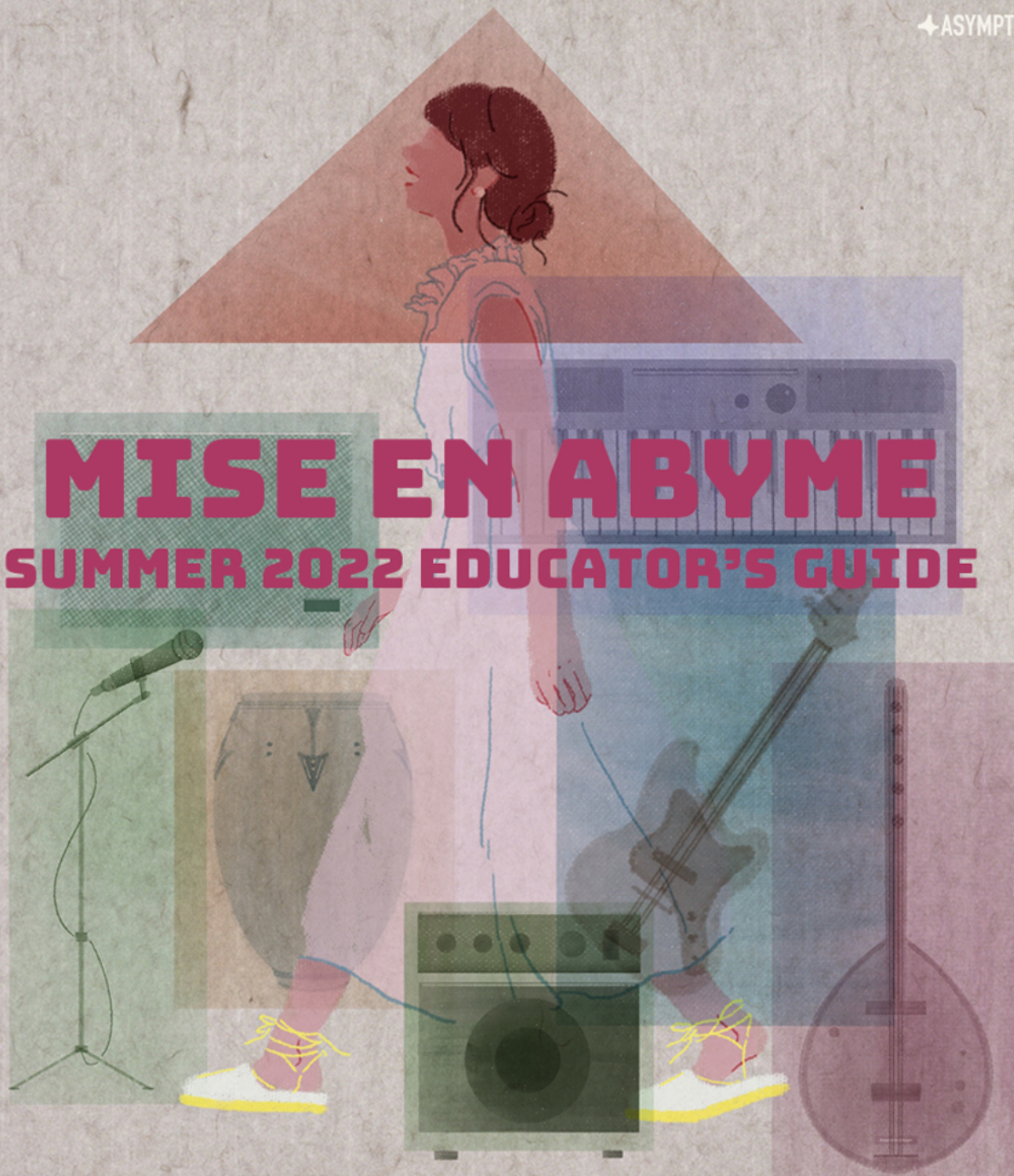


ASYMPTOTE

# MISE EN ABYME

## SUMMER 2022 EDUCATOR'S GUIDE





## **EDUCATOR'S GUIDE**

**Summer 2022 | MISE EN ABYME**

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Summer 2022 issue of the *Asymptote* Educator's Guide!

