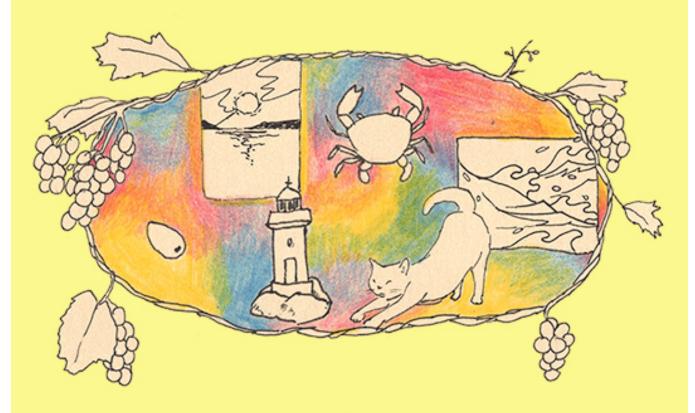
# Winter 2021 Educator's Guide



Brave New World Literature



# **EDUCATOR'S GUIDE**

# Winter 2021 I BRAVE NEW WORLD LITERATURE

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Winter 2021 issue of the Asymptote Educator's Guide!

This is our 20<sup>th</sup> educator's guide and contains five lesson plans spanning ekphrastic writing in response to bamboo structures to word choice in poems about drought. To help educators bring world literature into the classroom, each lesson is paired with poems, essays, and stories from "Brave New World Literature," our Winter 2021 issue available here: <a href="http://asymptotejournal.com/jan-2021">http://asymptotejournal.com/jan-2021</a>

"Image and Context," the first lesson in this guide, asks students to consider the bamboo structures by artist Minia Biabiany as a way to explore ekphrasis, artistic intent, and colonialism. Our second lesson, "Poetry, Oration, and Politics," has students read and react to poems about the legacies of slavery and racism in Brazil. "Divergent Lives: Rinsta, Finsta, and the Curated Self" is our third lesson where students examine the role of social media in their lives through composing their own short stories. Next up is "Emotional Traveling, Sentimental Traveler," a lesson affording students the opportunity to delve into the rich tradition of travel writing. Lastly, "Awash with Meaning: Word Choice in Poetry" looks at poetry as a response to ecological crisis and drought and builds on a previous lesson from our Spring 2017 educator's guide.

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 are valuable to us, and hearing about them helps us improve our formation of the next guide. Please leave feedback and suggestions here: <a href="http://tinyurl.com/asymptoteforedu">http://tinyurl.com/asymptoteforedu</a>.

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 which can be found here: <a href="https://www.asymptotejournal.com/blog/">https://www.asymptotejournal.com/blog/</a>

We'd especially love to read and share 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 <a href="mailto:education@asymptotejournal.com">education@asymptotejournal.com</a>.

# **Image and Context**

# "Weaving Silences" by Minia Biabiany

https://www.asymptotejournal.com/visual/minia-biabiany-weaving-silences/

In this lesson, students explore ekphrastic writing, artistic intent and viewer perceptions of art in response to historic legacies of colonialism.

# **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

- Analyze artwork
- Define *ekphrasis* and create their own descriptions of artworks
- Explain how added information about context or artist statements influences their understanding of an artwork
- Critically reflect on how the effects of colonialism can be represented in art

#### **Assessment**

Group discussion Written assignment

# **Approximate Grade Level**

High school students University Students

#### **Materials Needed**

"Weaving Silences" by Mina Biabiny, Interview by Eva Heisler <a href="https://www.asymptotejournal.com/visual/minia-biabiany-weaving-silences/">https://www.asymptotejournal.com/visual/minia-biabiany-weaving-silences/</a>

Video projector, or other way to show students images from the slideshow

# **Approximate length**

Lesson One (30 minutes) Lesson Two (30 minutes)

### Lesson One (30 minutes)

5-7 minutes. Show students the slideshow, going slowly through the images. Let them know that you will be asking them to describe an image. Show the slideshow a second time, spending at least 20 seconds on each image.

