

In-Class Poetry Analysis

Step 1: Read through the poem once. Read a second time and annotate the poem. (Be thorough!)

Step 2: Answer the following questions:

1. **Visual Elements:** Does the poem have a unique shape? If so, why? Does it help enhance the meaning of the poem? Does the poet use standard grammar and conventions? If not, why?
2. **Lyrical Devices:** What rhythm do you notice? Is there a rhyme scheme? Is it a specific type of poem based on the rhythm/rhyme (See Weebly doc poetry types & definitions.) Give several examples of figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification, symbolism, alliteration etc.) found in the poem. Explain the purpose of each example.
3. **Historical context:** Research the author and the time period in which the poem was written. (hint: look back at the author's bio) What events in the author's life were reflected in his writing? What was going on in the world? What does the author believe about God? After analyzing the historical context, explain where you see the historical significance in the poem (i.e. the time period, the author's life, etc.).
4. **Literal Meaning:** What is the literal meaning of the poem? Think surface level!
5. **Figurative Meaning:** What is the figurative (underlying or deeper) meaning of the poem? Pick out similes/metaphors and explain their significance. Are there any symbols used? Allusions? Identify them and determine their purpose in adding to the figurative meaning.
6. **Imagery:** List and describe at least 3 examples of imagery (be sure to identify the type of imagery) and explain why the author uses this device.
7. **Theme:** What is/are the theme(s) employed in this poem? What is their purpose?

Step 4: In 3 paragraphs, prove the theme! Your first sentence should be the thesis statement, then include several elements of analysis in each paragraph. Remember, the goal is to include elements that help you prove the theme of the work! You must also include at least two well-blended quotes in each paragraph.