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## Investigate!

### *Maude Clare*

# Investigate! The poetry of Christina Rossetti: *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?