

“Romanticizing” a Time and Place by Katee Rice

This exercise will serve as an introduction to Romanticism. Students will focus on a time spent in the natural world or a specific place in nature. They will then attempt to recreate the place by “romanticizing” details of the time or place they are revisiting. After giving a visual description of the place, students will then describe the emotions that this place sparked within them. The place in which students discuss in their writing doesn’t necessarily have to be the typical place within nature that would be discussed in romantic poetry (like the “Lake District”). It can be an urban location as well. The students could discuss a time spent waiting at the bus stop, riding a bike, or walking somewhere. Powerful memories of a time or place may be found within an urban setting for most, and these memories can be romanticized as well.

Talk with your group beforehand about some of their memories of the natural world. What do they remember about the visual details? What emotions were sparked? Be sure to share some of your own memories. Talk about the most memorable place in nature that you remember, and how it made you feel. This will help spark some ideas for them. Write down some of the visual descriptions, and discuss ways to “romanticize” the place they are working with.

Once you have discussed some of your own memories of the natural world as well as the students’ memories, it is time start writing. Have them put their romanticized descriptions and their emotions into a poem. While they are writing help them with describing the natural place in a romantic fashion.