

# AP Literature Poetry Packet

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION ONE:

### **The Eagle**

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

He clasps the crag with crooked hands;  
Close to the sun in lonely lands,  
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;  
He watches from his mountain walls,  
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

### **Winter**

William Shakespeare

When icicles hang by the wall,  
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,  
And Tom bears logs into the hall,  
And milk comes frozen home in pail,  
When blood is nipp'd, and ways be foul,  
Then nightly sings the staring owl,  
To-whit! To-who!—a merry note,  
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doe blow,  
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,  
And birds sit brooding in the snow,  
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,  
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,  
Then nightly sings the staring owl,  
To-whit! To-who!—a merry note,  
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

### **Spring**

William Shakespeare

When daisies pied, and violets blue,  
And lady-smocks all silver-white,  
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue  
Do paint the meadows with delight,  
The cuckoo then, on every tree,  
Mocks married men, for thus sings he:  
'Cuckoo! Cuckoo, cuckoo!' O word of fear,  
Unpleasing to a married ear.  
When shepherds pipe on oaten straws,  
And merry larks are ploughmen's clocks,

When turtles tread, and rooks, and daws,  
And maidens bleach their summer smocks,  
The cuckoo then, on every tree,  
Mocks married men, for thus sings he:  
'Cuckoo! Cuckoo, cuckoo!' O word of fear,  
Unpleasing to a married ear.

### **The Red Wheelbarrow**

William Carlos Williams

so much depends  
upon

a red wheel  
barrow

glazed with rain  
water

beside the white  
chickens.

### **Dulce et Decorum Est**

Wilfred Owen

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,  
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,  
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs  
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.  
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots  
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;  
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots  
Of disappointed shells that dropped behind.

GAS! Gas! Quick, boys!-- An ecstasy of fumbling,  
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;  
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling  
And floundering like a man in fire or lime.--  
Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light  
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,  
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams you too could pace  
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,  
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,  
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;  
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood  
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,  
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud

Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,--  
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest  
To children ardent for some desperate glory,  
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est  
Pro patria mori.

### **The Two Ravens**

Anonymous

As I was walking all alone,  
I heard two ravens complaining;  
The one to the other saying,  
'Where shall we go and dine today?'

"In behind that old field wall,  
I know that there lies a new-slain knight;  
And nobody knows that he lies there,  
But his hawk, his hound, and lady fair.

His hound is to the hunting gone,  
His hawk, to fetch the wild-fowl home,  
His lady's taken another mate,  
So we may make our dinner sweet.

You'll sit on his white collar-bone,  
And I'll peck out his pretty blue eyes;  
With this lock of his golden hair  
We'll roof our nest when it grows bare.

Very many for him lament,  
But none shall know where he is gone:  
Over his white bones, when they are bare,  
The wind shall blow for evermore."

## **SECTION TWO:**

### **A Study of Reading Habits**

Philip Larkin

When getting my nose in a book  
Cured most things short of school,  
It was worth ruining my eyes  
To know I could still keep cool,  
And deal out the old right hook  
To dirty dogs twice my size.

Later, with inch-thick specs,  
Evil was just my lark:  
Me and my coat and fangs  
Had ripping times in the dark.  
The women I clubbed with sex!

### **The Twa Corbies**

Anonymous

As I was walking all alane,  
I heard twa corbies making a mane;  
The tane unto the [t'other] say,  
'[Where] sall we gang and dine [today]?'

"In behint yon auld fail dyke,  
I wot there lies a new-slain knight;  
And naebody kens that he lies there,  
But his hawk, his hound, and [his] lady fair.

His hound is to the hunting gane,  
His hawk, to fetch the wild-fowl hame,  
His lady's ta'en another mate,  
So we may make our dinner sweet.

Ye'll sit on his white hause-bane,  
And I'll pike out his bonny blue e'en;  
Wi' ae lock o' his gowden hair  
We'll theek our nest when it grows bare.

Many a one for him makes mane,  
But nane sall ken [whare] he is gane:  
O'er his white banes, when they are bare,  
The wind sall blaw for evermair."

I broke them up like meringues.

Don't read much now: the dude  
Who lets the girl down before  
The hero arrives, the chap  
Who's yellow and keeps the store  
Seem far too familiar. Get stewed:  
Books are a load of crap.

## **Mirror**

Sylvia Plath

I am silver and exact. I have no preconceptions.  
Whatever I see, I swallow immediately.  
Just as it is, unmisted by love or dislike  
I am not cruel, only truthful –  
The eye of a little god, four-cornered.  
Most of the time I meditate on the opposite wall.  
It is pink, with speckles. I have looked at it so long  
I think it is a part of my heart. But it flickers.  
Faces and darkness separate us over and over.