5 minutes. Give the students 5 minutes to describe one of the images (keep the projector on, and turn back to any particular image upon student request) — simply ask them to describe it, without further instruction.

20 minutes. As a class, discuss the images. Begin by collecting general impressions. Ask the students: do you like them? What do you like or dislike about them? What do you think they mean?

Then, look at each image one by one. For each one, ask anyone who wrote their description about it to share what they wrote. Ask others if there is anything they would add to the description. Discuss the differences between what people perceive in the image — are there certain details that one person mentioned and another didn't? Do people see things differently? Are the descriptions a basic account of what is in the image, or is there an interpretive element? Do people disagree with each other's descriptions?

As you finish going over the images, discuss what the students see as the broader meanings of these artworks. What are they about? What larger themes or ideas are at work in these pieces?

Write EKPHRASIS on the board. Explain that ekphrasis is a description of a visual artwork that tries to give the reader the experience of seeing that artwork. Point out that simply describing what is in the image probably isn't enough to make the reader feel as if they are actually seeing it. Ask them how they would describe these images differently if they wanted the reader to experience what it is like to see them.

For homework, give them copies or a link to the interview and ask them to read it. Tell them to underline any sentences that stand out to them, or seem especially meaningful in helping to understand the text. They should also make note of any questions they have as they read, or note unfamiliar words.

#### **Lesson Two** (30 minutes)

Class discussion

The next class, begin with general impressions. How did the interview change their impression of the artworks? Some key points to notice: that the images are stills from videos (and the way that the text describes the videos), that the images are from several different exhibits, that a major focus of the text is the basket weaving – but there is only one image that includes that work, that sound (especially the song) is a major component of the artworks — which the description cannot capture, and that a major theme of the artist's work is colonialism and its legacies.

Ask them about which sentences they highlighted as significant. Discuss, as a group, what they mean, and how they relate to the images. If students are reticent to discuss, suggest some sentences yourself, such as:

"Discussions about independence are quickly ridiculed—even if the discourse is quite interesting.";

"I was surprised by the silence. I wanted to talk about that silence in my work.";

"I was like, okay, I'm in Guadeloupe, what are the traditions here that could help me explore the transformation of history into story, and story into matter?";

"I saw that the media representation of this political moment included a negative representation of the black community in Sweden, and I started to think about how the representation of myself is structured. This drawing started as an exploration of that question."; "

I wanted to address the implications of chlordecone but in a subtle way. I didn't want to say "chlordecone" out loud.";

"I am interested in how consciousness of the body changes when encountering fragile materials."

Many of these are statements about the artist's intentions and motivations in creating the work. By examining these sentences in detail, you can examine the question: how can these things be represented? How do you create an image about silence?

# **Final Assignment**

Create a description of another artwork from the *Asymptote* archives.

# **Poetry, Oration and Politics**

# "Four Poems" by Carlos de Assumpcao, translated by Robert Smith

https://www.asymptotejournal.com/poetry/carlos-de-assumpcao-four-poems/

Carlos de Assumpcao's poetry explores his racial identity and the racism he and his family have faced. Students will analyze the poems and discuss the themes of resistance, slavery, racism and identity as well as how authorial and political context influences literature.

# **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

- Analyze the poems and discuss ideas with an emphasis on symbolism, identity and social context
- Identify key themes and how they convey the poet's messages regarding racism and slavery as well as the poet's black identity
- Identify common ideas across poems
- Discuss the relationship between literature and politics
- Examine how authorial, political, and social contexts influence literature

#### **Assessment**

Participation in group discussion Comprehension questions Annotations Writing assignment

### **Approximate Grade Level**

High school students

# **Materials Needed**

"Four Poems" by Carlos de Assumpcao, translated by Robert Smith <a href="https://www.asymptotejournal.com/poetry/carlos-de-assumpcao-four-poems/">https://www.asymptotejournal.com/poetry/carlos-de-assumpcao-four-poems/</a>

Board or the discussion board feature of a learning management system.

