

# Art A Day

## CHALLENGE: Dante's Dilemmas

### Washington County Museum of Fine Arts

We challenge you to an art activity each day of the School Closure! If you decide to complete this challenge, share it with us in the comments and on Instagram @WCMFA and use the hashtag #ARTaDayCHALLENGE

**Stuff you'll need:** Read through the challenge to decide...the materials you use are up to you!

### Words you need to know:

**Sculpture:** three-dimensional representative or abstract form, often carved out of stone or wood or by casting metal or plaster.

**Narrative poem:** poetry that tells a story. Often, the entire story is written in metered verse. Narrative poems do not need rhyme.

**LOOK** at this marble **sculpture** that represents an Italian poet named Dante Alighieri. Most people just refer to him as Dante and he is known for writing one of the most famous pieces of literature ever created. The long **narrative poem** he wrote is called *Divine Comedy* and it is about Dante's travels through Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven. He started writing this in 1308 and completed it in 1320.

Look at the details in his face and the way his head rests on his hand. Notice the folds in the fabric and the way the artists were able to capture the illusion of the body weight being placed on the arm of the bench. The sculpture of Dante was created in 1891 by Fritz Kochendörfer and A. Montanari.



Fritz Kochendörfer (German, 1871-1942) and A. Montanari (fl. late 19th-early 20th century)

*Dante Seated on a Bench*, 1891

Marble

Gift of Mrs. Wilbur A. Marr, 1972

“Midway upon the journey of our life, I found myself within a forest dark, for the straightforward pathway had been lost.”

— Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*

**THINK** about the way Dante is staring off away from the viewer. As you look at this statue, what do you think the artists were trying to capture? Think about what Dante is best known for and imagine what he must be picturing in his mind as he is creating this deep subject.

**MAKE** and create what you picture Dante could possibly be imagining as he is looking into the distance with his head held in his hand. What is he contemplating? What is he imagining? If his thoughts were colors, shapes, and lines, what would they look like? This can be abstract, representational, or realistic.

**Writing Extension:** Read the quote from the *Divine Comedy* (in the blue box). Have you ever felt this way before? Write about a time when you felt like you were in a dark forest with no clear path. How did you find a path again? What would you tell others to do if they found themselves in this situation? Share your writing and creations with us!

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