Now I am a lake. A woman bends over me.  
Searching my reaches for what she really is.  
Then she turns to those liars, the candles or the moon.  
I see her back, and reflect it faithfully  
She rewards me with tears and an agitation of hands.  
I am important to her. She comes and goes.  
Each morning it is her face that replaces the darkness.  
In me she has drowned a young girl, and in me an old woman  
Rises toward her day after day, like a terrible fish.

## **Is my team ploughing**

A. E. Houseman

“IS my team ploughing,  
That I was used to drive  
And hear the harness jingle  
When I was man alive?”

Ay, the horses trample,  
The harness jingles now;  
No change though you lie under  
The land you used to plough.

“Is football playing  
Along the river shore,  
With lads to chase the leather,  
Now I stand up no more?”

Ay, the ball is flying,  
The lads play heart and soul;  
The goal stands up, the keeper  
Stands up to keep the goal.

“Is my girl happy,  
That I thought hard to leave,  
And has she tired of weeping  
As she lies down at eve?”

Ay, she lies down lightly,  
She lies not down to weep:  
Your girl is well contented.  
Be still, my lad, and sleep.

“Is my friend hearty,  
Now I am thin and pine,  
And has he found to sleep in  
A better bed than mine?”

Yes, lad, I lie easy,  
I lie as lads would choose;  
I cheer a dead man’s sweetheart,  
Never ask me whose.

### **SECTION THREE: Denotation and Connotation**

#### **Sonnet 138: When my love swears that she is made of truth**

William Shakespeare

When my love swears that she is made of truth  
I do believe her, though I know she lies,  
That she might think me some untutored youth,  
Unlearnèd in the world's false subtleties.  
Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,  
Although she knows my days are past the best,  
Simply I credit her false-speaking tongue;  
On both sides thus is simple truth suppressed.  
But wherefore says she not she is unjust?  
And wherefore say not I that I am old?  
O, love's best habit is in seeming trust,  
And age in love, loves not to have years told.  
Therefore I lie with her, and she with me,  
And in our faults by lies we flattered be.

#### **The World is Too Much With Us; Late and Soon**

William Wordsworth

THE world is too much with us; late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:

Little we see in Nature that is ours;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!  
The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;  
The winds that will be howling at all hours,  
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;  
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;  
It moves us not.--Great God! I'd rather be  
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;  
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;  
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.

### **A Hymn to God the Father**

John Donne

I.  
WILT Thou forgive that sin where I begun,  
Which was my sin, though it were done before?  
Wilt Thou forgive that sin, through which I run,  
And do run still, though still I do deplore?  
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done,  
For I have more.

II.  
Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I have won  
Others to sin, and made my sin their door?  
Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I did shun  
A year or two, but wallowed in a score?  
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done,  
For I have more.

III.  
I have a sin of fear, that when I have spun  
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore ;  
But swear by Thyself, that at my death Thy Son  
Shall shine as he shines now, and heretofore ;  
And having done that, Thou hast done ;  
I fear no more.

### **SECTION FOUR: Imagery**

#### **A narrow fellow in the grass**

Emily Dickinson

A narrow fellow in the grass  
Occasionally rides--  
You may have met him? Did you not,  
His notice instant is:

The grass divides as with a comb--

A spotted shaft is seen,  
And then it closes at your feet  
And opens further on--

He likes a boggy acre  
A floor too cool for corn,  
Yet when a boy, and barefoot,  
I more than once at noon

Have passed, I thought, a whip-lash  
Unbraiding in the sun,  
When, stooping to secure it,  
It wrinkled, and was gone.

Several of nature's people  
I know, and they know me;  
I feel for them a transport  
Of cordiality--

But never met this fellow,  
Attended or alone,  
Without a tighter breathing  
And zero at the bone.

### **The Widow's Lament in Springtime**

William Carlos Williams

SORROW is my own yard  
where the new grass  
flames as it has flamed  
often before but not  
with the cold fire  
that closes round me this year.  
Thirtyfive years  
I lived with my husband.  
The plumtree is white today  
with masses of flowers.  
Masses of flowers  
load the cherry branches  
and color some bushes  
yellow and some red  
but the grief in my heart  
is stronger than they  
for though they were my joy  
formerly, today I notice them  
and turned away forgetting.  
Today my son told me  
that in the meadows,  
at the edge of the heavy woods  
in the distance, he saw

trees of white flowers.  
I feel that I would like  
to go there  
and fall into those flowers  
and sink into the marsh near them.