Our newest guide has five lesson plans to help you bring engaging and timely translated literature into your classroom. Each lesson is paired with poems, essays, short stories, and a novel excerpt from "Mise en Abyme," our Summer 2022 issue, which is available here: <http://www.asymptotejournal.com/jul-2022>

"Swiss Cheese and Satire," our first lesson, introduces students to the power of satire and parody. Our second lesson, "Memories Among Us," affords students the space to consider, compare, and contrast collective and individual memory. "Lost and Found in Translation," our third lesson, asks students to engage with the important and difficult choices translators make when translating poetry. The fourth lesson, "Intertextuality: the Dark Coasts of Sinopoulos," has students consider intertextuality across Greek culture both past and present. "The Writer, the Editor, and the Publishing Industry" our fifth and final lesson, encourages students to think about autofiction and the role of authors and editors in the publishing industry.

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 experiences are valuable to us, and hearing about them helps us improve our formation for the next guide. Please leave feedback and suggestions here: <http://tinyurl.com/asymptote4edu>.

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: <https://www.asymptotejournal.com/blog/>

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 [education@asymptotejournal.com](mailto:education@asymptotejournal.com).

# Swiss Cheese and Satire

**From “About Mountains, Humans and Especially Mountain Snails” by Anaïs Meier, translated by Genia Blum**

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/special-feature/about-mountains-humans-and-especially-mountain-snails-anais-meier/>

Anaïs Meier’s stories are satirical takes on Swiss culture and identity. In this lesson, students will use Meier’s work as a starting point to define and discuss the role of satire in literature and society, its uses and potential abuses. They will then compose their own short satires modeled on Meier’s story “Cheese” and critique one another’s work in the following class.

## **Learning Objectives**

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

- Define and explain the basics of satire
- Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of satire in the text
- Compare and contrast the benefits and dangers of satire
- Compose their own satirical stories to examine an aspect of their identity or culture
- Reflect on their writing goals and process
- Critique one another’s satirical work

## **Assessment**

Comprehension questions

Class discussion

Student Satires

Reflective Notes

Peer Critique

## **Approximate Grade Level**

High school students

University students

## **Materials Needed**

From “About Mountains, Humans and Especially Mountain Snails” by Anaïs Meier, translated by Genia Blum

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/special-feature/about-mountains-humans-and-especially-mountain-snails-anais-meier/>

“What is Satire?” a lecture by Evan Gottlieb at Oregon State University

<https://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/wlf/what-satire>

## **Approximate Length**

Lesson One (50 minutes)

Lesson Two (50 minutes)

**Lesson One** (50 minutes)

### Opening Discussion (15 minutes)

First, ask students to define satire. Elicit possible examples from literature, television, pop culture, music etc. You may want to discuss famous spoofs like the film *Space Balls*; political satires like the television series *Veep*; mockumentaries like the series *Documentary Now!*; musicians who focus on parodies like Weird Al; humor websites like *the Onion*; or classic works such as Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal."

Next, have students watch Evan Gottlieb's lecture "What is Satire?"

<https://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/wlf/what-satire>

As they watch, ask students to take notes about the three types of satire outlined by Gottlieb:

- Horatian
- Juvenalian
- Menippean

What are the major characteristics of each type of satire?

Then, elicit responses to Gottlieb's other rules of satire with the following questions:

- What subjects must satire take aim at? Why?
- What is the role of the audience when it comes to responding to satire?
- How is satire risky?
- Are you familiar with any of the examples in the lecture? Can you think of others that fit one of the three types of satire?
- Who are some contemporary popular satirists now? What are their goals? Who do they satirize? What media do they use?
- How do satirists respond to and reflect their times?

### Reading (20 minutes)

Before students read "Cheese" by Anaïs Meier, ask them what they know about Switzerland. Where is it located? What first comes to mind when they think about the country? What clichés do they associate with it? Mountains? Skiing? Cheese?

Next, have them read "Cheese." As they read, ask them to consider some of the following questions:

- What are the funniest lines or images in the story?
- Are there any lines that confused you or that you feel you need more context to understand?
- What do you think Meier's goal was in writing "Cheese"? Who do you think she is satirizing?
- What sort of satire is "Cheese?"

### Class Discussion (15 minutes)

After reading, as a class discuss some of the questions above.

After the discussion, assign the homework below.

### Homework

Have students compose their own short satires and a short note reflecting on their goals and writing process.

For their satire, students should focus on one aspect of the culture they wish to satirize and focus on one concrete object or action, just as Meier focused on mountains and cheese.

Using “Cheese” as a model, they should aim for 500 – 800 words.