Carlos de Assumpcao, Batuque reading https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cq2L45XJjno&t=3s

# **Supplementary Materials**

Brief overview of the history of slavery in Brazil from Wikipedia <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slavery">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slavery</a> in Brazil

The African slave trade and slave life in Brazil from Brown University <a href="https://library.brown.edu/create/fivecenturiesofchange/chapters/chapter-2/african-slavery/">https://library.brown.edu/create/fivecenturiesofchange/chapters/chapter-2/african-slavery/</a>

Definition of poetic terms from Poets.org

# https://poets.org/glossary

### **Approximate Length**

Lesson One (90 minutes) Lesson Two (90 minutes)

**Lesson One** (90 minutes)

Pre-Class Activity

Ask students to:

- Read all four poems twice or thrice and annotate them
- Underline any lines that stand out
- Underline poetic techniques they notice (rhythm, repetition, symbolism the drum, punctuation etc.)

For background, you may wish to discuss the following definitions:

- Repetition: the poetic technique of repeating the same word or phrase multiple times within a poem or work. From: <a href="https://poets.org/glossary/repetition">https://poets.org/glossary/repetition</a>
- Symbol: an object or action that stands for something beyond itself. From: https://poets.org/glossary

# In-Class Activity

Ask students to discuss the pre-class homework in groups of 4 or 5 and analyze why certain lines stood out to them.

Then, ask students the following questions:

- What are the themes in the poems? Write students' answers on the board (or on a similar feature on the LMS) and ask the class to analyze how the themes fit together. Examples of themes include resistance, slavery, racism and identity.
- What effect do the words in Portuguese have on the rhythm of the poem?
- Discuss the use of first person in the poem. How different would the poem have been in third person or in second person? How does the point of view build the identity of the speaker?
- What effect does the lack of punctation have on the poems and the way we read the poems?
   Also, direct students towards the second poem where there is a full stop at the end and ask students what effect the punctuation has here.

Have the poems ready to read.

- Read the third poem aloud (Daybreak (or nightfall)) and then read the first poem again.
- Both poems mention a drum. Discuss the symbolism of the drum and its role in the African diasporic culture.

### Lesson Two (60 minutes)

Read the author bio and the translator's notes.

- Listen to the audio clip of Carlos de Assumpcao reading Batuque in the YouTube link. Pay attention to the rhythm.
- Discuss if the rhythm makes a difference to the content of the poem and oral quality of the poem. Ask students to make note of the recitation qualities they notice. (Direct students towards a discussion of repetition in the poem and the translator's note regarding retaining some of the words in Portuguese)
- Keeping the bio and translator's note in mind, discuss the relevance of knowing the authorial, historical, social, and political context in literature. Does it matter? Why or why not?
- Ask students to recall literature they have read where the context is important and where the context isn't as important to understanding the text.

# **Assign Homework** (30 – 45 minutes)

#### Free write

Free verse poem of 100-150 words or a prose reflection of 250 words on a political or historical movement that they feel is relevant in their lives (for example, environmental destruction or Black Lives Matter). Alternatively, students could write on their culture and the musical traditions in that culture.

# Divergent Lives: Rinsta, Finsta, and the Curated Self

# "Drexit" by Anna Mécs, translated by Owen Good

https://www.asymptotejournal.com/fiction/anna-mecs-drexit/

Anna Mécs's short story "Drexit" delves into the gulf between the image people project of themselves on social media and their real, everyday lives. In "Drexit," the gulf is as wide as the difference between life and death. In this lesson, students will reflect on their own lives—the real versus the curated—and compose their own "Drexits" in the process.

