

English 442 Exercise One Shakespeare in Code: Sonnet conversion

Part I: qualitative/narrative conversion

The Aim Convert a Shakespeare sonnet into a non-textual format. You're accustomed to doing "readings" of literature and producing a specific kind of output: a paper. In this exercise, the "input" will be the same (requiring the critical reading apparatus you should have gained as an English major), but the "output" will be different. Thus it will require two sets of skills.

The Text Sonnet #14 from Shakespeare:

Not from the stars do I my judgement pluck,
And yet methinks I have astronomy,
But not to tell of good, or evil luck,
Of plagues, of dearths, or seasons' quality,
Nor can I fortune to brief minutes tell;
Pointing to each his thunder, rain and wind,
Or say with princes if it shall go well
By oft predict that I in heaven find.
But from thine eyes my knowledge I derive,
And constant stars in them I read such art
As truth and beauty shall together thrive
If from thy self, to store thou wouldst convert:
Or else of thee this I prognosticate,
Thy end is truth's and beauty's doom and date.

Task Step 1: The "input" setup. All together:
In Class

- Figure out what the poem's about!
- Identify as many "dimensions" as you can (from Tufte).

Task Step 2: Come up with the "output" solution yourselves, in pairs.
Lab Session

- Come up with sample visual representations for each of those dimensions.
- Figure out which is the most important one, (ie the one that provides the framework for the poem) and make that your "primary dimension" (ie the one that will visually provide the structure for all the other ones).
- Decide what format you're going to use (sketch/drawing/painting, 2-d or 3-d collage, diorama, weaving/knitting/stitching, sound).
- Draw up some mock-ups of possible solutions (ie sketch out some plans on paper). You don't have to use *every* dimension.
- Decide what materials you're going to use (wool, objects, paper, computer, etc).
- Make a plan for physically creating the piece IN-CLASS over one to sessions.

Next Week Bring in all your materials and start assembling your piece.