

Read paragraphs 3-6 of “Letter One” of Rainer Maria Rilke’s Letters to a Young Poet from “But after this descent into yourself” through “Yours very truly, Rainer Maria Rilke” and answer the following questions:

1. What is the central idea in “Letter One”?
2. How does Rilke’s advice at the beginning of the excerpt develop his ideas about the creation of poetry?
3. How does Rilke use specific words and phrases in paragraphs 3-6 to refine his ideas about being a poet?
4. What ideas about “reward” does Rilke develop?
5. How does Rilke’s advice in paragraphs 3-6 develop a central idea in the text?
6. How does Rilke’s statement, that those who can live without writing “shouldn’t write at all,” refine a central idea?

7. Remind students to annotate their texts for a central idea, using the code CI.
8. How does Rilke's statement that those who can live without writing "shouldn't write at all help to make meaning of the word "renounce"?
9. What impact does Rilke believe that "self-searching" will have on the young poet, even if he gives up poetry?
10. Paraphrase Rilke's final piece of advice for the poet.
11. What central idea does Rilke's advice to the poet develop?