

Investigate! *Maude Clare*

Investigating *Maude Clare*

- ❖ How surprising do you find Maude Clare's behaviour?
 - How do you account for it?
 - How much sympathy do you feel for Nell?
- ❖ How do account for Nell's pride?
 - Why do you think that it was making her 'pale'?
- ❖ How do you think she felt when Thomas 'gazed long on pale Maude Clare' (l. 15) before he kissed her?
- ❖ Why do you think she went ahead with the wedding?

Investigating language and tone

- ❖ In what sort of tone do you think that Nell's words were uttered?
 - Do you think she uttered them in haste?
 - What indications are there that she is insecure in her marriage?
- ❖ In what sort of tone do you think that Maude's words were uttered?
 - What indications are there that they were prepared in advance?

Investigating structure and versification

- ❖ What is the effect of structuring the poem in the form of a ballad?

- ❖ Read the poem aloud and tap out the metre.
 - What is the effect of its strict regularity?
- ❖ What and whom does Maude Clare attack?
- ❖ What sort of moral statement do you think that the poem could be making?

Investigating imagery and symbolism

- ❖ What is the effect of the imagery Maude uses to describe her 'gift'?
 - Why do you think she chooses to speak in figures of speech rather than directly?

Investigating themes

- ❖ Why do you think that Maude Clare waits until after Thomas and Nell come 'out of the church' (l. 1) to confront them?
 - What do you think she hopes to achieve?
- ❖ What surprises you about the depiction of Maude?
 - How does she fit or subvert the stereotype of the jilted lover that you would expect from a mid-nineteenth century poem?