



Intertextuality of Literary and Visual Arts

Lesson Length: Approximately 1 ½ hours

Curriculum Alignment Code		GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4	GOAL 5	GOAL 6
		X	X		X	X	X
Instructional Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider how artists' choice of media impacts their message To develop analytical and interpretive skills in literature 						

Assignment Overview

- Analyze the photograph "Flower in a Churchyard Wall."
- Discuss the poem "Flower in the Crannied Wall" by Alfred, Lord Tennyson.
- Complete a Literature Web.
- Write a Response Journal entry.

Homework

- Finish reading *The Death of Ivan Ilych* by Leo Tolstoy.
- Finish writing an essay.

Extensions

- Explore and respond to other works of visual art linked to literature.
- Complete an Art Web for a painting or other work of visual art.
- Connect to Music

Materials

- Teacher Resource 11A**
- Student Activity Pages 11A and 11B**
- The photograph "Flower in the Brick Wall" (*Student Guide* p. 69)
- "Flower in the Crannied Wall" by Alfred, Lord Tennyson (*Student Guide* p. 70)

Background/Context

In this lesson students will analyze how a visual artist and a literary artist respond to similar subject matter, specifically, the image of a flower growing from a wall. This will give you a chance to challenge and extend students' visual literacy, noting the significance of choice of subject, how a visual artist assembles a composition (what is placed in the foreground and background, how the eye is led among the visual elements), how color and tone can establish a mood, and what each visual element might symbolize.

Students will also read a poem focused on a flower growing from a wall. Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809–1892), its author, was the most esteemed poet of Victorian England. Publishing during a period when there was a considerable popular audience for poetry, his works sold in great number and allowed him to dedicate himself to his writing. His works include *Idylls of the King*, which is a poetic rendering of the legends of King Arthur, and *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical*. This lesson's poem illustrates the compression that is possible in poetry. In a few brief lines, Tennyson conveys both a specific image and a desire to understand the whole universe.

In response to both pieces, you might ask students what types of words or phrases the visual art brings to mind, and what sorts of mental pictures arise in response to the written poem.


1. Discuss Artistic Media

- Explain to students that different artists use different media to convey an experience to an audience. Different artistic media include the sound produced by musical instruments or the human voice, paint or ink applied to a flat or three-dimensional surface, and the written or spoken word. In this lesson students will examine two different artistic portrayals of one image: a flower growing from a wall. The first portrayal, a photograph, is strictly visual, while the second, a poem, is literary.
- Have students turn to the photograph "Flower in the Brick Wall" on Student Guide page 69. As students view and think about the picture, ask them to respond to the following questions.

Discussion Questions

- Describe the subject of this photograph. Why do you think the photographer found it important enough to serve as the focus of an artwork?
- Why do you think the photographer decided to photograph the flower from this angle?
- What details make the image visually interesting?
- What might the photographer want to communicate via this photograph?
- Discuss students' answers in class, analyzing the photograph together to interpret its possible underlying messages and determine what makes it artistically engaging.

Name: _____ Date: _____

 **Activity 11A**

Literature Web

Directions: Complete the Literature Web for "Flower in the Crannied Wall."

Key Words _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	Feelings _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	
Ideas _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	Title _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	Images/Symbols _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Structure _____ _____ _____ _____ _____		

Copyright © Kendall Hunt Publishing Company

Change Through Choices · Lesson 11 · Intertextuality of Literature and Visual Arts

71

From Student Guide, page 71

2. Discuss the Literature

- Next, have students turn to the poem "Flower in the Crannied Wall" by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, on Student Guide page 70. Ask a volunteer to read it aloud. Then have students turn to **Student Activity Page 11A** and independently develop a Literature Web in response to the poem.
- Divide the class into small groups. Have them share and discuss their webs. Then talk about their responses as a class. Share the responses on the Sample Literature Web (**Teacher Resource 11A**) and have students compare them to their own.
- Continue discussion of the poem, using the questions on the next page as a guide.

Discussion Questions

Literary Response and Interpretation Questions

- Why do you think Tennyson chose to write this brief poem?
- Why does the speaker choose to pluck the flower “out of the crannies”?
- What is the relationship between the poem’s speaker and God, mentioned at the end of the poem?

Reasoning Questions

- How is a flower, either stuck in or plucked from a cranny in a wall, like a human being?
- What does artistry—either literary or visual—have to do with human spirituality?
- Do the poem and the photograph communicate the same theme or message? Why or why not? What does this indicate about differences between visual art and literature?

