

Investigating *Twice*

- ❖ How appropriate do you consider the title *Twice* to be?
 - What ideas does it suggest
- ❖ What signs does the speaker convey
 - Of weakness?
 - Of strength?
- ❖ What do you think that the speaker means when she declares that 'a woman's words are weak' (l. 7)?
 - Do you think that she really means this or do you think that she is speaking in irony?
- ❖ What are your thoughts about her beloved?
 - Would you describe him as cruel?

Investigating language and tone

- ❖ Why do you think that the speaker 'smiled' at the speech that her beloved gave her even though it hurt her so much (l. 19)?
 - Why do you think she calls his rejection a 'speech'?
- ❖ At the end of the poem, the speaker declares that she 'shall not question much' (l. 48)
 - Why do you think that she says this?
 - What negative associations does she have with the idea of questioning?

- Where do you think these associations have come from?

Investigating structure and versification

- ❖ Try reading the phrases 'O my love' and 'O my God' aloud repeatedly, changing the syllable you stress each time
 - Which sounds the most appropriate?
 - Why do you think that this is?
- ❖ Mark out the stresses in the second verse
 - How do you think the rhythmic pattern of the verse reflects the emotions of the speaker?
 - Is there anything surprising you can identify in the verse?

Investigating imagery and symbolism

- ❖ Note down the various ways in which the speaker describes her heart
 - What surprises you about the way in which it is described?
 - Why do you think that she chooses to speak of her heart in this way?

Investigate! The poetry of Christina

Rossetti: *Twice*

- ❖ What do you associate with the idea of scanning something?
 - How are these associations met in:
 - The description of the
 - beloved
 - God 'scanning' the speaker's
 - heart? (l. 11, 35).
 - What differences does the speaker suggest exist between the way that the beloved scans the heart and the way that God scans it?

Investigating themes

- ❖ What associations do you have with the idea of judgement?
 - How are these associations met in the poem?
 - Are they more relevant to
 - the beloved or to God?
- ❖ What does the speaker suggest the differences are between man's judgement and God's judgement?