










Rossetti: (a) *A Royal Princess*

 refers to links on www.crossref-it.info

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- ❖ **Lesson focus:** To explore the poem, allowing the students to develop their own ideas
 - Though this programme can be adapted to be a whole-class exercise, led by the teacher, the outline below assumes that students will work largely on their own. This obviously works best if they have already studied some of Rossetti's work.
- ❖ **Opening exercise:** Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4
 - Each group should read the poem aloud together, taking a stanza each in turn
 - They should discuss what they think the poem is about for 5-10 minutes
 - Then give each group a copy of
 -  Rossetti > *A Royal Princess* > Synopsis and commentary > Synopsis (including the 'Investigating' box if you wish)
 -  Rossetti > *A Royal Princess* > Synopsis and commentary > Commentary > The Lancashire Cotton Famine.
 - They check this against their ideas.
- ❖ **Textual examination:** Next, each group finds two specific aspects or features of the poem which they can link to another Rossetti poem or to her style in general
 - In a sentence or two, they explain these two links on two separate pieces of paper, clear and large enough to display later.
 -  Rossetti > *A Royal Princess* > Language, tone and structure
 -  Rossetti > *A Royal Princess* > Imagery, symbolism and themes
 - Now give each group two stanzas from the poem (copied onto pieces of card, and chosen to include suitable areas)
 - They should annotate them with whatever comments they think are relevant and helpful (again clearly, for display).
 -  Rossetti > *A Royal Princess* > Language, tone and structure
 -  Rossetti > *A Royal Princess* > Imagery, symbolism and themes
- ❖ **Discussion ideas:** All groups come back together and their cards/sheets are displayed on the board or wall
 - Look through and discuss what has been said
 - Students can make their own notes from what they see.
- ❖ **Recreative task:** Briefly discuss what are some of today's social issues
 - Using the same style and form as Rossetti's poem, write two or three stanzas of your own, commenting on a chosen contemporary issue.
 -  Rossetti > *A Royal Princess* > Imagery, symbolism and themes > Themes
- ❖ **Critical task:** The critic Lionel Stevenson claimed that Rossetti's work contained 'a minimum of intellectual substance'
 - How far do you think that *A Royal Princess* proves his statement to be wrong?
- ❖ **Extension task:** Find some facts and figures about social conditions in Victorian England
 - How do these affect your understanding of *A Royal Princess* and other Rossetti poems?
 -  Rossetti > Themes and significant ideas > Women > Social justice