Translation in interpersonal communication

Lesson Four: Creation

Student-Generated Content: The instructor posts a selection of student-generated questions on the class website and asks students to address them in writing.

Writing Task (3 to 6 hours): The assignment options for the writing task are as follows:

- Write a response paper that addresses one of the questions that were posted on the class website (1000 words)
- What do you think about the “diva mode of translation”? Look at one of the examples Bell mentions in her essay and use it to support your opinion (2500 words; extra credit).
- For advanced students: Read Rosmarie Waldrop's essay “[The Joy of the Demiurge](#).” How is Waldrop's experience as a translator similar to or different from Bell's notion of the “diva Translator”?
[Note: The word “demiurge” is an English word derived from *demiurgus*, a Latinized form of the [Greek](#) δημιουργός or dēmiurgós. It was originally a common noun meaning “craftsman” or “artisan,” but gradually came to mean “producer,” and eventually “creator.”]
- Choose one of the poetic experiments on [Charles Bernstein's website](#). Submit both the resulting text and a brief description of your process.

Between Languages

From *Deche Bitoope* by Natalia Toledo, translated by Clare Sullivan

is based on a translated selection of poems from *Deche Bitoope* (The Crab's Hard Shell) by Natalia Toledo. Students consider the poems in the context of their rich cultural and linguistic origin and explore sensory details to write their own poems about an influential person in their lives.

From *Deche Bitoope* by Natalia Toledo, translated by Clare Sullivan

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/poetry/natalia-toledo-deche-bitoope/>

Learning Objectives

At the end of this unit, students will be able to

Summarize information about Zapotec endangered languages and relate it to the poems

Identify examples of sensory imagery

Discuss details about an influential person and relate these to language, culture, and tradition

Compose an original poem about an influential person

Assessment

Written answers to questions about the readings

Completed drafts of a poem about an important person using sensory imagery or personification

Approximate Grade Level

High school or university students

Materials Needed

From *Deche Bitoope* by Natalia Toledo, translated by Clare Sullivan

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/poetry/natalia-toledo-deche-bitoope/>

Course learning management system: This lesson could be conducted entirely asynchronously. If there is a chance for a synchronous session, checkpoints #1 or #2 would be ideal for a class discussion and for the teacher to set up the remaining steps in the lesson.

Approximate Length

Lesson one is composed of four steps; each step requires approximately 2 hours.

Lesson One: Reading and Writing

In this unit, students will read several poems written by Natalia Toledo and translated by Clare Sullivan. There are four main steps to complete this unit. At each checkpoint, students are required to submit an assignment to the teacher.

Step One: Background – read “Untitled”; quotations; checkpoint #1

Step Two: Read “Prayer,” “Valle de Bravo Convent 1,” “Olga,” “House of Bees”; checkpoint #2

Step Three: Family and friends discussion; checkpoint #3

Step Four: Write a poem; checkpoint #4; checkpoint #5

Step One (2 hours): Students read the poem written by Natalia Toledo and translated by Clare Sullivan and think about their answers to a series of questions. Then, students read six quotations about the author and her native language.

“Untitled”

Your wings know how much I missed him, berelele
you read my hand’s heart like a gypsy.
For days I slept beneath the shade that covered my eyes,
until a boy appeared who took up my heart sickness in his arms
and made me his own on the night’s last star.

Reading Questions : Students write down responses to the following questions:

What do you think “berelele” means?
What language do you think it comes from?
What do you think the author is trying to convey?

Quotations: Students read the following six quotations about Natalia Toledo.

“Though Zapotec has existed as a written language for more than 2,000 years, Natalia Toledo was the first woman to write and publish poetry in her native language.”

<http://www.rochester.edu/College/translation/threepersent/2016/04/19/the-black-flower-and-other-zapotec-poems-by-natalia-toledo-why-this-book-should-win/>

“Toledo’s writing has been concerned with women and their relationship to the environment. Her writing, along with other writers' use of the Zapotec language in their work, has helped boost demand in Mexico to make indigenous cultures more visible. Toledo enjoys using the Zapotec language because she feels that it has ‘a great aesthetic sensibility for creating images and beauty.’”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natalia_Toledo

“In this book [*Deche Biotoope*], she [Natalia Toledo] returns to the landscape of her childhood where animals predict the future and grandmothers shape masa. Again, she questions Zapotec traditions even as she mourns their disappearance. But in these poems Toledo takes more risks: she exposes her pain and that of her people in images at once elegant and raw. Like the crab, she edges into the past, but the hard shell of experience or cynicism provides only temporary protection to the human vulnerability beneath it.”