For their short reflection, students should consider some of the aspects of satire outlined by Gottlieb in “What is Satire?” For example:

- What sort of satire—Horatian, Juvenalian, or Menippean—are they going to write? Which style most interests them and best suits the topic or subject they are satirizing?
- What is their goal of this satire? What subject are they trying to undermine or expose or draw attention too?
- Who is the audience for this satire?

Thinking about the questions above, students should compose a short introduction to their satires to provide readers with context and encourage their own reflection about their writing process and help them critique their own work, examining how the finished product aligns with their initial goals. Aim for 100 – 200 words.

## **Lesson Two** (50 minutes)

### **Pair Share & Critique** (25 minutes)

Ask students to share their satire and reflection with one of their peers. As they read, they should consider some of the following questions:

- Is the writer satirizing a powerful subject? What power dynamics are at play?
- What is the underlying message of the satire?
- As a reader, is it clear to you that this is a work of satire? Why or why not? Select specific lines to support your position.
- What lines, images, or scenes did you find most humorous? Why?
- Which of the three types of satire does this seem most to embody?
- Does the satire reflect the writer’s goals as described in their reflection?

### **Group Discussion** (25 minutes)

Ask students to share their responses to their peers’ satires. Discuss specific examples from some students with the class as a whole and ask them to reflect on how they felt while composing their satires, their goals, and whether they met those goals.



# Memories Among Us

from *Panicked Spring* by Gertrud Leutenegger, translated by Edward T. Larkin and Thomas Ahrens

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/special-feature/panicked-spring-gertrude-leutenegger/>

In this lesson, students read *Panicked Spring* by Gertrud Leutenegger which begins with the heroine walking the streets of London. However, it is anything but a typical day as ashes rain from the quiet skies in the aftermath of a volcanic explosion in Iceland. Students read the story, identify its major themes, and find specific examples from the text to support their ideas. Then they consider the role of collective and individual memory in the piece. Finally, using the information they have learned in the lesson, students craft an original expository or creative writing assignment.

## Learning Objectives

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

- Identify major themes in the piece
- Discuss the role of individual and collective memory
- Create an original writing assignment based on the material learned in the lesson

## Assessment

Small group discussion

Writing assignment

## Approximate Grade Level

High school students

University students

## Materials Needed

from *Panicked Spring* by Gertrud Leutenegger, (tr. Edward T. Larkin and Thomas Ahrens)

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/special-feature/panicked-spring-gertrude-leutenegger/>

Computer with projector

Post-it notes (or an online equivalent, such as Padlet or Jamboard)

## Additional Resources (optional)

Images of Eyjafjallajökull and the ash cloud (Wikipedia)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2010\\_eruptions\\_of\\_Eyjafjallaj%C3%B6kull](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2010_eruptions_of_Eyjafjallaj%C3%B6kull)

Definition of Theme

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

What is Collective Memory? (video from Audioversity)

<https://youtu.be/Si5AWDCPVp0>

What is Collective Memory? (article)

<https://memorialworlds.com/what-is-collective-memory/>

### **Approximate Length**

Lesson One (50 minutes)

Lesson Two (50 minutes)

### **Lesson One**

#### **Introduction** (10 minutes)

Briefly introduce that today's class will focus on a piece called *Panicked Spring* by the Swiss writer Gertrud Leutenegger. Share the artwork by Lu Liu at the beginning of the piece. Based on the title and the image, what do students think the story will be about?

Read the first paragraph of the piece. What information can you gather about the setting of the story? What do you think it will be about?

Answers may include the following:

- London, Trafalgar Square, Lord Nelson, Embankment Underground Station, Thames, city noise
- Ash cloud from Iceland, crippled air traffic
- April, spring, references to weather and nature

Share with the students that, according to the translators' note: The piece is "Set on a splendid spring day in London during the volcanic eruption of Iceland's Eyjafjallajökull (April 2010), when all European air traffic came to a standstill ...". Because of the rarity of such an event, it is likely that people who were in London at the time would remember it. The teacher may wish to project an image of the volcano or the location of the ash cloud (see Additional Resources above). Does this new information change students' initial perceptions of the text?

#### **Reading** (15 minutes)

Students read the remainder of part one, *Low water 0.68m*. As students are reading, ask them to highlight a passage that is interesting to them. Perhaps it contains a vivid description, mentions something they are curious about, or somehow stands out from other sentences.

After students have finished reading, ask them to share their overall impressions of part one with a partner, and then to discuss which passage they selected and why.

