

Read Paragraph 2 of “Letter One” of Rainer Maria Rilke’s Letters to a Young Poet from “With this note as a preface” through “Nature, to whom his whole life is devoted” and answer the following questions:

1. What advice does Rilke give the young poet on pages 5–6 (from “You ask whether your verses are any good” to “a sign and witness to this impulse”)?
2. How does Rilke’s advice to the young poet to “[g]o into” himself develop an important idea?
3. How does Rilke refine this idea through the image of the roots?
4. What kinds of poems does Rilke believe the young poet should avoid? Why?
5. How does Rilke’s advice about the subject matter of poetry introduce and develop an important idea in the text?
6. How does Rilke’s advice to the young poet on pages 7–8 develop his ideas about the role of the creator?
7. How does Rilke’s use of metaphor to describe childhood develop his ideas about writing?
8. What does Rilke suggest will be the impact of the “turning-within” that he advises?
9. How does Rilke’s discussion of childhood further develop an important idea in the text?