Change Question

- Imagine that the photograph and the poem were both composed by Tennyson. What would his choice to change between visual and literary media say about him or the message that he wished to communicate to his audience?

Response Journal

Have students respond to one of the following questions in their Response Journals:

- *Do you agree with the adage that “a picture is worth a thousand words”? Why or why not?*
- *Do you personally respond more strongly to visual or literary art? Why?*

3. Have a Journal Conference

- If you have not already done so this week, meet with students individually to discuss their experiences with the unit readings and to evaluate their progress in their journals. Use the Journal Response Rubric in Section 2 under “Assessment” to evaluate students’ work and suggest areas for improvement and exploration.



Homework

- Have students complete their reading of *The Death of Ivan Ilych* in preparation for Lesson 12.
- Remind students to finish writing their essay examining *The Death of Ivan Ilych* from the Platonist, Aristotelian, Moralistic, and Historicist perspectives, due in Lesson 12. Explain that they will not have an opportunity in class to revise the paper before they turn it in, so they should make sure it is thorough and expressed well.



Extensions

- Have students investigate other works of visual art that are based on or related to works of literature, or vice versa. Some examples are W. H. Auden's poem "Musée des Beaux Arts," based on Pieter Brueghel the Elder's painting *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*; John Everett Millais's painting *Ophelia*, based on the Shakespearean character in *Hamlet*; and Francis Cugat's painting that became the famous jacket art for F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby*. Ask students to consider why visual artists might feel motivated to respond to literature, and likewise why writers might find inspiration in visual art. Have them analyze some of the possibilities in their Response Journal.
- Many of the same concepts, ideas, and symbols that can be conveyed through literature can also be conveyed through visual art. Have students choose a painting or other work of visual art they find particularly rich with meaning. Have them use the Art Web on **Student Activity Page 11B** to analyze the work of art. Invite students to share completed webs along with the images they chose with the class.

Connect to Music

- Have students locate and listen to musical compositions based on or related to a work of literature. Examples include songs from Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story* (based on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*), Samuel Barber's song collection *Twelve Poems of Emily Dickinson*, Richard Strauss's symphonic work *Don Quixote*, or Cole Porter's songs from *Kiss Me, Kate* (based on Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*). Ask students to read the literary work referenced in the musical work, and then to listen thoughtfully to a recording of the music. Then have students make a classroom presentation that (1) discusses how the musical work draws ideas or emotions from the text or responds to its characters or events, and (2) includes recorded segments from the musical work to share with others.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Activity 11B **Art Web**

Directions: Complete the Art Web based on a painting or other visual artwork of your choice.

Key Elements _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	Feelings _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Ideas _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	Images/Symbols _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Title _____ _____ _____	
Structure _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	

