

Name:  
Date:

Period:  
Ms. Lopez

**Letters to a Young Poet and "Initiation"**  
**Lesson 3 – Look Deep Inside**

Directions: Examine the sections of "Letter One" noted below and provide text-based responses to the questions that follow each section. You will need to refer back to the full text to read the whole section being referenced.

**"If your everyday life seems poor ... far in the distance" (lines 41-50).**

1. How does Rilke's assertion that "for the creator there is no poverty and no poor, indifferent place" build upon his earlier ideas?

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2. What metaphors does Rilke use to describe childhood and memories? How do these metaphors develop his ideas about writing?

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3. Circle all the references to houses and homes in this section. According to Rilke, where is the artist's true home?

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**"And if out of this turning within" ... "that is the only way one can judge it" (lines 50-55).**

4. What does Rilke suggest will be the impact of the "turning within" that he advises? (50).

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5. According to Rilke, what makes "good" art? (54). Based on this criteria, who is qualified to judge art?

(lines on back →)

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**“So, dear Sir,” to “to whom his whole life is devoted" (lines 55-63).**

6. How does Rilke use specific words and phrases in this section to refine his ideas about being a poet?

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7. What might Rilke’s choice to capitalize Nature but use the lowercase for creator suggest about how he understands the relationship between artist and inspiration?

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8. How does Rilke’s advice on this section develop a central idea in the text?

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**“But after this descent into yourself ... quietest hour, can perhaps answer” (lines 64-75).**

9. How does Rilke’s statement that those who can live without writing “shouldn’t write at all” refine a central idea? (66)

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10. What impact does Rilke believe that “self-searching” will have on the young poet even if he gives up poetry?

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11. Paraphrase Rilke’s final piece of advice for the poet. What central idea does it develop?

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