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/poetry/natalia-toledo-poems/>

“Toledo translates all her own poetry into Spanish, a necessary practice for indigenous poets since professional translators from indigenous languages are a scarce commodity. [...] The first poem speaks to a ‘berelele,’ a Zapotec migratory bird (a type of stone-curlew). Since the bird’s rapid call sounds like its name and foretells the rain, Toledo calls it a gypsy. I [the translator] chose to keep the original name here.”

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/poetry/natalia-toledo-poems/>

“Of the 140 languages spoken in Mexico, 60 are at risk of being silenced forever, linguists say. [...] The languages most at risk in Mexico—including the Zapotec, the Chatino, and the Seri tongues—are undergoing ‘rapid change’ for a number of reasons, says Lourdes de Leon Pasquel, a linguist at CIESAS. Among them are ‘migration, social instability, [and] economic and ideological factors that push speakers to adopt Spanish.’”

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/4/140410-mexico-languages-speaking-cultures-world-zapotec/>

“Mexico is indeed home to many endangered languages, but also to many language-revitalization efforts—for example, among the Zapotec and Chitin communities in Oaxaca, and the Seri,’ Harrison said. For instance, Harrison has been working with a team of linguists, partially sponsored by National Geographic, to build a talking dictionary for Zapotec speakers in the Tlacolula Valley. ‘The Tlacolula Zapotec are a rural, agrarian community, but they are quickly crossing the digital divide, and eager to create digital tools and resources for their language,’ Harrison said.”

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/4/140410-mexico-languages-speaking-cultures-world-zapotec/>

Checkpoint #1 (Students post their answer to the following questions to the class discussion board:

What have you learned about the author and the Zapotec languages?

How do you think poetry can be used to revitalize or preserve language, culture, and tradition?

After reading both the poem and this information, what do you think the poem conveys about the landscape and people of Toledo’s childhood?

What do you think is the most interesting thing from the poem or these quotations? Why?

Then, students read their classmates’ responses and write a comment or follow-up question to a few of their posts.

Step Two (2 hours): Students read the four poems listed below. Additional information for each poem is provided. After reading, students complete checkpoint #2.

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/poetry/natalia-toledo-poems/>

“Prayer”

Petate: a mat, especially a sleeping mat, typically made of straw or dried palm leaves

Jicalpestle: a cup that is painted with multicolored flower designs

“Valle de Bravo Convent 1”

Huipil: a straight slip-over one-piece garment that is often decorated with embroidery and worn by women in Mexico and South America

“Olga”

“In ‘Olga’ there are no words for ‘cinnamon’ or ‘earrings’ in Zapotec so the poet describes these objects as ‘sweet bark’ and ‘metal that hangs from women’s ears.’”

(from the Translator’s Note)

“House of Bees”

“The poem ‘Lidxi Bizu’ (‘House of Bees’) mourns the death of the poet’s grandmother. The Zapotec language grants inanimate objects human attributes: ‘my house’s mouth’ (‘ruaa yóo’) is a door and ‘trees cried sap.’ This pine tar is used to make incense for funerals, but women also use it to perfume their hair. The narrator recalls how weeping women rubbed her own head with the sticky, fragrant substance. Zapotec imagery also fuses the natural and human worlds so I return to the original language’s striking image of pain: ‘a guichi birooba’ ndaani’ mudu ladxidua’ (‘spines grew inside my heart’s cocoon’).”

(From the Translator’s Note)

Checkpoint #2 (x minutes): Students choose two of the poems for consideration. After reflecting on the questions below, they submit their answers to the teacher.

Poem One Title:

What does the author write about in the poem? Which important person is discussed?
Which memories or feelings are conveyed? How are these related to language, culture, or tradition?
What sensory imagery (taste, touch, smell, sight, sound) is used in the poem?
Are there any examples of giving human attributes to inanimate objects in the poem?