### **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

- Reflect on social media and self-image
- Analyze urgency and stakes in narrative
- Compose hybrid stories/auto fiction to instantiate the tension between the curated vs true self
- Reflect on social media's impact on the performance of self

#### **Assessment**

Comprehension questions Group Discussion Writing Assignment

# **Approximate Grade Level**

High school students University students

#### **Materials Needed**

"Drexit" by Anna Mécs, translated by Owen Good <a href="https://www.asymptotejournal.com/fiction/anna-mecs-drexit/">https://www.asymptotejournal.com/fiction/anna-mecs-drexit/</a>

### **Supplementary Materials**

"On Fake Instagram, a Chance to be Real" by Valeria Safronova <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/19/fashion/instagram-finstagram-fake-account.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/19/fashion/instagram-finstagram-fake-account.html</a>

"My So-Called (Instagram) Life" by Clara Dollar <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/05/style/modern-love-my-so-called-instagram-life.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/05/style/modern-love-my-so-called-instagram-life.html</a>

Learning Management System discussion board feature for online or hybrid classes

# **Approximate Length**

Lesson One (60 minutes) Lesson Two (40 minutes)

Lesson One (60 minutes)

Reading Comprehension (40 minutes)

Have students read the first five paragraphs of the story. What are the stakes? How does Mécs create urgency? Possible questions for group discussion:

- What is Dorottya's diagnosis? How does this create urgency in the story?
- Who follows her Instragram account? How has Dorottya become "the girl living their children's lives?" Does this role, this responsibility, raise the stakes of her posts, beyond herself or her immediate family's reactions?
- What is Dorottya most afraid of? Why?

After discussing the first five paragraphs, have students read the rest of "Drexit." Possible questions for group discussion:

- What is Dorottya's "Drexit?" How much material does she produce for Instragram? Why?
- How does Dorottya become "a follower of her own profile"?
- Are Dorottya's posts, her imagined life, idealized or realistic? What do they say about her, her hopes, her fears—how do they characterize her?
- Is she producing this content for herself, her family, her mother, or an entire Hungarian generation? Why does Dorottya feel this responsibility?
- Why does Mécs title the story "Drexit"? What do you think she might be implying about Brexit and the U.K. today and the act of emigration?

# **Group Discussion** (15 minutes)

Ask students to reflect on their own social media use. What platforms do they use? What do their parents use? How do they present themselves? Do their curated lives reflect their actual lives or are they idealized? To what end? For example, draw their attention to the difference between Rinsta vs Finsta.

Ask them to examine their social media usage. Who are their audiences? Why do they post? To what end (sharing, connecting with friends, building a brand, self-marketing etc.)?

Alternatively, if students are reluctant to discuss their own social media accounts, they can choose a well-known influencer, celebrity, or a friend or peer and analyze and discuss their social media usage.

For background on Insta and Finsta, students can read and discuss the articles by Dollar and Safronova in the Supplementary Materials section, either alongside reading "Drexit" or beforehand.

**Writing Assignment** (5 minutes to discuss/brainstorm; 2+ hours to write as homework)

Students will imagine their own Drexits, focusing on phases 3 and 4, and compose fictional social media about their future. They can choose the impetus for the plan, manufacturing urgency (a terminal diagnosis, move, fallout with friends or family, massive life change etc.). They can also choose the timeline (i.e., they don't need to imagine 15 years of content).

They should write two plans for the prospective time period. The first should portray how they imagine the time to actually unfold. The second should reflect their aspirational selves.

# **Lesson Two** (40 minutes)

# Pair Work (20 minutes)

In pairs or small groups of 2-3, students should share their "Drexit" stories from the writing assignment and while doing so reflect on what they say about who they are, who they want to be, who they think the world/their families/friends expect them to be. How divergent are the stories? What do the discrepancies say about who they want to be versus how they actually view themselves?

# **Group Discussion** (20 minutes)

Select student work to discuss as a class. Ask the students to share their writing and thoughts from the previous pair work. What did they discover about themselves? How do they perceive who they are versus who they aspire to be? What is social media's role in shaping these perceptions and aspirations?

