

## Reading a Work of Art in Eight Steps

1. QUICK SKETCH: Sketch and label the main elements in this work of art.

2. DICTION: Record the denotative and connotative meanings of the primary words in the title *Death and the Miser*.

3. CHARACTERIZATION: Explain how characterization is used to establish the significance of both the dying and healthy versions of the character of the Miser through an analysis of the following elements of indirect characterization:

- looks and/or dress
- effect on others
- action or movement

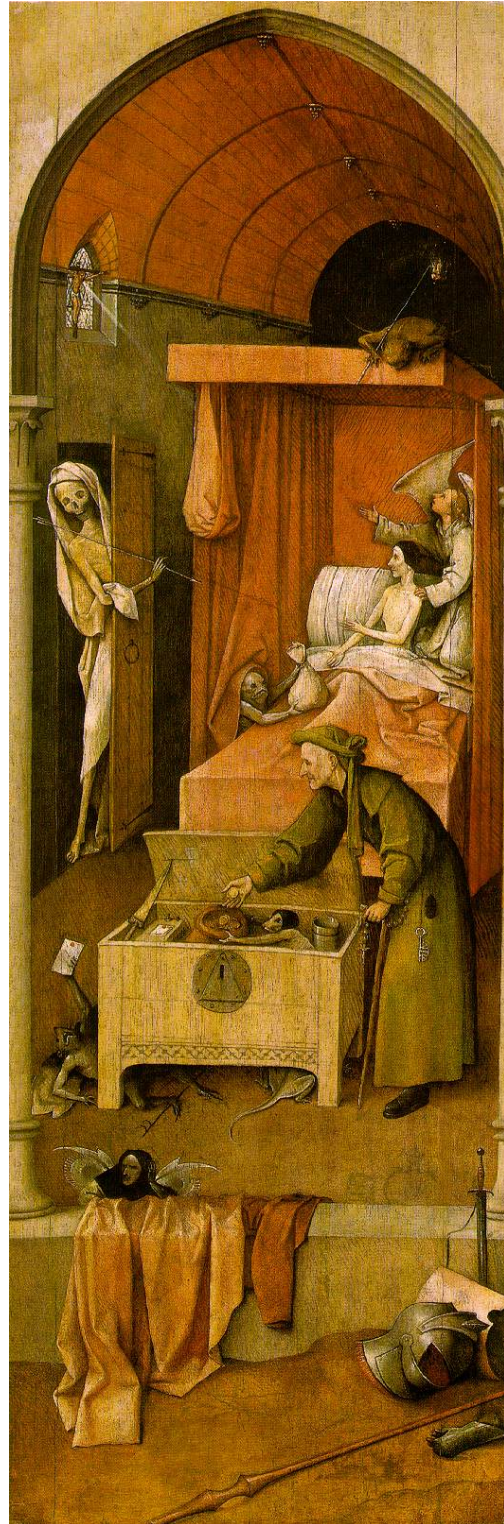
4. IMAGERY: Is the painting dominated by warm or cool colors? Describe the location of the dark and light areas. Overall do the colors and light establish a positive or negative tone?

5. SYMBOLISM: What is the symbolic meaning of three individual elements in the work? How do these three symbols work together to establish an overall meaning of the work?

6. TONE: Review your responses for #2-5 and describe what you believe to be the artist's attitude towards the subject of this painting. Explain how two elements from the work help establish this tone.

7. PLOT: At what point on the overall series of events, or plot, does the scene depicted in this work fall? Explain how specific elements in the work helped you determine your answer.

8. THEME: State the central, underlying, and controlling idea of this work. Use the "Identifying Theme" handout to help you develop your response to this step.



*Death and the Miser* by Hieronymus Bosch  
c. 1485, 12x36 1/2 in (30.5 x 93 cm)