

Responding to Poetry

Procedure: read the poem and compose a SOAPStone response on it. You can use the following website to guide you through the process (<https://medium.com/@ashleyroutis/soapstone-a-strategy-for-literary-analysis-b528b1bddf6a>). The assignment is due Monday, April 6th. This deadline for this assignment was set well in advance of the Ministry of Education's closure of schools on March 20th. In order to earn your course credit, and demonstrate your mastery of curriculum objectives, please complete this assignment as soon as possible.

"To A Mouse"
by Robert Burns

Oh, tiny timorous forlorn beast,
Oh why the panic in your breast?
You need not dart away in haste
To some corn-rick (bin)
I'd never run and chase you,
With murdering stick.

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken nature's social union,
And justifies that ill opinion
Which makes you startle
At me, your poor earth-born companion,
And fellow mortal.

I do not doubt you have to thieve;
What then? Poor beastie you must live;
One ear of corn that's scarcely missed
Is small enough:
I'll share with you all this year's grist,
Without rebuff.

Your wee bit housie too in ruin,
Its fragile walls the winds have strewn,
And you've nothing new to build a new
one,
Of grasses green;
And bleak December winds ensuing,
Both cold and keen.

You saw the fields laid bare and waste,
And weary winter coming fast,
And cosy there beneath the blast,
You thought to dwell,
Till crash; the cruel ploughman crushed
your little cell.

Your wee bit heap of leaves and stubble,
Had cost you many a weary nibble.
Now you're turned out for all your trouble
Of house and home
To bear the winter's sleety drizzle,
And hoar frost cold.

But, mousie, you are not alone,
In proving foresight may be in vain,
The best laid schemes of mice and men,
Go oft astray,
And leave us nothing but grief and pain,
To rend our day.

Still you art blessed, compared with me!
The present only touches thee,
But, oh, I backward cast my eye
On prospects drear,
And forward, though I cannot see,
I guess and fear.