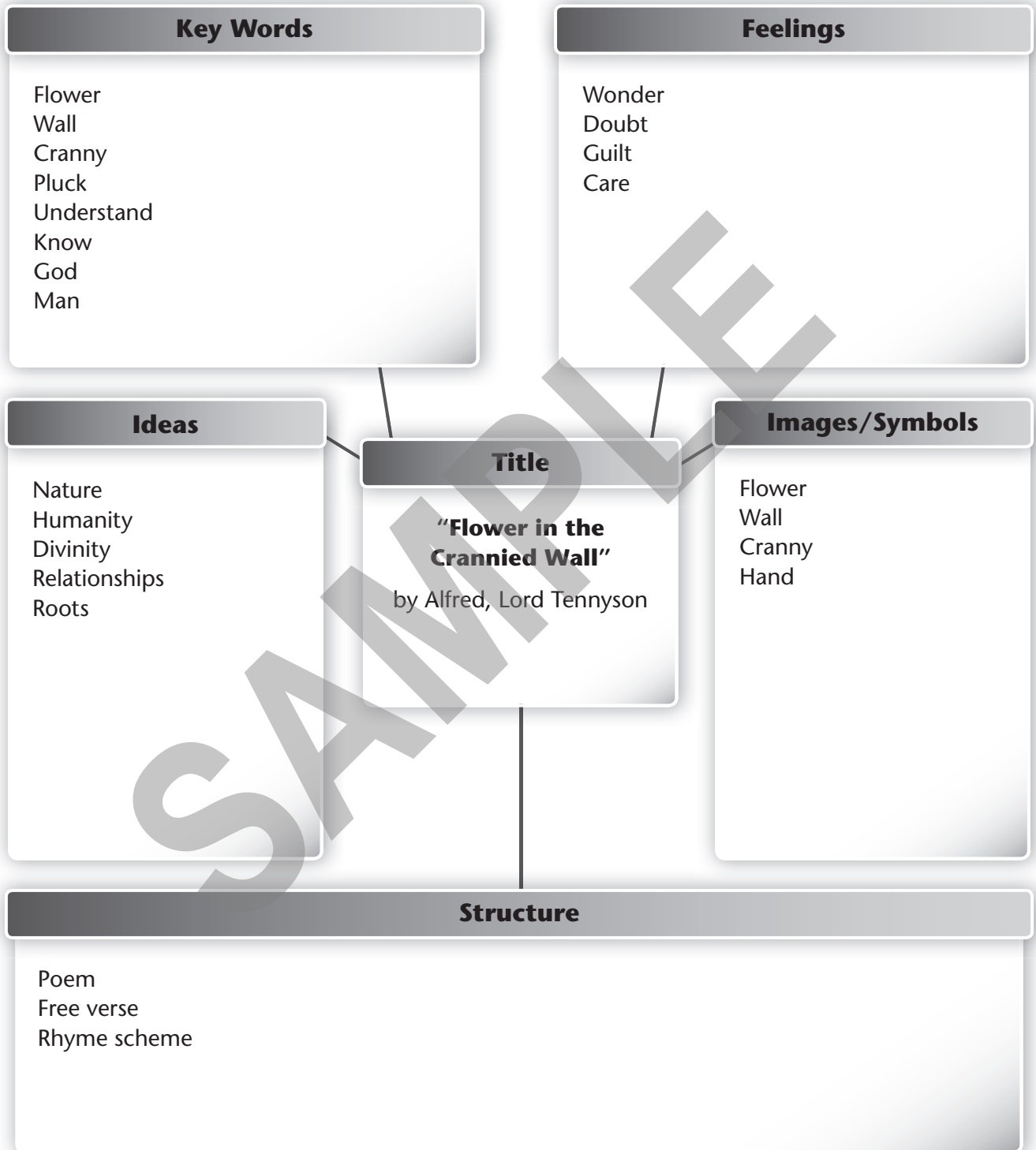
72 Change Through Choices - Lesson 11 · Intertextuality of Literature and Visual Arts

Copyright © Kendall Hunt Publishing Company

From Student Guide, page 72

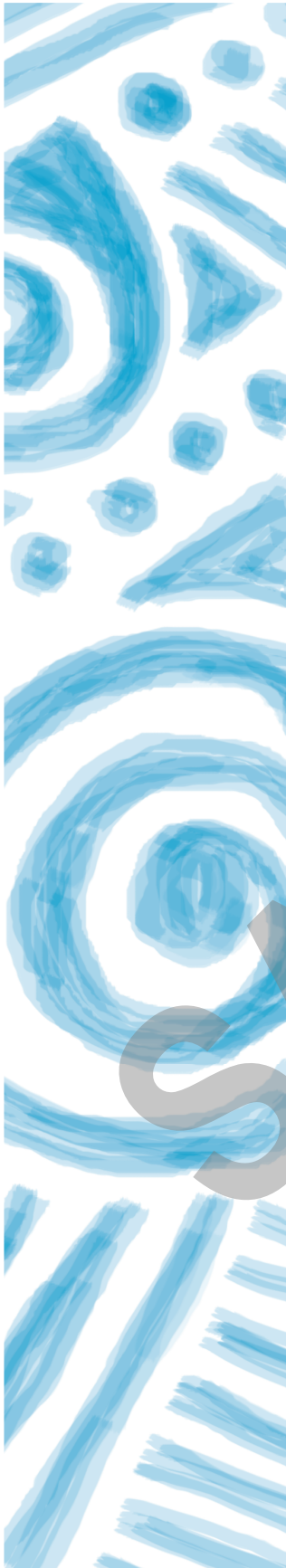
Sample Literature Web

11A



Copyright © Kendall Hunt Publishing Company

See Section 2, "Teaching Tips for Implementing This Unit," for a detailed explanation.



Flower in the Brick Wall



26kot, 2010. Under license from Shutterstock, Inc.



Flower in the Crannied Wall

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies;—
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

Copyright © Kendall Hunt Publishing Company

Name: _____ Date: _____



Activity 11A

Literature Web

Directions: Complete the Literature Web for “Flower in the Crannied Wall.”

Key Words

Feelings

Ideas

Title

Images/Symbols

Structure

Name: _____ Date: _____



Activity 11B

Art Web

Directions: Complete the Art Web based on a painting or other visual artwork of your choice.

Key Elements	Feelings
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Ideas	Title	Images/Symbols
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Structure

Copyright © Kendall Hunt Publishing Company