# **Emotional Travelling, Sentimental Traveler**

# "Impressions of the South of France" by Hugo von Hoffmansthal and translated by Henry Gifford

https://www.asymptotejournal.com/nonfiction/impressions-of-the-south-of-france-hugo-von-hoffmansthal/

Students explore emotional travelling through the figure of a 'sentimental traveler' by reading and commenting upon Hugo von Hoffmansthal's "Impressions of the South of France" and translated by Henry Gifford. After researching and learning about the different communities presented in this text, and reflecting upon the term 'impressions', students will explore their own relation to travel writing.

# **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

- Practice close reading
- Demonstrate an understanding of the figure of 'the sentimental traveler'
- Research and articulate ideas about the home community, the dreamed community, and the community one travels through
- Become comfortable with group analysis and critique
- Reflect on travelling literatures
- Talk about their own relation to travel
- Identify a text's tone, style and register
- Write about their literary destination of choice

# **Assessment**

Participation in group discussion Comprehension questions Forum post Writing assignment

### **Approximative Grade Level**

High school students

#### **Material Needed**

"Impressions of the South of France" by Hugo von Hoffmansthal, translated by Henry Gifford <a href="https://www.asymptotejournal.com/nonfiction/impressions-of-the-south-of-france-hugo-von-hoffmansthal/">https://www.asymptotejournal.com/nonfiction/impressions-of-the-south-of-france-hugo-von-hoffmansthal/</a>

Appropriate learning platform with a discussion feature

#### **Supplemental materials**

Definitions of impression: Merriam-Webster,

https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/impression

Extensive traveloques list:

https://www.goodreads.com/shelf/show/traveloque

Into the Wild by Jon Krakauer: http://www.metropolitancollege.com/Into%20The%20Wild.pdf

A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy by Laurence Sterne: https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli. 2015.16544/page/n9/mode/2up

The Great Railway Bazaar by Paul Theroux: https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.65786

# **Approximative Length**

Lesson One (2 hours)

Lesson One (2 hours)

Activity 1: Warm-up

Share the title of the text as well as the translator's notes with the students. Ask the students to read them and reflect upon the word « impression ». How can they define it? How do they think it will be rendered in the text? You can use the following <u>definitions</u> (see supplemental materials) to guide their thinking. Depending on your teaching setting, this could be done orally as a group with students writing their ideas on a board or shared in a forum post.

Following that reading, ask them to share/write down (depending on your learning setting) in a knowledge dump what they expect to read about in this text. When and where do they read about travels? In guides? Articles? Literature? The knowledge dump aims to get ideas and mental clutter on a document visible to everyone to promote discussion and conversation.

Activity 2: Close Reading and Research

Let the students know that they are going to read the text in full a few times. They should read the questions beforehand so they can start highlighting, underlying and/or taking notes during the first read.

The second read and the following work will be conducted in small groups. Depending on your teaching setting, they could do this work in class, and that would lead to a class discussion. Or their answers could be posted on the appropriate platform, and the members of each group would be asked to react to at least one other group's answers. In this section, students will both answer comprehension questions and do research on places and people and things mentioned in the text in order to fully grasp these impressions.

	Questions	Research
Paragraphs 1-3	-If you had to put together a picture book of your own country or community, what would you put in it? -Do you think your picture book would reflect reality? Or would it contain internalized or dreamed images of your country or community? -What's the author's take on telling or writing about travelling? Do you agree? Why? Why not?	
Paragraphs 4-5	-What is the attack made towards more modern travel? Is it a take you agree with? Why? Why not? What has been your experience?	-Rousseau and Sterne's travel writing craft: who are Rousseau and Sterne + look for a specific popular piece and sum it up in a few short sentences
Paragraphs 6-8	-Through what lens are the places in these paragraphs presented? (history, literature, landscapes, a specific person or character)	-Chambéry -rococo -Savoy (don't hesitate to add images to your research, that's helpful for the whole group)
Paragraphs 9-12	-How do we learn about Grenoble and Provence? Are these factual depictions with information on their locations and landscapes?	-Grenoble (location, images) -Stendhal (period, activity, movement) -Balzac (period, activity, movement) -Dauphiné (location, images, historical importance) -Provence and its language (location, images, the name of the language, is this language still used?)
Paragraphs 13-16	-For the author, for what should Arles be remembered? How does he manage to imprint his emotions towards these women onto this city?	-Arles (location, images, architecture) -take the time to listen to the music of « Carmen »