Poem Two Title:

What does the author write about in the poem? Which important person is discussed?
Which memories or feelings are conveyed? How are these related to language, culture, or tradition?
What sensory imagery (taste, touch, smell, sight, sound) is used in the poem?
Are there any examples of giving human attributes to inanimate objects in the poem?

Self-Reflection

Could you identify the sensory imagery in the poems?
Could you make connections between the poem and language, culture, and tradition?
Which questions do you have about these poems?

Step Three (2 hours): Students follow the instructions below for a family and friends discussion. After finishing the discussion, students complete checkpoint #3.

Discussion Instructions:

In the poems we read by Natalia Toledo, the subjects were people, landscapes, and memories. Think of a person you would like to write about. This person could be someone you know (a family member, friend, teacher) or someone you have never met (a sports player, musician, historical figure). Discuss this person with your family or friends. Think about memories or feelings you have about this person and what you have learned from them. Also, think about how to describe the person: Try to be as specific as you can about details, and include sensory imagery (i.e., taste, touch, smell, sight, sound). Finally, talk about this person in relation to language, culture, or tradition (e.g. dialect, beliefs, values, arts, cooking, etc.). Communicate about these topics with family and friends, and then answer the questions listed in checkpoint #3.

Checkpoint #3 (x minutes): After conducting a family and friends discussion, students answer a series of questions (in complete sentences) and submit their responses to the teacher.

Thinking of the family members or friends you had your discussion with, consider the following questions:

Which person did your discussion focus on?
What do you think is the most powerful detail about the person you discussed?
Did your discussion of the person have any relation to language, culture, or tradition?
Summarize the most interesting aspect of your conversation.

Step Four (2 hours): In this step, students write a poem, peer review their classmates' poems, and submit a revised draft of their poem.

Poem Instructions:

Write a poem about the person you discussed in step three. Use sensory imagery or give human characteristics to inanimate objects in your poem. If you need a structure, follow "Olga" by Natalia Toledo as an example.

"Olga" Structure:

You are the ... who ...

...

who ...

who ...

My ...

You ...

and ...

...

Two things for sure:

...

Checkpoint #4 (2 hours): Students post a draft of your poem to the course discussion board for peer review. Then, students read at least two of their classmates' poems and provide suggestions for improvement.

To help guide the students comments, here is a list of possible questions to consider:

Does the writer describe an influential person?

Does the writer use sensory imagery? Are there other senses that you think the writer could tap into in this poem?

Does the writer give human attributes to inanimate objects?

Is there a connection between the person and language, culture, or tradition?

Can you visualize a memory or feeling as you read the poem? If not, what other details would you like to know?

Checkpoint #5 (45 minutes): Students revise their poems based on their own ideas and the input they have received from their classmates. Finally, they submit the revised draft of their poem to the teacher.

Sources used for this lesson:

<https://www.lexico.com/definition/petate>

<https://www.wordmeaning.org/spanish/jicalpeste.htm>

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/huipil>

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/4-tips-supporting-learning-home>

Setting the Stage

From *The Cherry Orchard* by Anton Chekhov, translated by Graham Schmidt

Students research dramatic devices and Russia's society at the turn of the 20th century to supplement their reading of the last act in Anton Chekhov's play *The Cherry Orchard*. Visual mood boards encourage students to document their research and serve as a means to compare the play's setting with their own communities.

The Cherry Orchard by Anton Chekhov, translated by Graham Schmidt

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/drama/anton-chekhov-the-cherry-orchard/>

Learning Objectives

At the end of this unit, students will be able to

- Recognize and analyze the components and structure of a play/an act/a scene
- Learn about Russian Empire in the turn of the 20th Century
- Discuss social-economic forces in their own community
- Discuss character construction and how it relates to the themes of the play
- Discuss the subversion of one's identity (acting out of place)
- Engage in a comparative approach

Assessment

Participation in group discussions

Comprehension questions

Forum post

Creation of a cast of three characters based on the students' home communities

Writing assignments

Approximate Grade Level

High school students

Materials Needed

Final act of *The Cherry Orchard* by Anton Chekhov, translated by Graham Schmidt:

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/drama/anton-chekhov-the-cherry-orchard/>

A computer and Google Suite, Zoom, Skype, or a learning management system to serve as a shared platform. The video conferencing application will be useful if the instructor decides to implement this lesson plan with synchronous learning.

