

English Literature Welcome to College Summer homework

We want you to get off to the best possible start when you begin your studies with us in September. To help us see what level you are currently working at, complete this short piece of writing over the summer and give it to your teacher in your first lesson.

Read *La Belle Dame Merci* (below) and

listen to this reading of the poem by Ben Whishaw on Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qL-L8ExX3kQ&list=RDqL-L8ExX3kQ#t=2>



Write a paragraph of 250 - 300 words

giving your personal response to this question:

In La Belle Dame sans Merci, How does the relationship between the knight and the lady relate to romantic relationships today?

Your paragraph must be handwritten.

La Belle Dame sans Merci: A Ballad

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow,
With anguish moist and fever-dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful—a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna-dew,
And sure in language strange she said—
'I love thee true'.

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sighed full sore,
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
With kisses four.

And there she lulled me asleep,
And there I dreamed—Ah! woe
betide!—
The latest dream I ever dreamt
On the cold hill side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
They cried—'La Belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!'

I saw their starved lips in the gloam,
With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke and found me here,
On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here,
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.