

Comparing Failure in Different Interpretations of “The Story of Daedalus and Icarus”

I. The Prompt

Many authors have drawn on and transformed Ovid’s original myth of Daedalus and Icarus. After reading the source text (Ovid) and the three interpretations (Bruegel, Williams, and Auden), write a well-developed essay that explains how the different depictions of Icarus’ death establish the central idea of man’s failure. Be sure to compare each interpretation to the source text, including what is present and omitted in the interpretation. Use grade-level words and phrases to add voice and style to your response.

II. Making the Comparison

Work and Author	What does the work say about man’s failure?	What details of the source text are included?	What details of the source text are omitted?
<i>Landscape with the Fall of Icarus</i> by Pieter Bruegel	People are often aloof and disconnected from another person’s suffering, particularly when it is a result of their own failure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The hot sun • Icarus drowning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wings • The labyrinth • Daedalus’ warning • Daedalus’ grief
“Landscape with the Fall of Icarus” by William Carlos Williams	People are oblivious to the suffering of others, particularly when caused by one’s own failure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The hot sun • The wax wings • Icarus drowning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The labyrinth • Daedalus’ warning • Daedalus’ grief
“Musee des Beaux Arts” by W. H. Auden	People accept that suffering- and failure- are a part of life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The hot sun • The failure • Icarus drowning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wings • The labyrinth • Daedalus’ warning • Daedalus’ grief

III. Outlining the Response

Take time to outline your essay considering:

How will you organize your paragraphs? possibly, one paragraph for each text

What should be included in your introduction? the central idea of failure

What should be included in the conclusion? restating the central idea of failure

What types of phrases do you plan to use? participial, gerund, appositive

IV. Revising the Response

Complete the following checklist before turning in your essay.

- I've addressed all parts of the prompt (concept of failure, each text is compared to the source).
- I've used a variety of sentence beginnings and endings.
- I've used the phrases I identified in the outline.
- I've listed each work and its author, punctuated correctly.
- I've use descriptive word choice, spelled correctly.