Paragraphs 17-19	-Have you ever come across a representation (in a book, song movie) of what you think of as being your home community? -Do you know of a representation of a place that you think could be applied to your home community?	-Camargue (location, images) -Rhone (location, images)
Paragraph 20	-Try and interpret the first sentence of the last paragraph, What could he mean by it not being an accident? What is the importance of colors in this text when it comes to telling the memories of places he seems to have been through?	-Comédie Française: what is it? Does it still exist? Is he referring to a specific event?
General	Why do you think the translators did not translate certain words that are in French? What effects can it have on the reader?	

#### Homework

The students will answer one of these two essay prompts (minimum of 1.5 pages/ 750 words single spaced) and email it to their instructor before the next class. The first prompt is asking the students to dive into what they might have been exposed to when it comes to writing about travelling. For that reason, the range of example they can use can cross genres and platforms, but ressources on travelogues can be found in the supplemental materials.

- 1. In what ways is the author's text different or similar to what you read or maybe write about travelling? To do so, try to think about the media or platforms in which you read about travelling. In a novel? A guide? A magazine? Also ask yourself if you keep up a journal or take notes on the places, local and foreign, that you visit?
- 2. In "Impressions of the South of France", different communities seem to be represented. In this text, what places and feelings are associated with the home community (the home country left behind), the adoptive community (the community the author travels through), and the more abstract dreamed community (the mention of imagination in the observation of new places, the mind's wanderings)? Are these communities sometimes blurred together in this text? And how? To what effect?
- 3. Many places are still in lockdown due the Covid-19 pandemic forcing people to be at home for months. Thinking of the different communities discussed in the previous activities, it could be said that for many the home community has been reduced to the physical home. Travel about your home and write about it as if it were a sentimental voyage. Your physical home is now three communities: your home community, your dreamed community, and the one you physically travel through. Take us through them and your impressions of them like Hugo von Hoffmansthal did when travelling.

# Awash with Meaning: Word Choice in Poetry

"Four Poems" by Mangesh Narayanrao Kale, translated by Sarabjeet Garcha https://www.asymptotejournal.com/poetry/mangesh-narayanrao-kale-four-poems/

In this lesson plan, students read two poems: "Water" by Mangesh Narayanrao Kale from the Winter 2021 Issue and "The Drought" by Edil Hassan from the Spring 2017 Issue. Both poems address a lack of water and its consequences for the community. Students analyze the relationship between themes and word choice and explore both the denotation and connotation of key words in these texts.

# **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

- Annotate a text
- Analyze themes in a text
- Define denotation and connotation
- Discuss how word choice affects readers and creates meaning
- Compare and contrast themes and word choice in two poems

#### **Assessment**

Group discussion
Writing Assignment

# **Approximate Grade Level**

High school students University students

#### **Materials Needed**

"Water" by Mangesh Narayanrao Kale, translated by Sarabjeet Garcha from the Winter 2021 Issue <a href="https://www.asymptotejournal.com/poetry/mangesh-narayanrao-kale-four-poems/">https://www.asymptotejournal.com/poetry/mangesh-narayanrao-kale-four-poems/</a>

"The Drought" by Edil Hassan, from the Spring 2017 Issue <a href="https://www.asymptotejournal.com/special-feature/edil-hassan-two-poems/">https://www.asymptotejournal.com/special-feature/edil-hassan-two-poems/</a>

