

## Rosetti: (d) *Remember*

☞ refers to links on [www.crossref-it.info](http://www.crossref-it.info)

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- ❖ **Lesson focus:** To explore the poem, and to consider Rossetti's view of death and loss.
- ❖ **Opening exercise:** Write the last word of each line of the poem on the board, in a list
  - Ask students to write the sonnet which might fit with this rhyme pattern
    - This is based on the 'bouts rimes' which Rossetti used as a game
  - ☞ Rossetti > Biographical background > Education
  - This could be done individually, in pairs, or orally line by line around the group
    - If 14 lines seems too many, the first 8 could be used.
- ❖ **Textual examination:** Having discussed what kinds of poems the students have produced, read *Remember*.
  - Give the students the following questions to consider, either individually or in groups:
    - a) How does the speaker change their tone between the octet and the sestet?
      - ☞ Rossetti > *Remember* > Structure and versification
    - b) How does the meaning/impact of the word 'remember' change through its five appearances in the poem?
      - ☞ Rossetti > *Remember* > Language, tone and structure > Repetition
    - c) Is the speaker of the poem definitely female?
      - ☞ Rossetti > *Remember* > Themes > The role of women
  - Discuss the students' responses.
- ❖ **Discussion ideas:** What words/phrases suggest, or give an idea about death? These could be listed on the board
  - Does Rossetti give a comforting view of death?
    - ☞ Rossetti > *Remember* > Imagery, symbolism and themes > Imagery and symbolism > The 'silent land'
  - What tensions are set up? eg:
    - Beauty & death
    - Love of man and of God
    - The ephemeral & the eternal
    - The sensory & the transcendent
  - Is it these tensions which give the poem its power?
- ❖ **Recreative task:** A publisher is planning to include this poem in an anthology of works of literature which could be read at funerals
  - Write a letter to him /her explaining why you *either* support *or* oppose its inclusion.
- ❖ **Critical task:** Is the prevailing tone of *Remember* one of hope or of despair?
  - Refer to details from the poem to support your answer.
    - ☞ Rossetti > *Remember* > Language, tone and structure > Tone
    - ☞ Rossetti > *Remember* > Themes > Grief and prayer)
- ❖ **Extension task:** Read these other poems which are analysed on the website:
  - *Song: When I am dead, my dearest*
  - *At Home*
  - *Summer is Ended*
  - *Echo*
  - What overall view of death do these poems convey?