Approximate Length

Two 30-minute lessons (60 minutes total) spaced out over two weeks

Note to the instructor:

This learning experience is aimed at high school students. The idea is to have students explore the components of a play and relate these to features of the community/society they live in.

The learning experience is divided into two lessons, both of which are quite short. Ideally, the lessons could be spaced out over a two-week period. Each week, the instructor starts the class with a preliminary task that will lead to a discussion by giving further directions and/or summarizing

students' work. Depending on technological resources, students might work in separate groups before reconvening as a class.

Online Synchronous Versus Asynchronous Learning

This lesson has been designed for online synchronous learning with a main discussion led by an instructor via a video conferencing application. However, the learning experience could be used in an asynchronous learning environment following the asynchronous-adapted structure listed below:

Lesson One

Preliminary work: The instructor asks students to email their answers or to share them via a home platform. Each student should reply to at least three responses.

In class: Answers to questions could be emailed to the instructor and then shared on a home platform. The answers should not be shorter than 75 words. For the dramatic devices, the instructor could share the table with the students shortly before asking them to synchronously react on a shared Google doc or other knowledge dump. The compressed timeline for sharing the table is important to prevent in-depth research on the internet and to encourage students to learn to articulate their own definitions. Alternatively, the questions could be answered in a timed Google survey.

Homework could be posted on the home page where students are requested to react on the home platform to the choice of quotes from the other students.

Lesson Two

Preliminary work: This component can be performed with the students using a video-conferencing app or by talking on the phone prior to the class.

In Class: Instead of presenting their mood boards, the students could be asked to write a short essay (400-500 words) explaining their choices and giving reasons why they associate these images with this society. These essays could be shared after being sent to the instructor, and the other students could be asked to react to at least one essay, perhaps by sharing other media that would echo what was presented in a mood board.

Homework: Homework assignments can be posted on the home platform.

Lesson One: Preliminary Discussion and Literary Devices

Preliminary work (30 minutes): Ask students to read the final act of *The Cherry Orchard* and *not* to do research on the entire play or read a plot summary. Supply limited background information on the play (for example, 20th century, Russia, social changes, futility of the aristocracy and bourgeoisie) On a shared document or platform, ask the students to answer the questions listed below to the best of their ability. Remind students that, as they are only reading the final act of the play, they will be left with gaps in their understanding.

Preliminary Questions:

- Title and playwright?
- Setting?
- Main characters/supporting characters?

- Main conflict?
- Resolution?
- Climax?

In Class (30 minutes): Use student answers to start a group discussion about the key elements in plays generally and in *The Cherry Orchard* in particular. Questions for the discussion may include the following:

- How are these key elements displayed?
- How are these key elements to the readers?
- How are they important for the spectator and/or the reader?
- What details on the plot are being provided?
- What did students feel they were missing when reading only the final act?
- What do they think happened in the other acts?

After the discussion, provide the final version of the questionnaire. Responses should be recorded in a shared document for future reference.

Next, share the below list of dramatic devices with students and ask them to come up with their own definitions for at least three terms. Students can work in small groups. Give the students a maximum of ten minutes to prevent in-depth internet research and to encourage them to articulate their own definitions. Then, regroup, and start a group discussion comparing their definitions. Don't hesitate to expand upon and complete their definitions.

Rising action	Monologue	Lighting
Falling action	Narration	Music
Foreshadowing	Breaking frames	Greek chorus
Soliloquy	Costumes	An aside
Dramatic irony	Flashbacks	Foil

Homework Assignment: Ask students to try and find quotes from the final act that would represent at least five of the dramatic devices defined in class. Have students share them on a shared platform.

