

## EATAW 2005, Athens, Greece

Academic Writing Online: Crossing Cultures, Courses, Languages, and Educational Levels  
<http://wordsworth2.net/projects/crossculturalcollabs>

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### Assignment Letter 1

- Respond to one, two, or all three poems by the Swedish poet, Tomas Tranströmer. Reflect in particular on **how changes of particular words or phrases among two or more translations of the same poem affect the meaning of the poem for you**. If you understand Swedish, you may suggest other possible translations, or suggest translating decisions these writers made to create these poems in English.
- Write down **three words or short phrases** that seem to be central or at least quite important to the poem(s) or versions you wish to discuss. For each word or phrase you selected, write a few sentences of your own referring back to the poem in order to explain **why you think they are important**.
- Include one or two sentences to **introduce yourself**, for example, your name, which class you are taking, which university, and your academic interest or emphasis. You can say something about your previous experience with poetry as well, if you like.

### Assignment Letter 2

- Before you compose your Letter 2, **read all** the Letter 1 submissions and any second letters already posted by members of your group.
- Write a **personal response** about some of the reflections by members of your group. In your Letter 2, addressed to your entire group, refer specifically to at least two members of the group by name, attempting to **cite at least two groupmates** whose Letter 1 submissions have not already been cited by others if possible.
- In your Letter 2, identify and explain how a keyword and reflective sentence of theirs **contributed to your understanding** of a poem. Comment on ways in which their interpretations are similar to and/or different from your own.

### Assignment Letter 3

- Read the second letters and any additional letters already posted by members of your group and write a personal **response about some of the reflections** presented there, citing by name at least one person from a college other than your own.
- Either find or create an **illustration or music that captures the theme or mood** of one of these poems or one version of one of the poems. You will need to locate the artwork online or post it online so your partners at all three colleges can access it. If you create your own art or music, you can attach it as a file or refer us to the Website (include <http://> so the link will be active) where you have uploaded it.
- **Explain** briefly the relationship between the artwork you have selected or created and the poem.

### Assignment Letter 4

- **Read** the third letters and explore the art and/or music from **all** the members of your group. Write a personal response about **some** of the reflections and **cite by name at least one person** from a college other than your own.
- **Reflect** on some ways this conversation and composition have contributed to your **understanding** of Tranströmer's poems, your **knowledge** of how poetic language works, and your **thinking** about poetry as a literary, artistic, and cultural experience. You may want to include how **different cultural backgrounds contributed** (Swedish poem interpreted by Swedish students for Swedish and American students as well as by American students for both American and Swedish students).
- What **interested** you the most about this discussion—or surprised you, challenged you, or troubled you?

## **Andrum Juli by Tomas Tranströmer**

Den som ligger på rygg under de höga träden  
är också där uppe. Han rännilar sig ut i tusentals kvistar,  
gungar fram och tillbaka,  
sitter i en katapultstol som går loss i ultrarapid.

Den som står nere vid bryggorna kisar mot vattnen.  
Bryggorna åldras fortare än människor.  
De har silvergrått virke och stenar i magen.  
Det bländande ljuset slår ända in.

Den som färdas hela dagen i öppen båt  
över de glittrande fjärdarna  
ska somna till sist inne i en blå lampa  
medan öarna kryper som stora nattfjärilar över glaset.

### **Breathing Room: July** translation by May Swenson

Lying on his back under tall trees  
he is also up there. He rills into thousands of twigs and branches, is swayed back and forth,  
as if in a catapult seat outflung in slow motion.

Standing down by the jetties he squints across the waters. The docks age sooner than men.  
Made of splintered silver gray planks, and with stones in their bellies.  
The blinding light rips its way straight through.

Sailing all day in an open boat  
over the glittering bights,  
he will fall asleep at last inside a blue lamp  
while islands like great nocturnal moths creep over the glass.

### **Breathing Space July** translation by Robert Bly

The man who lies on his back under huge trees  
is also up in them. He branches out into thousands of tiny branches.  
He sways back and forth,  
he sits in a catapult chair that hurtles forward in slow motion.

The man who stands down at the dock screws up his eyes against the water.  
Ocean docks get older faster than men.  
They have silver gray posts and boulders in their gut.  
The dazzling light drives straight in.

