

## Drama, Writing and Speech Assignment 28

- Read Alfred Tennyson's "Balin and Balan" in your reader.
- Continue memorizing your speech. You will deliver your speech in front of the class this coming Friday.

### Long-Term Assignments

Your musings essay was due before the break, though many of you have yet to hand it in; however, since I want you to focus on memorizing your speech, I am setting a new due date: the first Friday in May. The assignment was to write a musings essay on a topic given in the study guide or below. Follow any of the example musings essays that you have read in this course, including those that you read this week by Christopher Morley and G. K. Chesterton. Other Examples:

- Write your thoughts on something that you have observed, as did Addison in his essay "On Westminster Abbey."
- Write a humorous essay on something that everyone finds difficult, such as confronting a friend, bringing something back to a store for a refund, canceling a music lesson, refusing an invitation, saying good-bye, or saying sorry.
- Write a humorous essay on a personal fault.
- Write an essay on a certain type of annoying person that we find everywhere. (See "The Fool" or "Shabby-Genteel.")
- Write a fictional letter, as in Morley's "Letter to Father Time." Through the letter you want to express some view about life, such as personal relationships, the passage of time, etc. Use Morley's essay as an example, or the following written by a former student of mine:

Dear Tissue Box,

It's been a long time since we've seen each other—about a year in fact, when I had my last cold. We used to get together more often. Yes, those were the days. We were



bosom friends then, inseparable really (especially during allergy season). You were what they call “a friend in need,” pretty much always at arm’s length when I needed you. I got a really bad cold that lasted for two weeks, and at first you were right there for me. I guess it was because I wasn’t feeling well, but after a few days I started to have second thoughts about our friendship. It might sound strange, but I am sure it happens all the time. I suddenly began to wonder why we were friends at all. One day we were getting along like bosom pals and then the next day I found your personality colorless—just one blank sheet of tissue paper after the next. When you weren’t boring me, I found you unbearably rough. You started to get on my nerves, and then came the big argument. I said that you were no better than a piece of sandpaper, and that no one in the world would put up with you. I then brought up that time we were on summer vacation when I had the bad allergies—when I couldn’t stop sneezing and my eyes were watering up. Of course I needed a friend like you to comfort me. But where were you? Nowhere to be found. And when I did find you, you were virtually empty of sympathy. After I scolded you for an hour, you excused yourself, saying that no box had an unending supply of tissues. “Tissues?” I said, “You mean sandpaper!” You then replied in your coarse sort of way, that if I didn’t appreciate you for who you were, you would just leave. I said go ahead, and I took one last blow of the nose on your colorless personality, and you were gone. I’ve heard that you have since made other friends and are now trying to avoid me. I didn’t know tissue boxes could bear grudges, but what else can we call it? Two weeks ago, I had a glimpse of you in my sister’s hands. I tried to catch your attention, but you just ignored me. Then when I grabbed you the other day from my brother, and said I’d like to blow my nose for old times’ sake, you said that you were busy with your new friends with their colds. You said they were very jealous friends and wouldn’t share you. So be it. But I’d like to make one thing clear—that I will never go so low as to fight over a box of sandpaper masquerading as tissues. And I also refuse to have a friendship that’s one sided. Since we are now through, perhaps you’d like to know that I have a new circle of friends. Unlike you, they’re not abrasive. Unlike you they have colorful personalities. They speak gently, and aren’t selfish. And unlike you, they are faithful friends that I don’t have to replace. They are hankies. Sincerely yours, Elsa Walter