

DECONSTRUCTION / RILKE QUESTION PROMPTS

Question Prompt 1:

What's the purpose of Deconstruction? As an analytical tool, how does it help us understand literature better, and what exactly does it help us understand? What are we supposed to examine and talk about when we set out to deconstruct something? Does this theoretical approach involve more than one analytical step? If so, what are those steps? What does Lynn mean when he says that deconstruction as a theoretical practice "aims to show...how the structures that we bring to language and experience inevitably fail...and meaning slips and slides and [ultimately] comes apart" (103)? How does this theoretical approach differ from that of New Criticism and Reader Response?

Reference specific passages to help you address these questions, and be specific in your answers.

Question Prompt 2:

Using the Rilke material you read this week as your starting place, try out some of the theoretical principals you've learned from your recent study of Deconstruction. How might we go about deconstructing a Rilke poem? What needs to occur in our opening analysis of a poem *before* we begin questioning the integrity of the piece as a whole, as well as specific bits of contradictory language within it? And then, by exactly what means do we actually begin the work of deconstruction itself? What kinds of things do we look for in the poem in an effort to "read the poem against itself"? What kinds of questions do we begin asking of the text in our close interrogation of it?

Look again at the vocabulary terms at the end of Chapter 5 in *Texts and Contexts* to help you with this discussion response. Reference a specific poem to help you address these questions, and be specific in your answers.

Question Prompt 3:

Using a **different Rilke poem** than you did last week as your starting place, continue the same work you started in last week's discussion forum: try out some of the theoretical principals you've learned from your recent study of Deconstruction. How might we go about deconstructing a Rilke poem? What needs to occur in our opening analysis of a poem *before* we begin questioning the integrity of the piece as a whole, as well as specific bits of contradictory language within it? And then, by exactly what means do we actually begin the work of deconstruction itself? What kinds of things do we look for in the poem in an effort to "read the poem against itself"? What kinds of questions do we begin asking of the text in our close interrogation of it?

Look again at the vocabulary terms at the end of Chapter 5 in *Texts and Contexts* to help you with this discussion response. Reference a specific poem to help you address these questions, and be specific in your answers.