Narrative Voice Lesson Plan, from the Spring 2017 Educator's Guide (pp. 25-27) <a href="https://www.asymptotejournal.com/assets/educational/asymptote-guide-for-educators-2017-spring.pdf">https://www.asymptotejournal.com/assets/educational/asymptote-guide-for-educators-2017-spring.pdf</a>

### **Approximate Length**

Lesson One (60 minutes) Lesson Two (60 minutes)

#### **Lesson One**

# Warm up (5 minutes)

Briefly introduce the poem "Water" by Mangesh Narayanrao Kale. What other texts do you know of that deal with water? What words come to mind when you hear the title? What themes or words might appear in this poem? Any answers are acceptable at this point.

# Reading the poem and preliminary discussion (15 minutes)

Distribute the poem to the students. Read the poem aloud. Ask students: What situation is this poem describing? According to the translator's note, this poem comes from the author, Mangesh Narayanrao Kale's "residence in several places in Maharashtra, India, where shortage of water is acute."

Have students read the poem again with a partner. Ask them to consider the following question: Why do you think "the word water" is used in the poem instead of simply "water"? One possible answer is that it has to do with the abstraction of water because it has disappeared from the world.

# **Analyzing the poem: Theme** (10 minutes)

Break students into small groups and assign each group one of the following themes. Each group should annotate the text by finding and highlighting words or phrases that relate to their assigned theme.

Water: Land:

Family / Motherhood / Generations:

Time / Past / Present:

# Analyzing the poem: Word choice (20 minutes)

Have students complete the chart with words and phrases from the poem on the left side and an impression on the right side. This can be done individually and then shared with the same group members. For the impressions, students can list emotions, colors, paraphrases, descriptions of the denotation or connotation for specific words, etc. The denotation of a word refers to its dictionary definition while the connotation of a word refers to the feelings associated with it. For more information, see <a href="https://literaryterms.net/denotation/">https://literaryterms.net/denotation/</a>

Word / Phrase	Impression

### **Discussion** (10 minutes)

Drawing on the work in the previous two activities, have each group share what they think the poem has to say about their assigned theme. Discuss in plenary.

#### **Lesson Two**

Read "The Drought" by Edil Hassan from the Spring 2017 Asymptote Banned Countries Special Feature. This poem is by a Somali author who now lives in the United States. Complete the same process as above for the poem. Since students are already familiar with the process, the following activities can be conducted in class or assigned as homework.

### Reading the poem and preliminary discussion (15 minutes)

What situation is this poem describing? (drought)

What effects of drought does the poem allude to? (e.g., migration)

# **Analyzing the poem: Theme** (10 minutes)

Break students into small groups and assign each group one of the following themes. Each group should annotate the text by finding and highlighting words or phrases that relate to their assigned theme.

Water: Land:

Family / Motherhood / Generations:

Time / Past / Present:

Your idea:

# Analyzing the poem: Word choice (20 minutes)

Have students complete the chart with words and phrases from the poem on the left side and an impression on the right side. This can be done individually and then shared with the same group members. For the impressions, students can list emotions, colors, paraphrases, descriptions of the denotation or connotation for specific words, etc.

Word / Phrase	Impression

# **Discussion** (10 minutes)

Drawing on the work in the previous two activities, have each group share what they think the poem has to say about their assigned theme. Discuss in plenary.

### **Assign writing assignment** (5 minutes)

For homework, write a short essay (one page) to compare and contrast the themes and word choice in these two poems. Share your work in the next class. The key questions to answer are as follows: How are the themes of the two poems similar or different? How are the methods of representing meaning similar or different? Which poem do you prefer? Why?

# **FEEDBACK**

Thanks for taking the time to read our Winter 2021 Educator's Guide. We hope you found it useful and engaging.

Have questions, comments, critiques, or testimonials?

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

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