



## *Jane Eyre's Guided Imagery*

### *Purpose:*

This strategy will help students think about, experience, write, and talk about images that relate to Brontë's novel *Jane Eyre*. The guided imagery experience will allow students a vicarious experience that will help them relate personally and bring further meaning to what they are reading. This experience can have the power to bring back memories of their own or help them use their imaginations to create mental images that allow them to connect further with the text.

### *Rationale:*

This strategy will be used immediately after Chapter 10, just before Jane arrives at Thornfield. Students will be able to use their own imaginations to envision what Thornfield Hall, with all its richness and mystery, will be like before actually reading about it. This activity should be a refreshing experience and create the gothic mood that permeates the pages dedicated to Jane's stay at Thornfield, helping them to formulate their own idea of the source of her unease.

### *Directions:*

Before reading the guided imagery prompt, begin playing background music, with lights dimmed and a candle burning if you wish. This will help create the mood. The music of the 1996 Zeffirelli film soundtrack is an excellent choice for this activity, especially the tracks "Jane's Infancy" and "Thornfield." The music has a great mix of lightness and tension that creates an other-worldly feel, going along well with the prompt.

- Instruct students to relax, get comfortable, and listen, concentrating on what they imagine and how they feel.
- With the music playing, read the prompt, waiting about 20 seconds between each line.
- Afterward, give the students about 10 minutes to write down their experiences.
- Ask students to share what they have written to get an idea of how they felt.
- Relate the images to the text of the novel.
- Allow students five more minutes to write their future predictions for Jane's arrival and experience at Thornfield Hall.

## Guided Imagery Prompt

Close your eyes and relax.

Loosen each muscle and slow your breathing.

You are slowly ascending a drive on a clear, crisp autumn day, before noon.

Somewhere in the distance a church bell is tolling.

You come upon the long front of a grand house, topped with battlements and backed by dark forest.

You enter a great hall with a high ceiling.

You are alone.

No one greets you and you stand looking round you and up at the staircase.

Through a doorway you glimpse vivid red and bright white and are drawn to it.

It is a drawing room, laid with white carpets covered with flowery garland designs.

The ceiling has moldings of white grapes and vine leaves.

The room is furnished with crimson couches and ruby red glass ornaments.

Large mirrors mounted between the tall windows reflect the snow and fire motif.

You continue through all the chambers.

The front ones are especially grand and all well arranged and handsome.

Everything is immaculate and stands ready to receive its inhabitants.

The third story rooms are rather dark and low, but interestingly antique.

You can see that the old furniture from downstairs has periodically been removed to these apartments as fashions have changed.

Some of the bedsteads are a hundred years old with heavy doors of oak or shaded with old English hangings whose embroidery was stitched by fingers that have long been coffin-dust.

This story of the house seems to speak of the past and whisper memories.

Here in the forenoon these retreats are full of a hush and gloom that is appealing and quaint.

But you would not relish a walk here by moonlight.

You continue to the end of the very narrow, low-ceilinged corridor to an even more narrow staircase to the attics.

From there you see a ladder that leads to a trapdoor in the roof.

You climb out onto the top of the hall and lean out over the battlements.

Looking very far down, the grounds of the estate are laid out like a map; the velvet lawn, the wide fields, the thick forests, the church at the wide gates, the road and the hills, all reposing under the blue autumn sky.

You turn and descend the ladder and are met with blackness.

The attic is black as a vault compared to the sunlit scene above.

You grope to fasten the trapdoor and, finding the way out of the attic, begin to descend the narrow winding staircase.

You linger in the dim hall, lit only by a little window at the far end.

While you pace softly in that still region, the sound of a laugh strikes your ears.

You stop and the sound stops, but only for an instant. It begins again, low and louder, tragic and preternatural, echoing through the hall and terminating in an odd murmur.

Begin to move and open your eyes.

Now take a few minutes to write your experience.