### **After Apple Picking**

Robert Frost

My long two-pointed ladder's sticking through a tree  
Toward heaven still,  
And there's a barrel that I didn't fill  
Beside it, and there may be two or three  
Apples I didn't pick upon some bough.  
But I am done with apple-picking now.  
Essence of winter sleep is on the night,  
The scent of apples: I am drowsing off.  
I cannot rub the strangeness from my sight  
I got from looking through a pane of glass  
I skimmed this morning from the drinking trough  
And held against the world of hoary grass.  
It melted, and I let it fall and break.  
But I was well  
Upon my way to sleep before it fell,  
And I could tell  
What form my dreaming was about to take.  
Magnified apples appear and disappear,  
Stem end and blossom end,  
And every fleck of russet showing clear.  
My instep arch not only keeps the ache,  
It keeps the pressure of a ladder-round.  
I feel the ladder sway as the boughs bend.  
And I keep hearing from the cellar bin  
The rumbling sound  
Of load on load of apples coming in.  
For I have had too much  
Of apple-picking: I am overtired  
Of the great harvest I myself desired.  
There were ten thousand thousand fruit to touch,  
Cherish in hand, lift down, and not let fall.  
For all  
That struck the earth,  
No matter if not bruised or spiked with stubble,  
Went surely to the cider-apple heap  
As of no worth.  
One can see what will trouble  
This sleep of mine, whatever sleep it is.  
Were he not gone,  
The woodchuck could say whether it's like his

Long sleep, as I describe its coming on,  
Or just some human sleep.

## **SECTION FIVE: Figurative Language I (Simile, Metaphor, Personification, Apostrophe, Metonymy)**

### **The Hound**

Robert Francis

Life the hound  
Equivocal  
Comes at a bound  
Either to rend me  
Or to befriend me.  
I cannot tell  
The hound's intent  
Till he has sprung  
At my bare hand  
With teeth or tongue.  
Meanwhile I stand  
And wait the event.

### **Metaphors**

Sylvia Plath

I'm a riddle in nine syllables,  
An elephant, a ponderous house,  
A melon strolling on two tendrils.  
O red fruit, ivory, fine timbers!  
This loaf's big with its yeasty rising.  
Money's new-minted in this fat purse.  
I'm a means, a stage, a cow in calf.  
I've eaten a bag of green apples,  
Boarded the train there's no getting off.

### **To his Coy Mistress**

Andrew Marvell

Had we but world enough, and time,  
This coyness, lady, were no crime.  
We would sit down and think which way  
To walk, and pass our long love's day;  
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side  
Shouldst rubies find; I by the tide  
Of Humber would complain. I would  
Love you ten years before the Flood;  
And you should, if you please, refuse  
Till the conversion of the Jews.  
My vegetable love should grow

Vaster than empires, and more slow.  
An hundred years should go to praise  
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze;  
Two hundred to adore each breast,  
But thirty thousand to the rest;  
An age at least to every part,  
And the last age should show your heart.  
For, lady, you deserve this state,  
Nor would I love at lower rate.

But at my back I always hear  
Time's winged chariot hurrying near;  
And yonder all before us lie  
Deserts of vast eternity.  
Thy beauty shall no more be found,  
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound  
My echoing song; then worms shall try  
That long preserv'd virginity,  
And your quaint honour turn to dust,  
And into ashes all my lust.  
The grave's a fine and private place,  
But none I think do there embrace.

Now therefore, while the youthful hue  
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,  
And while thy willing soul transpires  
At every pore with instant fires,  
Now let us sport us while we may;  
And now, like am'rous birds of prey,  
Rather at once our time devour,  
Than languish in his slow-chapp'd power.  
Let us roll all our strength, and all  
Our sweetness, up into one ball;  
And tear our pleasures with rough strife  
Thorough the iron gates of life.  
Thus, though we cannot make our sun  
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

### **Dream Deferred**

Langston Hughes

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up  
like a raisin in the sun?  
Or fester like a sore--  
And then run?  
Does it stink like rotten meat?  
Or crust and sugar over--  
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags  
like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

## **SECTION SIX: Figurative Language II (Symbol, Allegory)**

### **The Road Not Taken**

Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear,  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I marked the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I,  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

### **You, Andrew Marvell**

Archibald MacLeish

And here face down beneath the sun  
And here upon earth's noonward height  
To feel the always coming on  
The always rising of the night:

To feel creep up the curving east  
The earthy chill of dusk and slow  
Upon those under lands the vast  
And ever climbing shadow grow

And strange at Ecbatan the trees  
Take leaf by leaf the evening strange

The flooding dark about their knees  
The mountains over Persia change

And now at Kermanshah the gate  
Dark empty and the withered grass  
And through the twilight now the late  
Few travelers in the westward pass

And Baghdad darken and the bridge  
Across the silent river gone  
And through Arabia the edge  
Of evening widen and steal on

And deepen on Palmyra's street  
The wheel rut in the ruined stone  
And Lebanon fade out and Crete  
High through the clouds and overblown

And over Sicily the air  
Still flashing with the landward gulls  
And loom and slowly disappear  
The sails above the shadowy hulls

And Spain go under and the shore  
Of Africa the gilded sand  
And evening vanish and no more  
The low pale light across that land

Nor now the long light on the sea:

And here face downward in the sun  
To feel how swift how secretly  
The shadow of the night comes on...