Lesson Two: Mood Boards

Preliminary work (30 minutes): The previous lesson established that the play is set in the Russian Empire at the beginning of the 20th century. In small groups, ask students to prepare two comparative early-20th-century mood boards: one for the Russian Empire and one for their own country. These boards should represent what *they* think these two societies looked like. Search terms could include "early-20th-century Russian architecture, clothing, artists, politicians, aristocracy, bourgeoisie." A mood board is a kind of visual knowledge dump. To create a mood board, one needs to define a topic (here the early-20th-century Russian Empire) for which to collect images that reflect one's vision of the topic. A mood board can be produced by copying and pasting images from the internet into a Google document. Alternatively, students could use <https://www.thinglink.com>, a website that turns images into a multimedia launcher.

In Class (30 minutes): Each group starts by presenting their early-20th-century mood boards to the class. These presentations serve to exchange ideas on what this mood board would look like today for the society students live in.

Bring back the focus on the play's characters and their identities. In small groups, ask students to collect information on different levels of character analysis: physical, psychological, social, and moral. Then in the same small groups, ask students to categorize the characters of the final act into distinct groups. Reconvene as a class. Ask students to explain their choices. The following questions may help guide the discussion:

- Why these characters in this group?
- Do they act in accordance with their group's expectations?
- Do they act out of place?

Collect this information on a shared document as a knowledge map.

Homework Assignment: As an individual assignment, ask students to create three characters using the four different levels of character analysis (physical, psychological, social, and moral). These characters will represent three different categories that exist in the students' society. But just as in *The Cherry Orchard*, the students must show how these characters are more than the frame and the expectations their society is forcing on them. Their completed project can be shared with the whole class on the appropriate home platform.

What Even We Don't Know

“Junkshop; or ‘Everything Thrown in the Trash Is Not Trash’” by Mirza Athar Baig, translated by Haider Shahbaz

Students observe how Mirza Athar Baig's "Junkshop; or 'Everything Thrown in the Trash is Not Trash'" plays with various points of view. Translated from Urdu, this excerpt from a novel also provides a glimpse of Pakistani culture. The corresponding lesson plan has students engage both with the play on point of view and the text's surrealism.

Junkshop; or 'Everything Thrown in the Trash Is Not Trash' by Mirza Athar Baig, translated by Haider Shahbaz

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/fiction/junkshop-or-everything-thrown-in-the-trash-is-not-trash/>

Learning Objectives

At the end of this unit, students will be able to

- Perform a close reading of a literary text
- Reflect on the use and effect of point of view
- Identify metafiction and how metafiction is used in this particular text

Assessment

Discussion board posts

Written responses

Approximate Grade Level

High school or university students

Materials Needed

Definition of metafiction

[Hunter College's Guide to Annotation](#)

Approximate Length

Two lessons (45 minutes each)

Lesson One: Introduction to Metafiction

Pre-Class Activity: Students read the excerpt and annotate the text. They may want to use the "Hunter College's Guide to Annotation"; see above.

Students should pay particular attention to the following questions:

- From whose point of view is the text written?
- Are there multiple perspectives represented? If so, where are the shifts in perspective?
- How and where does the text acknowledge the existence of the reader?

Definitions and Discussion: Introduce the concept of metafiction. Use the following definition of metafiction:

- Metafiction is “a form of fiction that emphasizes its own constructedness in a way that continually reminds the reader to be aware that they are reading or viewing a fictional work.

Metafiction is self-conscious about language, literary form, and storytelling, and works of metafiction directly or indirectly draw attention to their status as artifacts.” (Patricia Waugh, from *Metafiction – The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction*. London, New York: Routledge, 1984, p. 2.)

Read the passage beginning with “But the thing that even Ashraf doesn’t know...” and ending with “Anything could have happened to that bottle” as a class. Ask students to comment with their annotations to this passage and build upon each other’s’ observations.

If you are using a learning management system:

- Students post their digital annotations and responses to the discussion board feature
- Students comment on other students’ responses and engage in a discussion about different aspects of the text that they had not considered. How this conversation continues depends upon the structure and limitations of your learning management system.
- Once students have considered each other’s responses, bring it back to a whole-group discussion. Was there some sort of consensus reached among the class? If not, why not? Which passages stood out the most?

