

Week 1

Discussion Questions for Anne Bradstreet's poetry and Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*. Use textual evidence to support your analyses.

1. In Anne Bradstreet's poetry her tone is frequently self-critical. First, what language in the poems communicates this self-criticism; and second, why might Bradstreet have felt it necessary to be critical of herself and her writing?
2. Compare Bradstreet's work, like "The Author to Her Book," to "In Honour of that High and Mighty Princess, Queen Elizabeth." How are the poems similar / different? "The Author to Her Book" and other such domestically oriented poems appear in many literature anthologies, while "In Honour . . ." does not. Speculate as to why that would be.
3. In *A Room of One's Own* Virginia Woolf outlines many of the barriers to women (artistic women especially). Discuss two or three barriers. How does the imaginary plight of "Judith Shakespeare" illustrate these barriers and their consequences?
4. Though separated by nearly 300 years (and an ocean), many of Bradstreet's creative obstacles are the same ones that Woolf confronts. Like what?

For next week, select one of these questions to develop further into a one- to two-page essay. Follow MLA style and use plenty of textual evidence, citing as needed.