### **To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time**

Robert Herrick

GATHER ye rosebuds while ye may,  
Old time is still a-flying :  
And this same flower that smiles to-day  
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,  
The higher he's a-getting,  
The sooner will his race be run,  
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,  
When youth and blood are warmer ;  
But being spent, the worse, and worst  
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,  
And while ye may go marry :  
For having lost but once your prime  
You may for ever tarry.

## **SECTION SEVEN: Figurative Language III (Paradox, Overstatement, Understatement, Irony)**

### **Much madness is divinest sense**

Emily Dickinson

Much madness is divinest sense  
To a discerning eye,  
Much sense, the starkest madness.  
'Tis the majority  
In this, as all, prevail:  
Assent, and you are sane;  
Demur, you're straightway dangerous  
And handled with a chain.

### **The Chimney Sweeper**

William Blake

When my mother died I was very young,  
And my father sold me while yet my tongue  
Could scarcely cry "'weep! 'weep! 'weep! 'weep!"  
So your chimneys I sweep and in soot I sleep.

Theres little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head,  
That curled like a lamb's back was shav'd, so I said,  
"Hush, Tom! Never mind it, for, when your head's bare,  
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair."

And so he was quiet, and that very night,  
As Tom was a sleeping, he had such a sight  
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack,  
Were all of them lock'd up in coffins of black.

And by came an Angel who had a bright key,  
And he open'd the coffins and set them all free;  
Then down a green plain leaping, laughing they run,  
And wash in a river and shine in the Sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,  
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind;  
And the Angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,  
He'd have God for his father, and never want joy.

And so Tom awoke and we rose in the dark,  
And got with our bags and our brushes to work.

Tho' the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm;  
So if all do their duty they need not fear harm.

### **Southern Cop**

Sterling A. Brown

Let us forgive Ty Kendricks.  
The place was Darktown. He was young.  
His nerves were jittery. The day was hot.  
The Negro ran out of the alley.  
And so Ty shot.

Let us understand Ty Kendricks.  
The Negro must have been dangerous.  
Because he ran;  
And here was a rookie with a chance  
To prove himself a man.

Let us condone Ty Kendricks  
If we cannot decorate.  
When he found what the Negro was running for,  
It was too late;  
And all we can say for the Negro is  
It was unfortunate.

Let us pity Ty Kendricks.  
He has been through enough,  
Standing there, his big gun smoking,  
Rabbit-scared, alone.  
Having to hear the wenches wail  
And the dying Negro moan.

### **SECTION EIGHT: Allusion**

**“Out, Out – “**

Robert Frost

The buzz-saw snarled and rattled in the yard  
And made dust and dropped stove-length sticks of wood,  
Sweet-scented stuff when the breeze drew across it.  
And from there those that lifted eyes could count  
Five mountain ranges one behind the other  
Under the sunset far into Vermont.  
And the saw snarled and rattled, snarled and rattled,  
As it ran light, or had to bear a load.  
And nothing happened: day was all but done.  
Call it a day, I wish they might have said  
To please the boy by giving him the half hour  
That a boy counts so much when saved from work.  
His sister stood beside them in her apron

To tell them "Supper." At the word, the saw,  
As if to prove saws knew what supper meant,  
Leaped out at the boy's hand, or seemed to leap—  
He must have given the hand. However it was,  
Neither refused the meeting. But the hand!  
The boy's first outcry was a rueful laugh,  
As he swung toward them holding up the hand  
Half in appeal, but half as if to keep  
The life from spilling. Then the boy saw all—  
Since he was old enough to know, big boy  
Doing a man's work, though a child at heart—  
He saw all spoiled. "Don't let him cut my hand off—  
The doctor, when he comes. Don't let him, sister!"  
So. But the hand was gone already.  
The doctor put him in the dark of ether.  
He lay and puffed his lips out with his breath.  
And then—the watcher at his pulse took fright.  
No one believed. They listened at his heart.  
Little—less—nothing!—and that ended it.  
No more to build on there. And they, since they  
Were not the one dead, turned to their affairs.

### **On His Blindness**

John Milton

When I consider how my light is spent  
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,  
And that one talent which is death to hide  
Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent  
To serve therewith my Maker, and present  
My true account, lest he returning chide,  
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"  
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent  
That murmur, soon replies: "God doth not need  
Either man's work or his own gifts: who best  
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state  
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed  
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:  
They also serve who only stand and wait."

### **Hero and Leander**

John Donne

Both robbed of air, we both lie in one ground,  
Both whom one fire had burnt, one water drowned.

