



Reading the Poem

The Lady of Shalott

The appeal of this work is through its imagery. But many students do not have the experience that allows them to read and understand such poems. Therefore, their first experience with this poem should be by hearing it read aloud skillfully. Only after they have heard it can they be expected to read it in a way that carries meaning. Consequently, the teacher's reading is vital in arousing and maintaining students' interest.

Preparation for Reading Aloud

- Read the poem aloud to yourself several times before you attempt to read it to the class.
- In reading, look for meaning. This means ignoring where the lines end and look to where the sentence ends. (See the first two lines for an example.)
- Be aware of the rhythm of the poem and use your voice to reflect this.

Look at lines that are descriptive. How should these be read?
Look at the verses where there is a sense of mystery. Can your voice add to this?

Look at the dramatic change when The Lady moves to see Lancelot ride past. The rhythm become almost staccato as the drama builds.

Consider how to read the verses that begins, "Lying, robed in snowy white....." so as to show the Lady going to her death.
How will you read the last few lines?

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Teacher Strategy A - Setting the Scene



1. If your class is not familiar with Camelot set the scene for them. Use non-fiction books and have class find illustrations of medieval castles, peasants, knights in armour, court dress of the time.
2. Have class in groups of two or three to examine these. Encourage discussion.
3. When all have had an opportunity to look at material on Middle Ages distribute **Lady of Shalott BLM 1**.

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Teacher Strategy B

1. Introduce the poem and read it aloud to class.
2. Distribute copies of the poem but before reading it a second time explain any words that are unfamiliar.
3. After second reading have class discuss:
 - What was the spell that held the Lady of Shalott?
 - Consider who cast the spell and why.
 - Which parts did the author describe so well that you could “see” it in your mind?





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Teacher Strategy C - Dramatisation

1. Re-read the poem to class while they follow the text.
2. Explain to students how the movie/ musical *West Side Story* was a modern version of Romeo and Juliet with two street gangs in leather jackets and flick knives replacing the families described by Shakespeare.
3. Have class discuss a modern version of Lady of Shalott with the main character as teenager. Where might she be living? Who has decided she cannot leave her home? Why?
4. Class use **Lady of Shalott BLM 2**.

