

Poetic Elements to Consider When Writing Poetry Explications:

Any one or all of the following may be the key(s) to unlocking the meaning of the poem you have selected. Be sure to include all of the following that are relevant to your poem in your explication.

- ☐ Literal Meaning of Poem
- ☐ Type of poem
 - epic • limerick • haiku • sonnet (Petrarchan or Shakespearean?)
 - narrative • ballad • lyric
- ☐ Title - Is the title necessary to the understanding of the poem? If yes, how? Why?
- ☐ Poet's biography, if relevant
- ☐ Poet's tone in poem (ironic, sarcastic, solemn, humorous, aloof, whimsical, etc.)
- ☐ Speaker/ Persona [the characters in the poem]
 - One Speaker? Point of view? Omniscient, Limited, 1st person
 - What do you know from context? What can you infer?
- ☐ Theme of poem (main message, purpose, lesson, moral, etc. Theme ≠ Subject)
- ☐ Allusions—What is the allusion? How is the significance of the allusion related to the poem?
 - Historical references
 - Literary references
 - Allusions to people, places, etc.
- ☐ Figurative Language Present —What does the figurative language mean? How is it relevant?
 - Similes
 - Metaphors
 - Personification
 - Symbolism (Universal, color, flower, archetypal)
 - Sensory imagery
- ☐ Word Choice
 - Diction
 - Familiar or formal
 - Connotations
- ☐ Rhyme
 - Rhymed or free verse
- ☐ Rhythm
 - Established rhythm pattern or free verse
- ☐ Mood of the Poem
 - Mood can be inferred from sum of the above
- ☐ Sound Devices
 - Alliteration
 - Assonance
 - Consonance
 - Repetition
 - Onomatopoeia (Pop, smack, etc.)
- ☐ Unusual typographical elements that may enhance meaning. Caps? Arrangement on page? Fonts?