

English 10

Poetry Explication

Poem chosen: Monday, February 1

Draft due: Wednesday, February 10

Final paper due: Monday February 22

Presentations: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, February 22, 23, 24

Begin by choosing a poem from *Sound and Sense* that you would not mind using for an extended exploration. Rather than choosing something you feel you can master right away, choose a poem you genuinely like. Greater ambition will lead to a better paper because there will be a greater authenticity to your working out answers to the various questions and problems.

The paper you will write will consist of five sections, with a thesis above the first section and a conclusion after the fifth section.

Above the first section give a thesis that will link what you discuss to an overall emotional effect.

I. Speaker, occasion. Include anyone apostrophized, characters in the poem. What are the effects of the poet's choices?

II. Theme. Here you discuss the meaning of the poem as it unfolds over the poem's gestural structure. How does the meaning build as you travel through the poem?

III. Form, including any fixed form (sonnet, villanelle...) as well as meter and rhyme. Include line length also in this section. What are the effects (both emotional and thematic) of the poem's formal choices? What do changes in meter or near-misses in rhyme add to the poem?

IV. Image. Include in this section the images the poem provides, as well as any metaphors or symbols, personification or metonymy. What are the effects of the images? As you write about effect, don't just say that the images make the poem more vivid—push the effect further.

V. Sound tropes and their effects on pace, emphasis, and meaning. Consider alliteration, assonance, consonance, onomatopoeia and the relationship of those sounds to the poem's meaning.

Write a one-paragraph conclusion in which you discuss the confluence of the five sections.

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In all sections, you should include quotations from the poem carefully blended with your own writing. You should cite by giving line number (l. 3) or (ll. 3-4). If you are quoting over a line break, indicate the line break with a slash (/). If you quote 4+ lines, you are quoting too much in one chunk without commentary.

You may include the poem at the top of the first page for easy reference, but you must still use short, frequent quotations to support ideas.

Along with your paper, include the marked-up copies of your poem and any draftwork, on loose-leaf paper or typed.

Your paper may be handwritten on loose-leaf paper or typed (double-spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman, 1" margins). Any work submitted electronically to Jupiter must be uploaded as a single pdf to the appropriate slot.

Once your paper is finished, you will share your findings with the class in a 5–8-minute presentation. This presentation will feature you talking about your poem, projected on the wall. You will certainly not read from your paper, as that would be dull. You'll need to practice your presentation a couple of times in order to be able to give it in the time allotted.

Some of the poems are famous and, thus, there are plagiarism poetry sites that purport to help you cut corners. Please do not use any outside source you would be ashamed to cite. Please cite any outside sources you use, but you do not need to use anything except for Perrine, your reading ability, and your teacher. If you are flummoxed, I recommend you talk to me and then look at JSTOR (see the class materials on Jupiter for login) for legit scholarly articles on your poet or piece.

Please remember to call the speaker of your poem "the speaker" and not to use biographical information (other than era or movement). Please remember, as Yeats says, the poet "never speaks directly as to someone at the breakfast table, there is always a phantasmagoria." It's never appropriate to deny a poet imagination or reduce any person to the facts of their life or of any other single, reductive lens.