## **Leda and the Swan**

William Butler Yeats

A sudden blow: the great wings beating still  
Above the staggering girl, her thighs caressed  
By the dark webs, her nape caught in his bill,  
He holds her helpless breast upon his breast.

How can those terrified vague fingers push  
The feathered glory from her loosening thighs?  
And how can body, laid in that white rush,  
But feel the strange heart beating where it lies?

A shudder in the loins engenders there  
The broken wall, the burning roof and tower  
And Agamemnon dead.

Being so caught up,  
So mastered by the brute blood of the air,  
Did she put on his knowledge with his power  
Before the indifferent beak could let her drop?

## **SECTION NINE: Meaning and Idea**

### **Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening**

Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.  
The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.

## **Design**

Robert Frost

I found a dimpled spider, fat and white,  
On a white heal-all, holding up a moth  
Like a white piece of rigid satin cloth --  
Assorted characters of death and blight  
Mixed ready to begin the morning right,  
Like the ingredients of a witches' broth --  
A snow-drop spider, a flower like a froth,  
And dead wings carried like a paper kite.

What had that flower to do with being white,  
The wayside blue and innocent heal-all?  
What brought the kindred spider to that height,  
Then steered the white moth thither in the night?  
What but design of darkness to appall?--  
If design govern in a thing so small.

## **We outgrow love**

Emily Dickinson

We outgrow love like other things  
And put it in the drawer,  
Till it an antique fashion shows  
Like costumes grandsires wore.

## **SECTION 10: Tone**

### **Apparently with no surprise**

Emily Dickinson

Apparently with no surprise,  
To any happy flower,  
The frost beheads it at its play,  
In accidental power.

The blond assassin passes on.  
The sun proceeds unmoved,  
To measure off another day,  
For an approving God.

### **The Coming of Wisdom with Time**

William Butler Yeats

Though leaves are many, the root is one;  
Through all the lying days of my youth

I swayed my leaves and flowers in the sun;  
Now I may wither into the truth.

### **The Apparition**

John Donne

When by thy scorne, O murtheresse, I am dead,  
    And that thou thinkst thee free  
From all solicitation from mee,  
Then shall my ghost come to thy bed,  
And thee, fain'd vestall, in worse armes shall see;  
Then thy sicke taper will begin to winke,  
    And he, whose thou art then, being tyr'd before,  
Will, if thou stirre, or pinch to wake him, thinke  
    Thou call'st for more,  
And in false sleepe will from thee shrinke,  
And then poore Aspen wretch, neglected thou  
Bath'd in a cold quicksilver sweat wilt lye  
    A veryer ghost than I;  
What I will say, I will not tell thee now,  
Lest that preserve thee; and since my love is spent,  
I'had rather thou shouldst painfully repent,  
Than by my threatenings rest still innocent.

### **The Flea**

John Donne

Marke but this flea, and marke in this,  
How little that which thou deny'st me is;  
Me it suck'd first, and now sucks thee,  
And in this flea our two bloods mingled bee;  
Confesse it, this cannot be said  
A sinne, or shame, or losse of maidenhead,  
    Yet this enjoyes before it wooe,  
    And pamper'd swells with one blood made of two,  
    And this, alas, is more than wee would doe.

Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,  
When we almost, nay more than maryed are.  
This flea is you and I, and this  
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is;  
Though parents grudge, and you, w'are met,  
And cloysterd in these living walls of Jet.  
    Though use make thee apt to kill me,  
    Let not to this, selfe murder added bee,  
    And sacrilege, three sinnes in killing three.

Cruell and sodaine, has thou since  
Purpled thy naile, in blood of innocence?  
In what could this flea guilty bee,

Except in that drop which it suckt from thee?  
Yet thou triumph'st, and saist that thou  
Find'st not thyself, nor mee the weaker now;  
    'Tis true, then learne how false, feares bee;  
    Just so much honor, when thou yeeld'st to mee,  
    Will wast, as this flea's death tooke life from thee.

## **SECTION ELEVEN: Musical Devices**

### **We Real Cool**

Gwendolyn Brooks

THE POOL PLAYERS.  
SEVEN AT THE GOLDEN SHOVEL.

We real cool. We  
Left school. We

Lurk late. We  
Strike straight. We

Sing sin. We  
Thin gin. We

Jazz June. We  
Die soon.

### **As imperceptibly as grief**

Emily Dickinson

As imperceptibly as grief  
The summer lapsed away,  
Too imperceptible at last  
To seem like perfidy.

A quietness distilled  
As twilight long begun,  
Or nature spending with herself  
Sequestered Afternoon.

The dusk drew earlier in,  
The morning foreign shone --  
A courteous, yet harrowing grace,  
As guest, who would be gone.

And thus, without a wing  
Or service of a keel,  
Our summer made her light escape  
Into the beautiful.