The man who spends the whole day in an open boat moving over the luminous bays  
will fall asleep at last inside the shade of his blue lamp  
as the islands crawl like huge moths over the globe.

**Classroom Discourse and Communication Across the Curriculum**  
by Art Young, Clemson University

	<b>Personal Discourse</b>	<b>Classroom Discourse</b>	<b>Public Discourse</b>
<b>Function</b>	<b>Expressive Writing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-discovery</li> <li>• Inner speech</li> </ul>	<b>Interactive Writing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversational</li> <li>• Dialectical</li> </ul>	<b>Transactional Writing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informative</li> <li>• Persuasive</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose</b>	Explains to Oneself	Explains to Classroom Colleagues	Explains to Distant Others
<b>Audience</b>	<b>Self and Trusted Others</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Privileges Language of Learner</li> <li>• Accountability to Self</li> </ul>	<b>Classroom Community: Familiar and Known</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Privileges Language of Classroom Community</li> <li>• Accountability to Classmates</li> </ul>	<b>Distant and Other: Unknown</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Privileges Language of Critical Audiences</li> <li>• Accountability to Public</li> </ul>
<b>Genre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Journals</li> <li>• Diaries</li> <li>• Logs</li> <li>• Notebooks</li> <li>• Freewrites</li> <li>• Braindumps</li> <li>• Fridgenotes</li> <li>• Post-it Notes</li> <li>• Weblogs (blogs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letters</li> <li>• Notes</li> <li>• Questions</li> <li>• Poems</li> <li>• Parodies</li> <li>• E-mail</li> <li>• Presentation Software</li> <li>• Web Discussion Boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essays</li> <li>• Articles</li> <li>• Reports</li> <li>• Presentation Software</li> <li>• Memos</li> <li>• Multimedia</li> <li>• Web Publications</li> </ul>
<b>Response Time</b>	<b>Immediate:</b> Shaping at Point of Utterance	<b>Quick:</b> from “Real” Audience—Visible and Tactile	<b>Lengthy:</b> to Publication or Presentation

**Classroom Environment**

- Social and Collaborative
- Respects Diversity and Risk Taking
- Active Learning and Interactive Teaching
- Motivation for Reading and Writing

Developing Knowledge That Is Personally and Professionally Useful

## Selected Student Quotations and Reflections

I especially appreciate the reference to the "night butterfly." There is no similar word in English; unfortunately, "moth" doesn't have quite the same poetic softness and luminary quality. The night butterfly imagery, especially coupled with "hela natten / entire night," changes the whole feel of the last stanza. (Karen, Clemson)

My impression on reading the Swedish version is that of the forever longed for Swedish summer. That time of the year when life seems to slow down and offer a chance to live and breath. I also read into it the longing to return to nature. To lie beneath the trees, to stand by the lake, to sail all night - all these things represent freedom to me. It is funny to see how Bly seems to have interpreted it as more or less the opposite. I think it goes to show how much power the reader still has. (Sandra, Chalmers)

Anna states, "Transtömer has chosen words that, to me, all symbolize calm and beauty." I do not feel that when I read "Breathing Room: July". So it seems that the feel of a poem can really be lost in a translation, now I wish I could interpret the Swedish version of this poem. (Ashlee, Tidewater)



Poetry as a visual art has never been so real to me as it is now, after reading the third letters. (Meredith, Clemson)

I also found the discussion about different translations inspiring. It made it obvious how written language really is a two-part way of communication and the message is only transferred after being "translated" by both the writer and the reader (Erik, Chalmers)

helped me to accept constructive criticism ...enjoyed communicating and sharing different thoughts about the poem. Rather poetry, literature, or having cultural experiences, you will be able to expand your vocabulary, thinking strategies, writing, and creative abilities in writing. (Katinka, Tidewater)

Also, I've never had the opportunity to participate in a conversation about particular poems over the course of days rather than minutes or hours. I've found that the extra time and space, as well as being able to leave the poems and come back to them a day or so later, has proved more meaningful and lasting than a few hours discussion of one poem has ever been for me. (Jennifer, Clemson)