



# Literature

A Video Interview Study Guide

## Recommended Viewing

### Bob Mooney on Joyce

<https://youtu.be/j7CxykID5bQ>

Bob Mooney is a professor of English at Washington College and Executive Editor at Etruscan Press. Mooney discusses the themes of Joyce's short story "The Dead," its place in *Dubliners*, Joyce's short story collection, and its place in Joyce's collective work. (30:07)

### H. L. Hix on Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale"

<https://youtu.be/ZcEkKdJ3NBA>

H. L. Hix is a poet, a professor at the University of Wyoming, and an Etruscan Press author. Hix discusses Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale," the poem's musicality and relates it to the musicality of all poetry, and how the poem and the concept of personal experience fit into our 21st century lives. (33:47)

### Jeff Talarigo on Alistair MacLeod

<https://youtu.be/AAQv7PPKHi4>

Jeff Talarigo is an Etruscan Press author. Talarigo discusses Alister MacLeod's book *Island*, specifically the story "The Boat" and how setting is used as a character, developing realistic, unsentimental narrators, collaboration, and literary citizenship. (20:18)

### Kevin Oderman on Ezra Pound

<https://youtu.be/zGLvmlhN0-c>

Kevin Oderman is an Emeritus Professor at West Virginia University, and an Etruscan Press author. Oderman discusses the work of Ezra Pound, how as an American he fits into British and World Literature, his politics and imprisonment, and where to start reading. (25:38)

### Lynn Lurie on Virginia Woolf's "A Mark on the Wall"

<https://youtu.be/1vxdXOV8V3I>

Lynn Lurie is an Etruscan Press author. Lurie discusses Woolf's background, her dense and poetic style, how war seeped into every aspect of Woolf's writing, and the ultimate meaning of the essay. (33:42)

### Mike Lennon on Orwell and Greene

<https://youtu.be/9q-Ehpxcdho>

Mike Lennon is co-founder of the Wilkes Creative Writing Program, a program instructor, a publishing professional, and Norman Mailer's biographer. Lennon discusses Orwell's "Shooting an Elephant" and Graham Greene's "After the Party," the similarities between the two author's upbringings and experiences and breaks down each story and its possible inspiration. (45:48)

### Diane Raptosh on William Blake

<https://youtu.be/5WuUzDOJfV8>

Diane Raptosh is a poet, English and Creative Writing professor at the College of Idaho, where she also directs the Criminal Justice/ Prison Studies program, and an Etruscan Press author. Raptosh discusses William Blake's "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," Blake's subversion of order and how it still affects us, and reads from "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell" and an excerpt from her book-length poem *American Amnesiac*. (28:23)

### Bob Mooney on Blake's "Lament of Enion"

<https://youtu.be/VKuGc5pE2h8>

Bob Mooney is a professor of English at Washington College and Executive Editor at Etruscan Press. Mooney discusses how Blake creates a universe in the poem that reflects us as people, poetry and the eternal, the ramifications of changes in time and space, and how poetry like Blake's shows that everyone is both a hero and a villain. (26:38)

### Wayne Benson on T. S. Eliot

<https://youtu.be/pLpbz1ueQQs>

Wayne Benson is a poet and podcaster. Benson discusses his love for T.S. Eliot and how Eliot's work relates to that which came before and after, reads the first five stanzas of "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and discusses the choices Eliot makes, and reads his own poem "Nomad." (30:16)

# Questions/Prompts

## Bob Mooney on Joyce

1. One of the themes running through Joyce's "The Dead" is that of epiphany. What does the word epiphany mean to you? How is it presented in Dr. Mooney's discussion? Who in the story has an epiphany? How does it contribute to the forward momentum, or profluence, of the story?
2. How does the story "The Dead" relate to the other stories in *Dubliners*? How does it relate to the rest of Joyce's work and career? How does it relate to Irish and British Literature, and to literature as a whole?

**Writing Prompt:** *Write 500 words on how you personally relate to the story "The Dead" considering the following questions: What themes are present aside from that of the epiphany? What character or characters do most relate to, and why? What did you learn about yourself reading the story?*

## H. L. Hix on Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale"

1. What is your first reaction to Hix's reading of the poem? Is the poem easier to connect to when heard as opposed to when read? Do you agree with Hix's assertions about the poem and its effects? If so, why? If not, why not?
2. How are music and poetry similar? How do they differ? Summarize Hix's explanation of poetry in two to three sentences. Do you agree with his assertions about language and sound? If so, why? If not, why not? Is this something you have considered before?