#### **Discussion of themes** (25 minutes)

If students are unfamiliar with the definition of "theme," go over the definition and examples. (See Definition of Theme <https://literarydevices.net/theme/> for more information, if needed.)

Have students consider the following questions:

- What themes do you think are included in the piece?
- Are the passages you have chosen related to any of these themes?

On the board, make a list of possible themes for the piece. If not mentioned, add several themes mentioned by the translators: "the power of memory," "the role that nature plays in human affairs," or "our interconnectedness with historical events".



Next, have students transfer their chosen passage onto a physical or virtual note, and then place it with the most appropriate theme. (This is subjective, and students may find that passages fit into more than one category. Additional themes may need to be added to the list.) This activity can be done in the classroom with post-it notes or virtually with an online tool, such as a class Padlet or Jamboard.

After students have categorized their chosen passages, the teacher leads a whole class discussion about the themes of the piece.

### **Homework**

Students should finish reading the piece, briefly summarizing each section, and highlighting passages related to their theme of interest.

## **Lesson Two**

### **Introduction** (25 minutes)

Warm up by having a class discussion in which students summarize the remaining three sections of the piece and discuss what, if anything, makes each section distinct.

Then in pairs have students share the passages they highlighted in the remainder of the text. What themes are they related to? Did they identify any additional themes as they finished reading?

### **Translators Note** (25 minutes)

Ask students to think about the following questions, doing a quick freewrite for about 5 minutes, and then sharing their ideas in a group discussion.

- What role does memory have in the story?
- How are characters affected by historical events or experiences?

After sharing ideas, have students read the translator's note and the author biography of Gertrud Leutenegger.

Briefly review the concept of collective memory if students are unfamiliar with it. According to Scientific American, "Collective memory refers to how groups remember their past" and "...can change over generations". (See Additional Resources above for another discussion of the concept).

Students may brainstorm some examples of collective memories of groups they belong to, such as their families, cultures, or ethnicities. In the text, there are various monuments to historical events mentioned, and these could be considered part of collective memory. Then there are the narrators' memories or dreams, such as the forest room, which could be considered individual memory.

Building on this discussion, ask students:

- What collective memories are mentioned in the story? How do these historical memories affect the heroine of the story? What affect do they have on the reader?
- What individual memories are mentioned in the story? What do these tell the readers about the heroine of the story?
- Do you think it is possible to distinguish between collective and individual memory? Why or why not? How are these concepts similar or different?

**Assignment**

Assign the writing project and have students start brainstorming if there is any class time remaining. Set a future class date for students to share their work. Depending on the aims of the class, the teacher may assign option one or two, or give students the choice of which assignment to complete.

**One:** Choose one of the themes and write a short paper (approximately two pages) explaining how it is developed throughout the piece, using specific quotations or examples for support.

**Two:** Think of a place where you have spent time and have vivid memories. Brainstorm a list of memories, nature, history, people, and any other details you remember. If desired, conduct some research to find historical information or other specific details about the place. Using these notes, compose an original essay or short story (approximately two pages). It may be framed around a specific significant event (such as the volcanic explosion in the piece) or a regular day infused with the collective memory of the place. Photographs, drawings, or other realia can accompany finished written pieces.

# Lost and Found in Translation

## “Fourteen Ways of Looking at a Translator” by Eugene Ostashevsky

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/special-feature/fourteen-ways-of-looking-at-a-translator-eugene-ostashevsky/>

In the excerpts from “Fourteen Ways of Looking at a Translator” Eugene Ostashevsky explores the role of translation in poetry. His poems reflect the ambivalent and contextual nature of language with which both poets and translators work. Students will discuss poems in groups and as a class in order to investigate how language functions in poetry.

### Learning Objectives

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

- Identify main poetic devices such as simile and metaphor
- Examine the relationship between poetry and translation
- Analyze the role of the translator in creation of meaning
- Discuss the ambivalent nature of language
- Paraphrase poetry in their own words

### Assessment

Class discussion

Group writing

### Approximate Grade Level

University students

### Materials Needed

“Fourteen Ways of Looking at a Translator” by Eugene Ostashevsky

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/special-feature/fourteen-ways-of-looking-at-a-translator-eugene-ostashevsky/>

### Additional Materials

Projector/smart screen with internet connection

Walter Benjamin’s essay “The Task of the Translator”

<https://www.konstfack.se/PageFiles/46686/Walter%20Benjamin%20-%20The%20task%20of%20the%20Translator.pdf>

Definition of metaphor from *Poetry Foundation*:

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/learn/glossary-terms/metaphor>

Three different translations of the first line of Homer’s *The Odyssey*:

“Sing to me of the man, Muse, the man of twists and turns.” Robert Fagles, 1996

“Tell me about a complicated man.” Emily Watson, 2017

“Sing in me, Muse, and through me tell the story / of that man skilled in all ways of contending.” Robert Fitzgerald, 1961

## **Approximate Length**

Lesson One (50 minutes)

Lesson Two (50 minutes)

### **Lesson One** (50 minutes):

#### **Preparation**

Students will read “Fourteen Ways of Looking at a Translator” before class.

