

SZYMBORSKA ACTIVITIES for WORLD LIT WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

WORKS IN PACKET

“Cat in an Empty Apartment”
“Hatred”
“Here”
"In Praise of Self-Deprecation"
“An Interview with Atropos”
“Lots’ Wife”
“A Moment in Troy”
“No End of Fun”
“Psalm”
“Rubens’ Women”
“Suicide’s Room”
“Theatre Impressions”
“Tortures”
“Two Monkeys by Brueghel”
“Vietnam”

ACTIVITIES

1. For 3 poems, write out a SOAPSTONE (speaker, occasion, audience, purpose, internal structure, external structure, and tone).
2. In "Some Like Poetry," Szymborska takes the three words of her title and creates three stanzas exploring what each of these words means to her. Write a three-word sentence of your own and, following Szymborska's lead, use each word as a topic for a stanza. Try to imitate Szymborska's ironic tone.
3. http://info-poland.buffalo.edu/web/arts_culture/literature/poetry/szymborska/poems/link.shtml
Look up this link. Select 2 poems not included in your packet, and write a SOAPSTONE.
4. Other suggested poems:
“Some Like Poetry”
“Nothing Twice” (rock song also)
“Calling out to Yeti”
"The Joy of Writing"
"The Terrorist, He's Watching"
"The End at the Beginning”

Respond in any authentic and meaningful artistic way to one of these poems (or any poem not heretofore used). Do not merely illustrate the poem, but respond personally -- create a visual of your reaction to the poem.

5. Elements of Szymborska's poetry:

- a. Celebration of the miraculous qualities of the ordinary and seemingly insignificant events.
- b. Concrete imagery and precise language, making her poetry a bit easier to translate than other poetry, but her puns and plays on words still elude translation.
- c. Universality of meaning and experience.
- d. Skepticism.
- e. Sense of humor.
- f. Socratic questioning by a naive questioner.
- g. Stripping away of the cliché to reveal truths.
- h. Frequently opens poems with a seemingly innocent question, then uncovers a series of harsh truths.
- i. Expresses a poetic joy in life's miraculous potential, tempered by her strong skepticism of easy solutions, and her acute awareness of suffering.

Write a 3-page analysis of Szymborska's poems in the packet, referring to the listed elements.

6. Compare and contrast the 3 translations of "Rubens' Women" (included in the packet).
7. Write out -- by hand, one line at a time -- two Szymborska poems that you have not used for any other part of this assignment. After each line, write an extended response of association the CONTEXT of the poem supports. You may include drawings.