## **Nothing Gold Can Stay**

Robert Frost

Nature's first green is gold,  
Her hardest hue to hold.  
Her early leaf's a flower;  
But only so an hour.  
Then leaf subsides to leaf.  
So Eden sank to grief,  
So dawn goes down to day.  
Nothing gold can stay.

## **SECTION TWELVE: Rhythm and Meter**

### **"Introduction" to *Songs of Innocence***

William Blake

Piping down the valleys wild,  
Piping songs of pleasant glee,  
On a cloud I saw a child,  
And he laughing said to me:

"Pipe a song about a Lamb!"  
So I piped with merry cheer.  
"Piper, pipe that song again;"  
So I piped: he wept to hear.

"Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;  
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!"  
So I sung the same again,  
While he wept with joy to hear.

"Piper, sit thee down and write  
In a book, that all may read."  
So he vanished from my sight,  
And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,  
And I stained the water clear,  
And I wrote my happy songs  
Every child may joy to hear.

### **It takes all sorts**

Robert Frost

It takes all sorts of in- and outdoor schooling  
To get adapted to my kind of fooling.

## **Had I the Choice**

Walt Whitman

Had I the choice to tally greatest bards,  
To limn their portraits, stately, beautiful, and emulate at will,  
Homer with all his wars and warriors--Hector, Achilles, Ajax,  
Or Shakespeare's woe-entangled Hamlet, Lear, Othello--Tennyson's fair ladies,  
Meter or wit the best, or choice conceit to wield in perfect rhyme, delight of singers;  
These, these, O sea, all these I'd gladly barter,  
Would you the undulation of one wave, its trick to me transfer,  
Or breathe one breath of yours upon my verse,  
And leave its odor there.

## **SECTION THIRTEEN: Sound and Meaning**

### **The Span of Life**

Robert Frost

The old dog barks backward without getting up.  
I can remember when he was a pup.

### **Sound and Sense**

Alexander Pope

True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,  
As those move easiest who have learned to dance.  
'Tis not enough no harshness gives offense,  
The sound must seem an echo to the sense:  
Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,  
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;  
But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,  
The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar;  
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,  
The line too labors, and the words move slow;  
Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,  
Flies o'er the unbending corn, and skims along the main.  
Hear how Timotheus' varied lays surprise,  
And bid alternate passions fall and rise!

### **I heard a fly buzz when I died**

Emily Dickinson

I heard a fly buzz when I died;  
The stillness round my form  
Was like the stillness in the air  
Between the heavens of storm.

The eyes beside had wrung them dry,  
And breaths were gathering sure

For that last onset, when the king  
Be witnessed in his power.

I willed my keepsakes, signed away  
What portion of me I  
Could make assignable,-and then  
There interposed a fly,

With blue, uncertain, stumbling buzz,  
Between the light and me;  
And then the windows failed, and then  
I could not see to see.

### **The Bench of Boors**

Herman Melville

In bed I muse on Tenier's boors,  
Embrowned and beery losels all:  
A wakeful brain  
Elaborates pain:  
Within low doors the slugs of boors  
Laze and yawn and doze again.

In dreams they doze, the drowsy boors,  
Their hazy hovel warm and small:  
Thought's ampler bound  
But chill is found:  
Within low doors the basking boors  
Snugly hug the ember-mound.

Sleepless, I see the slumberous boors  
Their blurred eyes blink, their eyelids fall:  
Thought's eager sight  
Aches—overbright!  
Within low doors the boozy boors  
Cat-naps take in pipe-bowl light.

### **SECTION FOURTEEN: Pattern**

#### **Death, be not Proud**

John Donne

Death be not proud, though some have called thee  
Mighty and dreadfull, for, thou art not soe,  
For, those, whom thou think'st, thou dost overthrow,  
Die not, poore death, nor yet canst thou kill mee.  
From rest and sleepe, which but thy pictures bee,  
Much pleasure, then from thee, much more must flow,  
And soonest our best men with thee doe goe,  
Rest of their bones, and soules deliverie.

Thou art slave to Fate, Chance, kings, and desperate men,  
And dost with poyson, warre, and sicknesse dwell,  
And poppie, or charmes can make us sleepe as well,  
And better then thy stroake; why swell'st thou then?  
One short sleepe past, wee wake eternally,  
And death shall be no more; death, thou shalt die.

### **Acquainted with the Night**

Robert Frost

I have been one acquainted with the night.  
I have walked out in rain -- and back in rain.  
I have outwalked the furthest city light.

I have looked down the saddest city lane.  
I have passed by the watchman on his beat  
And dropped my eyes, unwilling to explain.

I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet  
When far away an interrupted cry  
Came over houses from another street,

But not to call me back or say good-bye;  
And further still at an unearthly height,  
One luminary clock against the sky

Proclaimed the time was neither wrong nor right.  
I have been one acquainted with the night.