Instructor will read Walter Benjamin’s essay “The Task of the Translator.”

#### **Warm-up Discussion** (10 minutes)

To begin the session, ask the students what their native language is and what languages they speak. List them on board. Open Google Translate page and ask students to come up with words to translate to and from English. Let them discuss freely the quality of translations. If there are speakers whose native language is not English, ask them if there are variations in meaning.

End the warm-up discussion with the “bread” example Walter Benjamin uses. You can read (or paraphrase) the relevant passage\* and ask how and why *brot* and *pain* would mean something different to a German or French. Allow them to reflect by thinking about “bread” in their own native languages.

\*In “*Brot*” and “*pain*” the intended object is the same, but the mode of intention differs. It is because of their modes of intention that the two words signify something different to a German or a Frenchman...

#### **Group Discussion** (20 minutes)

Put students in pairs in three groups. Assign each group a separate theme- (a) translator (b) poet (c) word/language- explored in the poems. Ask them to find all the adjectives, phrases, and metaphors Ostashevsky uses to describe these. You can explain what a metaphor is by using the definition from *Poetry Foundation* and show an example to start them off, e.g., go-between, artist of separation as a metaphor for translator.

The groups might come up with following examples:

- Translator: carrier of correspondence
- Poet: entranced
- Word/language: sovereign for word; sea for language

#### **Class Discussion** (15 minutes)

Reconvene as a class and have each group report on their list. Write them on the board. Ask if they can identify common elements in each list. Ask if there are any themes emerging from the poems.

They might identify following themes related to language and translation: ambivalence of meaning, faithfulness (or lack thereof) to source language, interdependency of poet and translator, foreignness of all languages.

#### **Wrap-up** (5 minutes)

Conclude the class with an overview of the themes.

## **Lesson Two** (50 minutes):

### **Class Discussion** (20 minutes)

After a short review of the highlights of the previous session, show the three different translations of the first line of Homer's *The Odyssey*:

"Sing in me, Muse, and through me tell the story / of that man skilled in all ways of contending." Robert Fitzgerald, 1961

"Sing to me of the man, Muse, the man of twists and turns." Robert Fagles, 1996

"Tell me about a complicated man." Emily Watson, 2017

Prompt a class discussion by asking:

- Whether the translator has a right to take such liberties when translating a poem.
- Whether the translated poem is "fake" and/or inferior to the original.

### **Group Discussion** (20 minutes)

Divide the class into groups of three or four. Give each group certain lines from the poems and ask them to interpret their meaning. After their discussion, they will paraphrase the lines and share with the rest of the class. Prepare them to justify their word choices and describe the liberties they took with original lines.

Here are a few lines that the instructor might choose:

- Knock, knock. Who's there? The translator. Translator, are you going postal?/They who say you do not mean what you say do not mean what they say./How do we come to mean what we say, say we. Really.
- The letter/ killeth./ It killeth/ later./ It killeth/ by translator.
- The translator lies in a trance. Does the poet possess the translator, does the translator possess the poet.
- The poet is entranced. The translator is enchanted./The poet makes an entrance. What does the translator make.
- Language is a sea which laps about the littoral of the world./ Does the poet enter the translator. Do they make it./ The translator enters the sea. The translator enters the sea to make pee.
- The word is its own reward in poetry. It reigns over itself./ It is sovereign. The word is weird. It is foreign./Poetry is when you don't understand the language./ When you don't understand, you stand under. You listen.
- What you don't understand is poetry. / What you understand is translation.

### **Wrap up** (10 minutes)

Each group will read their paraphrase. After each reading ask the class whether group's paraphrase is "faithful" to the original, point out their word choices (if there are any that stand out), and let them justify the liberties they took.

