

'Another metaphor by Jupiter!' he would exclaim as he said this (which will show the disorderly and circuitous way in which his mind worked and explain why the oak tree flowered and faded so often before he came to any conclusion about Love). 'And what's the point of it?' he would ask himself. 'Why not say simply in so many words--' and then he would try to think for half an hour,--or was it two years and a half?--how to say simply in so many words what love is. 'A figure like that is manifestly untruthful,' he argued, 'for no dragon-fly, unless under very exceptional circumstances, could live at the bottom of the sea. And if literature is not the Bride and Bedfellow of Truth, what is she? Confound it all,' he cried, 'why say Bedfellow when one's already said Bride? Why not simply say what one means and leave it?'

So then he tried saying the grass is green and the sky is blue and so to propitiate the austere spirit of poetry whom still, though at a great distance, he could not help reverencing. 'The sky is blue,' he said, 'the grass is green.' Looking up, he saw that, on the contrary, the sky is like the veils which a thousand Madonnas have let fall from their hair; and the grass fleets and darkens like a flight of girls fleeing the embraces of hairy satyrs from enchanted woods. 'Upon my word,' he said (for he had fallen into the bad habit of speaking aloud), 'I don't see that one's more true than another. Both are utterly false.' And he despaired of being able to solve the problem of what poetry is and what truth is and fell into a deep dejection.

Annotation Paper Preparation

1. What is happening in this passage? Explain the context.
2. With your partners/groups, brainstorm one potential *theme* for the passage. You can choose from the themes of biography, time, language, and narrow down one (or more) of them into a specific statement like “language unable to reflect the passage of time”.
3. With your partners/groups, turn your attention to the specific language, words and phrases, in the passage. Choose one of the themes from the list, then, focus on either the **literary devices and terms** (imagery, personification, simile, etc), or on the **narration** (the commentary by the biographer) in the passage. Identify the significant moments of in the passage and analyze why they are significant and what they reveal or engage about your chosen theme.