

English 11/AP English Language and Composition
Sections for Dickinson presentation

For the presentation of your poem you need not have any polished, finished writing except for the copytext itself. I will give specific notes about the presentation tomorrow; these are the sections we have discussed a couple of times; they should already be in your notes. Think of the presentation as not going longer than 8 minutes.

I. Recite your poem for extra credit. By the time you are finished with section II, you will find that you can recite your poem!

II. Present your copytext. Your copytext is the typewritten version of the poem as you would present it in a reader's edition of the poems of Emily Dickinson. Think about line, punctuation, capitalization, and variant words. Be able to talk intelligently about your choices in terms of your aesthetic judgment as an editor and/or the initial or final intentions of the poet. With some poems, the copytext is complex; with others, this portion of the presentation will be straightforward.

III. Discuss the poem itself: poetic devices and the way the craft of the poem contributes to its meaning. Begin with a general statement about the poem's meaning. Then ground your idea (theme statement) in the poem's diction and syntax. Look up any unfamiliar words. Think about formal elements—syllabics (number of syllables per line) and meter (iambic?)—as well as true or slant rhyme and its effects, imagery, and so on. How do the poem's formal choices relate to the poem's meaning?

IV. Place the poem in context. Discuss the poem's tone and content in conjunction with the poems before and after it. For the reader of the fascicle, how does the poem fit in—thematically and formally—with the poems around it?

V. Decide whether you think the fascicle is a collection, a workbook, or something else. Remember the history of publication and role of Ralph Franklin in the re-assembling of the fascicles. What would you look for in a collection of poetry (remember: narrative or emotional arc)? Do you see an arc across the poems here when you read the fascicle end to end? Do you see some streaks of continuity thematically, tonally, formally? Draw a conclusion about the way this fascicle works.