



Fear Factor!

Exploring the theme of fear and some spider-inspired writings...

1. Think About And Reflect:

- What is your biggest fear (now or when you were younger)?
- Which of these fears do you think are rational, and which irrational? Why?
- How do you deal with your fears? How do they affect your life?
- Are you the kind of person who enjoys being scared by things like horror movies and haunted houses?

2. Close Reading: Read the following poems closely, marking the text the way you would mark other kinds of texts (articles, essays, novels, etc.).

[*Important idea; ? Question/Ponder; ! Wow; Surprise, etc.]

NATURAL HISTORY

By: E.B. White

The spider, dropping down from twig,
Unfolds a plan of her devising,
A thin premeditated rig
To use in rising.

And all that journey down through space,
In cool descent and loyal hearted,
She spins a ladder to the place
From where she started.

Thus I, gone forth as spiders do
In spider's web a truth discerning,
Attach one silken thread to you
For my returning.

The Spider as an Artist
Has never been employed --
Though his surpassing Merit
Is freely certified
By every Broom and Bridget
Throughout a Christian Land --
Neglected Son of Genius
I take thee by the Hand --

Emily Dickinson
-1896

The Spider and the Ghost of the Fly

By Vachel Lindsay

Once I loved a spider
When I was born a fly,
A velvet-footed spider
With a gown of rainbow-dye.
She ate my wings and gloated.
She bound me with a hair.
She drove me to her parlor
Above her winding stair.
To educate young spiders
She took me all apart.
My ghost came back to haunt her.
I saw her eat my heart.

Source: <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/173886>

Design

By: Robert Frost, 1874 – 1963

I found a dimpled spider, fat and white,
On a white heal-all, holding up a moth
Like a white piece of rigid satin cloth—
Assorted characters of death and blight
Mixed ready to begin the morning right,
Like the ingredients of a witches' broth—
A snow-drop spider, a flower like a froth,
And dead wings carried like a paper kite.

What had that flower to do with being white,
The wayside blue and innocent heal-all?
What brought the kindred spider to that height,
Then steered the white moth thither in the night?
What but design of darkness to appall?—
If design govern in a thing so small.

Source: <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/design>