# Intertextuality: The Dark Coasts of Sinopoulos

**“Elpenor” by Takis Sinopoulos, translated from the Greek by Konstantinos Doxiadis**

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/poetry/elpenor-takis-sinopoulos/>

In this lesson, students will explore how Sinopoulos’ poetry relates to both classical Greek literature and the contemporary 20th century context in which he was writing. Students will enrich their understanding of Sinopoulos and Homer’s *Odyssey* with supplementary secondary materials which provide background information into both the context of “Elpenor” and the intertextuality that the poem represents. Finally, students will be invited to recreate a character from the *Odyssey* themselves by echoing Sinopoulos’ style.

## Learning Objectives

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

- Analyse the tone and register of a poem
- Investigate the similarities and differences between the intertextuality of a classical fable and a contemporary poet
- Relate the significance of a historical context to the themes of a poem
- Explain or infer a poet’s choices on a personal and political level
- Creatively reimagine a character from the *Odyssey* in poetry

## Assessment

- Individual research
- Group discussion
- Class discussion
- Group presentation
- Creative writing

## Approximate Grade Level

University students

## Materials Needed

“Elpenor,” by Takis Sinopoulos, translated by Konstantin Doxiadis:

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/poetry/elpenor-takis-sinopoulos/>

Article in *Ancient Literature*: “Elpenor in the *Odyssey*: Odysseus’ Sense of Responsibility” by Clark Roomland

<https://www.ancient-literature.com/elpenor-in-the-odyssey/>

Article on the British Library’s *European Studies Blog*: “Poet of a Pitiabale Time: Takis Sinopoulos” by Susan Halsted

[https://blogs.bl.uk/european/2017/03/poet-of-a-pitiabale-time-takis-sinopoulos.html#:~:text=The%20German%20poet%20Friedrich%20H%C3%B6lderlin,Brod%20und%20Wein'%20\(c.](https://blogs.bl.uk/european/2017/03/poet-of-a-pitiabale-time-takis-sinopoulos.html#:~:text=The%20German%20poet%20Friedrich%20H%C3%B6lderlin,Brod%20und%20Wein'%20(c.)

## Approximate Length

Lesson one (60 minutes)



Lesson two (45 minutes)

### Pre-lesson activities

Students read both the poem “Elpenor” by Sinopoulos and the following article on Elpenor in Homer’s *Odyssey*:

<https://www.ancient-literature.com/elpenor-in-the-odyssey/>

It would be useful for each student to have a printed copy of both to bring to the lesson.

Students make notes on the article under the following headings:

- Information about Elpenor: characteristics, biography etc.
- Elpenor’s relationship to Odysseus
- Events from the *Odyssey* which include Elpenor

### Lesson One

**Introduction** (10-15 minutes): Read through the poem as a class once more. What do the students notice about the tone and language used? Does it remind them of anything? Does it sound better when read aloud, or read silently and individually?

- The tone is serious, classical and sonorous. The poem reads like it was intended to be read aloud, or even performed.
- The language used is older, higher register and even archaic at points (thou): like a Shakespeare play

Considering what you know about the *Odyssey* from the article, what is the “land of death” and the “dark coast” that Sinopoulos is referring to in the article?

### Looking at Language

 (15 minutes)

Students take a few minutes to read through the poem once more independently, highlighting and annotating any stylistic or poetic devices they recognize. Then, ask them to share their findings with a partner and then discuss their findings as a whole class, recording bullet points on the board for students to be able to fill in their notes. Results could include:

- Jarring, non-collocating adjective/noun phrases: ‘clotted silence’
- Use of direct/indirect quotes from the *Odyssey*: “Elpenor, how art thou come to this dark coast?”
- Self-awareness/self-referencing metaphors: “Wandering in the countless threads of history”
- Rhyme “the frozen sea the black cypress trees”
- Alliteration “the shallow shore ravaged by salt and sun”
- Strange verb usage e.g. to ‘plant’ a person
- Personification “whispers of the wind and roars of the sea”
- Metaphor “the sun that burned through the gaps in his thought”

What are the *effects* of these devices on the reader? How do they help to strengthen the mood, tone or rhythm? Which ones were most likely to have been the direct result of the translator? (rhyme)

## Comparison (30-35 minutes)

Working in pairs or small groups, the students now have time to compare the article they read for homework with the poem. They could draw a table to streamline their notes:

Similarities	Differences

Write these guiding questions on the board:

- *Where can you recognise the events of the Odyssey in the poem?*
- *Where is the symbolism used the same or similar?*
- *Where does the poem diverge from the Odyssey?*
- *Is there any ambiguity in the poem, where the events or meaning are unclear?*

After around 15-20 minutes, students report back on their findings to the class. Each group only adds something that the previous group has not yet mentioned, in order to streamline the class discussion (or points where groups disagree).