If you are using a video conferencing application:

- Ask students how they responded to each pre-class activity question. Foster a discussion that examines how they connected their responses to the text.
- Once the students have considered each other’s responses, bring it back to a whole-group discussion. Was there some sort of consensus reached among the class? If not, why? Which passages stood out the most?

Guiding questions for the discussion can include:

- How does Baig gesture towards the reader? Is it direct or indirect? What specific language is evidence of this?
- Are there any other passages besides the specified passage that is evidence of metafiction? Why?

Homework: Students craft a response that answers the pre-class activity questions. This response should include evidence from the text, their observations based on their annotations, and remarks from class discussion. Challenge students to consider what they had not thought of before the discussion.

Lesson Two: Hybridity Versus Ethnicity

Discussion: In the Translator’s Note, Haider Shabaz writes that in light of “Pakistan’s socio-political atmosphere—torn between colonial Enlightenment values and a vicious interpretation of Islam—and the annoying demand on creative artists from Pakistan to write narratives that ‘correctly’ and ‘realistically’ represent our society, Mirza Athar Baig’s novel [...] wears its hybridity—rather than its ethnicity—on its sleeve.”

Begin a whole-group discussion with the following questions:

- In what sense does the text prioritize “hybridity” over “ethnicity”?
- Where is there evidence of Pakistani surrealism in the text? What does this contribute to the piece?

- Do Baig's gestures towards the reader contribute to either of these elements in the text?

If you are using a learning management system:

- Replicate the discussion board conversation produced in the first in-class activity.
- Once the students have considered each other's responses, bring it back to a whole-group discussion. Consider the array of responses students presented and pick certain themes to address.

If you are using a video conferencing application:

- Initiate a discussion that examines how students connected their responses to the text.
- Once the students have considered each other's responses, bring it back to a whole-group discussion. Consider the array of responses students presented and pick certain themes to address.

Homework: Students craft a response that answers the questions asked in class by citing evidence from the text. The response should indicate that the student has considered the points that Shabaz makes in his translator's note. Were they able to use evidence from the text and the translator's note? Did they use discussion points brought up in class?

Speak. Repeat

From *Masters of a Dying Art* by Claudiu Komartin, translated by Diana Manole

Students to consider the uses of repetition in poetry. Students watch a TED Ed video on various kinds of repetition found in poetry and investigate the function of repetition in the two poems from *Masters of a Dying Art* by Claudiu Komartin

From *Masters of a Dying Art* by Claudiu Komartin, translated by Diana Manole

Learning Objectives

At the end of this unit, students will be able to

- Differentiate functions of repetition in poetry

Assessment

Short poem

Discussion board posts

Written response

Approximate Grade Level

Middle school and high school students

Materials Needed

From *Masters of a Dying Art*

TEDEd Video: [The Pleasure of Poetic Pattern](https://ed.ted.com/lessons/the-pleasure-of-poetic-pattern-david-silverstein) by David Silverstein

<https://ed.ted.com/lessons/the-pleasure-of-poetic-pattern-david-silverstein#review>

Approximate Length

Two lessons of 60 minutes each.

Lesson One: Repetition and Writing

Pre-Class Activity (45 minutes): Students watch a TEDEd video, available here:

<https://ed.ted.com/lessons/the-pleasure-of-poetic-pattern-david-silverstein>

Have students take notes while they watch the video and answer the following questions:

- What were two things that the speaker said that repetition can accomplish?
- How many different types of repetition did the speaker mention? What were they?
- Give a few popular examples of repetition that the speaker discusses.
- Pick a favorite song of yours that uses repetition. What kind of repetition does it use?

Discuss the pre-class activity questions with your students either via the discussion board (if you are using a learning management system) or verbally (if you are using a video conferencing system.)

Next, read both poems aloud with your students.

Then, have students engage with the following questions:

- How does Komartin employ repetition? Is there more than one way, as the video discussed?
- What do the different forms of repetition accomplish?
- What kind of imagery stands out to you the most? Why?
- What do you think that Komartin is trying to say?

Concentrate on one part of the text to read closely if your students are struggling to answer any of the questions.

Creative writing: Students write a short poem that emphasizes repetition in a list, like Komartin. Ask them to pick a city or town to describe as the basis for this poem.

