

Investigate! The poetry of Christina

Rossetti: *At Home*

Investigate! *At Home*

Investigating *At Home*

- ❖ How surprising do you find the fact that the speaker of *At Home* is already dead?
 - How does it change the way you read the rest of the poem?
- ❖ How do you find the presence of the speaker?
 - Eerie, comforting, or ghost-like and disturbing?
- ❖ Think about the emotions the speaker is expressing
 - Do you think she is angry with her friends, or do you think that she accepts their happiness?
 - What comments does the poem make about happiness and what causes it?

Investigating language and tone

- ❖ Think about the conversation of the friends and the description of it as part of an 'honest chat' (l. 9)
 - What associations do you have with the word 'honest'?
 - What associations do you have with the word 'chat'?
- ❖ Do you agree that theirs is an 'honest chat' or do you think that it has more sinister connotations?

Investigating structure and versification

- ❖ Look at the rhyming words in the poem
 - Where does Rossetti combine rhyming words to give an idea or a thought more prominence?
 - What is the effect of this?
- ❖ Read the poem aloud and think about the rhythm
 - What effects does the speaker create?
 - Can you identify any places where change in metre corresponds to a change in tone?

Investigating imagery and symbolism

- ❖ Compare the treatment of the fruits in *Goblin Market* and *At Home*
 - How are they described in a manner which makes them appear attractive?
- ❖ Why do you think that Rossetti chose to describe 'green orange boughs' hanging inside the house?
- ❖ How does watching her friends feasting make the speaker feel?

Investigate! The poetry of Christina

Rossetti: *At Home*

Investigating themes

- ❖ Think about the narrative of the poem
 - Do you think that a message is conveyed through it?
 - If so, what is this message or moral?
- ❖ What do you consider the most striking or memorable element of the poem?