

Tess of the d'Urbervilles: (c) Comparing two settings

☞ refers to links on www.crossref-it.info

- ❖ **Lesson focus:** To compare the settings of Talbothays and Flintcomb-Ash, and to examine the references and hints which Hardy uses.
- ❖ **Opening exercise:** Look at the first three paragraphs of Chapter 2.
 - ☞ Synopses and commentary > Chapter 2
 - There are nine sentences (not including 'Such is the Vale of Blackmoor.')
 - Allocate one to each student (or pair) and ask them to make a comment about the effect and implications of their sentence
 - Paragraph four can be used as well, if more are needed.
 - This is where Tess starts from in her journey (literal and metaphorical).
- ❖ **Discussion ideas:** Spend a short time allowing students to re-read Chapters 16, 42 and 43.
 - ☞ Synopses and commentary > Chapter 16 & 42
 - Distribute the phrases and sentences on **Worksheet a)** around the group
 - The students should find their extract in the novel and stick their phrase onto a separate piece of paper and write annotations on it
 - Divide the board (or a noticeboard, etc.) into two columns, headed Chapter 16 and Chapters 42/43
 - Students should attach their sheets in the appropriate columns, drawing links between comments in opposite columns
 - This can be done with pens, or pieces of coloured wool if more appropriate
- ❖ **Textual examination:** As a follow on from the above, the coloured links may be similarities or contrasts, and may include:
 - Use of language/vocabulary
 - Types of reference
 - Imagery
- Themes of the novel
- Any other ideas.
- Discussion of Hardy's methods and effects should follow
 - ☞ Narrative in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* > Perspectives and viewpoint in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* > Landscape and painting
- ❖ **Recreative task:** Describe a scene you know well (or, perhaps, the view from the classroom window) in such a way as to make it sound friendly and welcoming
 - Repeat the description, this time creating an unfriendly, even threatening, scene.
 - ☞ Themes in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* > Nature as sympathetic or indifferent > Hardy's use of Nature
 - You could experiment with looking down from an upstairs window, and other perspectives.
 - ☞ Narrative in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* > Perspectives and viewpoint in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* > Views from the heights and the depths
- ❖ **Critical task:** '...impoverished and unorthodox individuals are ostracized.' (Patricia Ingham, *Authors in Context: Thomas Hardy*, Oxford World's Classics, 2003)
 - Do the descriptions of the various settings in this novel accentuate Tess's inability to 'fit in' with society?
 - ☞ Themes in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* > Tess as an outsider+ Tess as a secular pilgrim
 - ☞ Imagery and symbolism in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* > Hardy's use of imagery + Colour symbolism in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* + Geographical symbolism in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*
- ❖ **Extension task:** Research into rural conditions in Victorian England, particularly for women. You could start with <http://www.victorianweb.org/history/sochistov.html>. See also ☞ Social / political background > Agricultural and social conditions.