Draw the table on the board and collect the key ideas there for students to fill in the gaps in their tables.

## Lesson Two

### Pre-Lesson Activities

Students read the author bio and the translator's note available next to the poem on the *Asymptote* website, and take notes on the following task:

*The poem was first published in 1951. Relate the significance of this date to the themes of the poem itself with the information provided in the bio and the translator's note.*

**Introduction** (15 minutes): class feedback. Students take 5 minutes to talk to their partner about their notes on the homework task, and then each pair reports back to the class.

The pairs should pay particular attention to where their ideas *differ*.

### Trauma, the *Odyssey* and Sinopoulos (30 minutes)

**Sinopoulos and the *Odyssey*** (30 minutes): now that we know this poem was most likely a reaction to the trauma of the German occupation and the Greek Civil War of the 1940s, split the class into groups of 3-4 and assign them with either Task A or Task B. Task B would be more suitable for the faster students in the class, and Task A for the students who need more time.

#### Task A

Read the article by Susan Halsted on Takis Sinopoulos: "Poet of a Pitiable Time" and then answer the following questions:

What does the figure of Elpenor represent in this poem in a direct sense?  
 What *could* the figure of Elpenor represent in this poem in a more indirect sense?

Use quotes from both the article and the poem in your answer, and prepare to present it to the class.

### Task B

Read the article by Susan Halsted on Takis Sinopoulos: “Poet of a Pitiable Time” and then answer the following questions:

- Why do you think Sinopoulos chose to recreate the events and imagery of Homer’s *Odyssey* in this poem, both on a personal and a political level?
- Regarding the events surrounding the German occupation of Greece, what could the chosen subject matter be referring or reacting to?
- What meaning or significance could it convey to refer back to a country’s ‘founding’ or classical literature, particularly in times of trauma?

After around 20 minutes, at least one group from Task A and one group from Task B volunteer to present their findings to the class.

### Homework Task / Creative Writing

Research Homer’s *Odyssey*. Choose another character from the fable and write a poem about them which includes events from the *Odyssey*. Choose characters and events from the table below, or find your own:

Characters	Event(s)
The Sirens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Odysseus' ship passes through between Italy and Sicily, where the sirens attempt to lure them</li> </ul>
Calypso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calypso, the beautiful nymph, holds Odysseus captive on Ogygia for seven years</li> </ul>
Polyphemus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Odysseus blinds Polyphemus and escapes his lair</li> </ul>
Helen of Troy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helen's abduction from Sparta</li> <li>• Sparta launch the ships which start the Trojan War</li> </ul>
King Agamemnon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Odysseus encountering Agamemnon’s spirit in Hades</li> <li>• Agamemnon’s murder by Clytemnestra</li> </ul>

**Possible subject matter for the poem could include:**

- Reimagining a character or event from the *Odyssey* in a modern cultural context
- Exploring personal or national trauma

**Extension Activity**

Choose a character or an event from *your* national, classical literature. Write a poem which takes inspiration from this classical literature yet places the character or event in a modern cultural context.

# The Writer, the Editor, and the Publishing Industry

**“Two Stories” by Herve Guibert, translated by Daniel Lupo**

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/fiction/two-stories-herve-guibert/>

This piece includes two stories written by Guibert: *The Photography Critic* and *The Editor*. For this lesson, students will look at the genre of autofiction and analyze the stories in the context of the autofiction genre. Students will also look at some of aspects of the publishing industry, both from the view of an author and that of an editor.

## Learning Objectives

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

- Practice close reading
- Analyze the text
- Discuss topics from the reading including autofiction, editing, publishing
- Recognize and identify different aspects of the publishing industry
- Write their own art review

## Assessment

Participation in group discussions

Discussions and research on autofiction

Art review assignment

## Approximate Grade Level

High school students

University students

Useful for students interested in writing and editing

## Materials Needed

“Two Stories” by Herve Guibert, translated by Daniel Lupo

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/fiction/two-stories-herve-guibert/>

Autofiction Definitions

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Autofiction>

Who is an editor?

