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### Investigating commentary on *Lines to Fanny*

- ❖ 'I must write you a line or two and see if that will assist in dismissing you from my Mind for ever so short a time.' If Keats was referring to his poem *Lines to Fanny*, do you think he will have succeeded?
- ❖ Why should he have wanted to 'dismiss' his beloved from his mind?
- ❖ What do the extracts from Keats' letters suggest about his state of mind when he wrote them?
  - ✕ <http://crossref-it.info/textguide/john-keats-selected-poems/40/2967>
    - How do they compare with the state of mind suggested by the poem?

### Investigating language and tone of *Lines to Fanny*

- ❖ What linguistic techniques does Keats use to create such a direct and honest tone in the poem?
- ❖ How does Keats convey the impression of a mind thinking aloud?
  - What is the effect of the questions he asks?
- ❖ Explore the lines about America. How does the language used here convey Keats' dismay at what he saw as the country's bleakness?
  - Do you think he could also be alluding to the bleak realm of mortal disease?
- ❖ 'The tone of the final stanza is ecstatic.' What poetic means does Keats use to produce such a tone?

### Investigating structure and versification of *Lines to Fanny*

- ❖ 'The poem's structure and versification seem constantly to be breaking away from any pattern imposed on them.'

Explore this idea and show how the form of this poem is an important part of its overall effect and meaning.

- ❖ Do you think the irregularity contributes to the poem's feeling of spontaneity?

### Investigating imagery and symbolism in *Lines to Fanny*

- ❖ To what use does Keats put the traditional image of the 'muse' in this poem?
- ❖ What is Keats conveying when he draws on imagery of birds and flight when writing about poetic inspiration?
- ❖ Why do you think Keats suddenly invokes religious imagery?
- ❖ Explore the images Keats uses to convey his feelings about America
  - How is its alien nature suggested?
- ❖ Urns are important symbols for Keats. What role do they play in this poem?

### Investigating themes in *Lines to Fanny*

- ❖ How successful do you think Keats is at conveying the idea that Fanny is both the source of his inspiration and the distraction from whom he should be running away?
- ❖ Explore the theme of dream/vision versus reality. Where else would you find this theme amongst Keats' poems?
- ❖ How important is the theme of love in this poem?
  - Could it be the central theme?
- ❖ What exactly do you think Keats means by poetic inspiration?
  - How does Keats present Fanny as his muse?