### **A Christmas Tree**

William Burford

Star,  
If you are  
A love Compassionate,  
You will walk with us this year.  
We face a glacial distance, who are her  
Huddl'd  
At your feet.

### **SECTION FIFTEEN: Additional Poems:**

#### **A Poison Tree**

William Blake

I was angry with my friend:  
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.  
I was angry with my foe:  
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I watered it in fears,  
Night and morning with my tears;  
And I sunned it with smiles,  
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night,  
Till it bore an apple bright.  
And my foe beheld it shine.  
And he knew that it was mine,

And into my garden stole  
When the night had veiled the pole;  
In the morning glad I see  
My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

### **The Chariot (Because I could not stop for Death)**

Emily Dickinson

Because I could not stop for Death,  
He kindly stopped for me;  
The carriage held but just ourselves  
And Immortality.

We slowly drove, he knew no haste,  
And I had put away  
My labor, and my leisure too,  
For his civility.

We passed the school where children played,  
Their lessons scarcely done;  
We passed the fields of gazing grain,  
We passed the setting sun.

We paused before a house that seemed  
A swelling of the ground;  
The roof was scarcely visible.  
The cornice but a mound.

Since then 'tis centuries; but each  
Feels shorter than the day  
I first surmised the horses' heads  
Were toward eternity.

### **Musee des Beaux Arts**

W. H. Auden

About suffering they were never wrong,  
The Old Masters; how well, they understood

Its human position; how it takes place  
While someone else is eating or opening a window or just walking dully along;  
How, when the aged are reverently, passionately waiting  
For the miraculous birth, there always must be  
Children who did not specially want it to happen, skating  
On a pond at the edge of the wood:  
They never forgot  
That even the dreadful martyrdom must run its course  
Anyhow in a corner, some untidy spot  
Where the dogs go on with their doggy life and the torturer's horse  
Scratches its innocent behind on a tree.  
In Breughel's Icarus, for instance: how everything turns away  
Quite leisurely from the disaster; the ploughman may  
Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry,  
But for him it was not an important failure; the sun shone  
As it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green  
Water; and the expensive delicate ship that must have seen  
Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,  
had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on.

## **The Lamb**

William Blake

Little Lamb who made thee  
Dost thou know who made thee  
Gave thee life & bid thee feed.  
By the stream & o'er the mead;  
Gave thee clothing of delight,  
Softest clothing wooly bright;  
Gave thee such a tender voice,  
Making all the vales rejoice:  
Little Lamb who made thee  
Dost thou know who made thee

Little Lamb I'll tell thee,  
Little Lamb I'll tell thee:  
He is called by thy name,  
For he calls himself a Lamb:  
He is meek & he is mild,  
He became a little child:  
I a child & thou a lamb,  
We are called by his name.  
Little Lamb God bless thee.  
Little Lamb God bless thee.

## **The Tyger**

William Blake

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies  
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?  
On what wings dare he aspire?  
What the hand dare sieze the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,  
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?  
And when thy heart began to beat,  
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?  
In what furnace was thy brain?  
What the anvil? what dread grasp  
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,  
And watered heaven with their tears,  
Did he smile his work to see?  
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

## **One Art**

Elizabeth Bishop

The art of losing isn't hard to master;  
so many things seem filled with the intent  
to be lost that their loss is no disaster.

Lose something every day. Accept the fluster  
of lost door keys, the hour badly spent.  
The art of losing isn't hard to master.

Then practice losing farther, losing faster:  
places, and names, and where it was you meant  
to travel. None of these will bring disaster.

I lost my mother's watch. And look! my last, or  
next-to-last, of three loved houses went.  
The art of losing isn't hard to master.

I lost two cities, lovely ones. And, vaster,  
some realms I owned, two rivers, a continent.  
I miss them, but it wasn't a disaster.

--Even losing you (the joking voice, a gesture  
I love) I shan't have lied. It's evident  
the art of losing's not too hard to master  
though it may look like (*Write it!*) like disaster.

### **Do not go gentle into that good night**

Dylan Thomas

Do not go gentle into that good night,  
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,  
Because their words had forked no lightning they  
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright  
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,  
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,  
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight  
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,  
Curse, bless me now with your fierce tears, I pray.  
Do not go gentle into that good night.  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

### **Sonnet 130: My mistress' eyes**

William Shakespeare

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;  
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;  
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;  
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.  
I have seen roses damasked, red and white,  
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;  
And in some perfumes is there more delight  
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.  
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know

That music hath a far more pleasing sound;  
I grant I never saw a goddess go;  
My mistress when she walks treads on the ground.  
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare  
As any she belied with false compare.

### **The Canonization**

John Donne

FOR God's sake hold your tongue, and let me love!  
Or chide my palsy, or my gout,  
My five gray hairs, or ruin'd fortune flout;  
With wealth your state, your mind with arts improve,  
Take you a course, get you a place,  
Observe his Honour, or his Grace,  
Or the king's real, or his stamp'd face  
Contemplate; what you will, approve,  
So you will let me love.