**Writing Prompt:** *What poem resonates with you? Write 500 words on a poem that affects you mentally, emotionally, or physically considering the following questions: How is it similar to "Ode to a Nightingale"? How does it differ? What aspect of it do you connect with the most? The least?*

## Jeff Talarigo on Alistair MacLeod

1. How does Talarigo characterize MacLeod's book *Island*? What is it about? How does Talarigo use it in his own teaching? How does he think it can be used by others?
2. What similarities exist between MacLeod's book and Talarigo's own *In the Cemetery of the Orange Trees*? Was this purposeful on Talarigo's part? How does it extend to other stories beyond the two discussed?

**Writing Prompt:** *Write 500 words on the town you grew up in, providing as much detail as possible, in a style similar to those employed by the narrators of *Island* and *In the Cemetery of the Orange Trees*.*

## Kevin Oderman on Ezra Pound

1. Why are we discussing Pound, an American poet, in a course of British Literature? What ties does Pound have to poetry in general? to the American poets? to the British poets?
2. What kind of influence did Pound have on the art and world of poetry? How did his work develop? Can it be considered easily accessible?

**Writing Prompt:** *Write 500 words on whether we as an audience should embrace an artist's work despite, or because, of their political views. Does support of the artist show support for their causes and behavior? How do we separate the artist from the art?*

## Lynn Lurie on Virginia Woolf's "A Mark on the Wall"

1. What was significant about the Bloomsbury group? How do you think Woolf's involvement affected her writing? What other events of the time period affected Woolf's writing? Was it apparent to you before viewing this video?
2. What revelations about Woolf's writing style does Lurie provide? How has your understanding of Woolf changed? How has your understanding of the short story changed?

**Writing Prompt:** *Write 500 words on "A Mark on the Wall" considering the information you learned from the video about Virginia Woolf, her art, and the time period when the short story was written.*

# Questions/Prompts (cont'd)

## Mike Lennon on Orwell and Greene

1. Write two to three sentences on what you learned about each Orwell and Greene. What traits and experiences do they have in common? How do they differ? How are the individual pieces “Killing an Elephant” and “After the Party” similar? How do they differ?
2. How do the themes presented in “Killing an Elephant” and “After the Party” relate to modern or current events? What can be learned from them? How do you think the works would be received today?

**Writing Prompt:** *Write 500 words comparing and contrasting a theme or piece of imagery from each “Killing an Elephant” and “After the Party.”*

## Diane Raptosh on William Blake

1. How is William Blake characterized? How is his work characterized? What did this mean for the poetry establishment? How did Blake influence Raptosh’s work?
2. What are some of the theme’s in Blake’s work, specifically “The Marriage of Heaven and Hell?” What are some of the images in “The Marriage of Heaven and Hell?” How do they tie in the themes? Are these themes timely, or timeless?

**Writing Prompt:** *Poets influence one another across time. Write 500 words comparing and contrasting the work of Blake and Raptosh considering the differences in their time periods, political and social environments, and audiences.*

## Robert Mooney on Blake’s “Lament of Enion”

1. How is “The Four Zoas,” specifically “Lament of Enion” characterized? What writer is Blake compared to here? Why? In two to three sentences, summarize what the poem is telling us.
2. What is the goal of Blake as a writer? What means does he use to achieve this goal? In your opinion, does Blake succeed in achieving that goal? If yes, how? If not, why not?

**Writing Prompt:** *Again, this video discusses how writers influence one another despite their differences. Write 500 words on a writer who has influenced you, not necessarily in writing, but in life.*

## Wayne Benson on T. S. Eliot

1. How is T.S. Eliot described? How is his work described? What bases are given for these descriptions? Where does “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” fall into the line of his work?
2. Describe J. Alfred Prufrock, both physically and emotionally, in two to three sentences. Where is he in his life? How have his attitudes recently changed? What has led him to question things as he does? What does his life look like past the end of the poem?

**Writing Prompt:** *As discussed in the video, the rhyme scheme in “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” is difficult to detect. Write 12 stanzas of poetry employing everyday language with an internal rhyme scheme.*