Lesson Two: Workshop and Responses

Workshop: (Students swap their poems with a partner and ponder the following questions:

- In what way did you employ repetition?
- What was the function of repetition in your poem?
- Did you use other poetic devices?
- What were you trying to say about your city or town? How did repetition help you accomplish that?

If you are using a learning management system:

- Have students post their poems to the discussion board and answer the questions for several other students' poems.

If you are using a video conferencing system:

- Ask for brave volunteers to read their poems and have the class discuss the questions.

Homework: Students craft a response comparing and contrasting Komartin's poem with theirs.

They should respond to the following question:

- How are they different?
- How are they similar?
- What do they believe they both accomplish?
- What do they say about the respective cities/towns?

FEEDBACK

Thanks for taking the time to read our Spring 2020 Educator's Guide. We hope you found it useful and engaging.

Have questions, comments, critiques, or testimonials?

Please leave your feedback at <http://tinyurl.com/asymptoteforedu>. We look forward to hearing from you!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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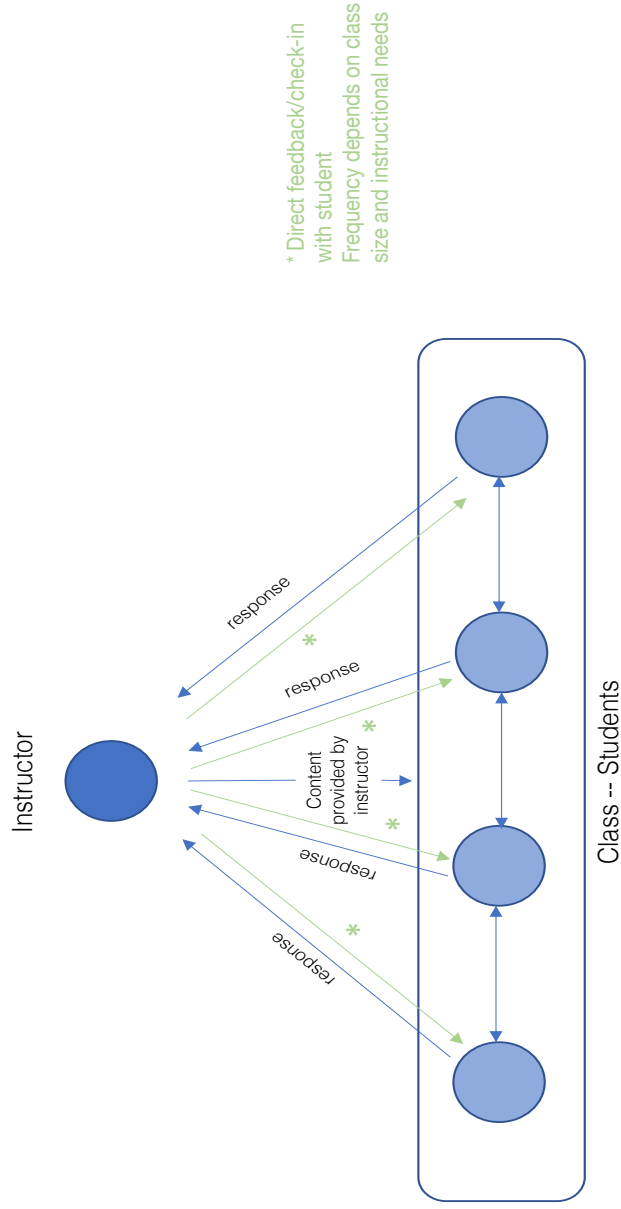
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Appendix: Asynchronous Communication in Online Learning

Asynchronous communication in online learning



Asynchronous communication is the relay of information with a time lag. Discussion forums and email are two examples of how asynchronous communication is employed in online learning. It is very helpful to communicate in this way, because students have plenty of time to formulate thoughts. By communicating via email, students are able to respond in detail to a question or topic that they might have answered incompletely in a real-time conversation. This time lag in communication helps students internalize information by giving them time to research certain ideas or merely extra time for contemplation. The main disadvantage to asynchronous communication is time lost waiting for a response. [https://www.worldwidelearn.com/education-advisor/questions/synchronous-asynchronous-learning.php]