<https://www.hardiegrant.com/au/media/blog/what-does-an-editor-actually-do>

<https://www.practicaladultinsights.com/what-does-a-magazine-editor-do.htm>

Thinking about the relationship between authors and editors

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2009/sep/27/raymond-carver-editor-influence>

On the publishing industry

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/books/review/the-atlas-six-olivie-blake.html>

<https://lunch.publishersmarketplace.com/2022/03/editorial-resignations-at-big-houses-spark-reckoning/>

## Supplementary materials

Autofiction Definitions

<https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/authors/pw-select/article/85269-autofiction-what-it-is-and-what-it-isn-t.html>

On Herve Guibert

<https://www.blind-magazine.com/news/herve-guibert-a-writer-writing-on-photography/>

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet-books/2014/06/wayne-koestenbaum-on-the-journals-of-herve-guibert>

Hervé Guibert | The MIT Press

2020 | herve-guibert (herveguibert.net)

Who is an editor?

<https://www.wise-geek.com/what-is-a-fiction-editor.htm>

<https://www.themuse.com/advice/editor-job-career-explainer-guide#:~:text=Editors%20plan%2C%20coordinate%2C%20revise%2C,writers%20to%20refine%20their%20work.>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zb0Tyxi5ksM>

On the publishing industry

<https://lithub.com/unlivable-and-untenable-molly-mcgee-on-the-punishing-life-of-junior-publishing-employees/>

## Approximate Length

**Lesson One** (In class - 95 minutes)

**Lesson Two** (In class - 65 minutes)

**Lesson Three** (take-home assignment and class time, 80 – 120 minutes)

**Lesson One** (95 minutes)

**Part One** (35 minutes)

- Ask the students to read the first story “The Photography Critic” twice, and then discuss the piece in general in small groups (20 minutes)
  - What were their first impressions? What lines stood out the most?
  - What audience do students think the author had in mind when he wrote this?
  - Have students come across this kind of piece before?
- Ask the students to present their ideas to the class and pose the following questions: (15 minutes)
  - What effect does the third person narration have on the story?
  - How does the past tense impact the narrative?
  - What is the tone of the piece?

**Part Two** (60 minutes)

- Ask students to read the translators note (20 – 30 mins)
  - Ask students to discuss if the translator’s note expands their understanding of the piece.



- In the translator's note, concentrate on the lines about Guibert's themes, especially the effects of writing on the writer's health and the writer's health on their writing.
- Ask students to read the "The Photography Critic" again and find quotes from the story that are related the two themes that are a) the effects of writing on the writer's health and then b) the writer's health on their writing.
- Discuss the chosen quotations
- Ask students to read about autofiction (30 mins)
  - Ask students to do some research into the author's life and see if there are any resemblances between the critic in the story and the author's own life. (See links on Guibert in the Supplementary Materials section)
  - What is the difference between autofiction and autobiography?
  - What are some benefits and difficulties of writing autofiction?
  - Why might some authors choose to write autofiction?
  - Is this a genre that any students might be interested in writing in? Discuss why they would be interested or not interested in autofiction.

## **Lesson Two** (65 minutes)

### **Part One** (40 – 50 minutes)

- Ask students to read the second story "The Editor"
  - Ask students to point out any differences in how the story is written (e.g.: - tone, point of view, character engagement etc.)
  - Discuss why Guibert choose to write about both the writer and the editor
  - Ask students to read the articles about what an editor does to gain a good understanding of how editors work. Then ask students to compare and contrast the role of the editor in the story and the role the editor should ideally be performing.
  - For students who are interested in becoming editors, what kind of editors would they like to be?
- Ask students to read *the Guardian* piece of the editor's influence on Raymond Carver.
  - Based on the student's understanding of who an editor is, ask them to discuss the ethics of editing based on the Raymond Carver article and Guibert's story "The Editor"

### **Part Two** (15 minutes)

- Based on the two stories and the students' own opinions, what role does money play in the life of a) an author and b) an editor?
- Ask students to read the NY Times and Publishers Market Place articles on the publishing industry, and then discuss the role money plays in the publishing industry.

## **Lesson Three** (80 – 120 minutes)

### Take home exercises

- Ask students to visit an art exhibition (either in person or virtual) and write a 500-to-1000-word review of the exhibition. Students can either focus on the range of work or pick four pieces they

find particularly interesting to write about. (Teachers can also choose to take the class to an exhibition or a gallery).

- Once they have visited the art exhibition and written their review, ask them to write a diary entry in third person about the entire process.

#### Class exercise

- When students meet for class after completing the assignment, ask students to discuss/compare and contrast their process with the process narrated in *The Photography Critic*.

## **FEEDBACK**

Thanks for taking the time to read our Summer 2022 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!

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