Alas! alas! who's injured by my love?  
What merchant's ships have my sighs drown'd?  
Who says my tears have overflow'd his ground?  
When did my colds a forward spring remove?  
When did the heats which my veins fill  
Add one more to the plaguy bill?  
Soldiers find wars, and lawyers find out still  
Litigious men, which quarrels move,  
Though she and I do love.

Call's what you will, we are made such by love.  
Call her one, me another fly;  
We're tapers too, and at our own cost die;  
And we in us find th' eagle and the dove;  
The phoenix riddle hath more wit  
By us; we two being one, are it.  
So, to one neutral thing both sexes fit.  
We die and rise the same, and prove  
Mysterious by this love.

We can die by it, if not live by love,  
And if unfit for tomb or hearse  
Our legend be, it will be fit for verse;  
And if no piece of chronicle we prove,  
We'll build in sonnets pretty rooms;  
As well a well-wrought urn becomes  
The greatest ashes, as half-acre tombs,  
And by these hymns, all shall approve  
Us canonized for love;

And thus invoke us, "You, whom reverend love

Made one another's hermitage;  
You, to whom love was peace, that now is rage;  
Who did the whole world's soul contract, and drove  
    Into the glasses of your eyes;  
    (So made such mirrors, and such spies,  
That they did all to you epitomize)  
    Countries, towns, courts beg from above  
    A pattern of your love."

### **The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock**

T. S. Eliot

*S'io credesse che mia risposta fosse  
A persona che mai tornasse al mondo,  
Questa fiamma staria senza piu scosse.  
Ma perciocche giammai di questo fondo  
Non torno vivo alcun, s'i'odo il vero,  
Senza tema d'infamia ti rispondo.*

Let us go then, you and I,  
When the evening is spread out against the sky  
Like a patient etherized upon a table;  
Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,  
The muttering retreats  
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels  
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:  
Streets that follow like a tedious argument  
Of insidious intent  
To lead you to an overwhelming question . . .  
Oh, do not ask, "What is it?"  
Let us go and make our visit.

In the room the women come and go  
Talking of Michelangelo.

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes,  
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes  
Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,  
Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,  
Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys,  
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,  
And seeing that it was a soft October night,  
Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.

And indeed there will be time  
For the yellow smoke that slides along the street,  
Rubbing its back upon the window-panes;  
There will be time, there will be time  
To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet;

There will be time to murder and create,  
And time for all the works and days of hands  
That lift and drop a question on your plate;  
Time for you and time for me,  
And time yet for a hundred indecisions,  
And for a hundred visions and revisions,  
Before the taking of a toast and tea.

In the room the women come and go  
Talking of Michelangelo.

And indeed there will be time  
To wonder, "Do I dare?" and, "Do I dare?"  
Time to turn back and descend the stair,  
With a bald spot in the middle of my hair--  
[They will say: "How his hair is growing thin!"]  
My morning coat, my collar mounting firmly to the chin,  
My necktie rich and modest, but asserted by a simple pin--  
[They will say: "But how his arms and legs are thin!"]  
Do I dare  
Disturb the universe?  
In a minute there is time  
For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.

For I have known them all already, known them all--  
Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons,  
I have measured out my life with coffee spoons;  
I know the voices dying with a dying fall  
Beneath the music from a farther room.  
So how should I presume?

And I have known the eyes already, known them all--  
The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase,  
And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin,  
When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall,  
Then how should I begin  
To spit out all the butt-ends of my days and ways?  
And how should I presume?

And I have known the arms already, known them all--  
Arms that are braceleted and white and bare  
[But in the lamplight, downed with light brown hair!]  
Is it perfume from a dress  
That makes me so digress?  
Arms that lie along a table, or wrap about a shawl.  
And should I then presume?  
And how should I begin?

.....

Shall I say, I have gone at dusk through narrow streets  
And watched the smoke that rises from the pipes  
Of lonely men in shirt-sleeves, leaning out of windows? . . .

I should have been a pair of ragged claws  
Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.

.....

And the afternoon, the evening, sleeps so peacefully!  
Smoothed by long fingers,  
Asleep . . . tired . . . or it malingers,  
Stretched on the floor, here beside you and me.  
Should I, after tea and cakes and ices,  
Have the strength to force the moment to its crisis?  
But though I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed,  
Though I have seen my head [grown slightly bald] brought in upon a platter,  
I am no prophet--and here's no great matter;  
I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker,  
And I have seen the eternal Footman hold my coat, and snicker,  
And in short, I was afraid.

And would it have been worth it, after all,  
After the cups, the marmalade, the tea,  
Among the porcelain, among some talk of you and me,  
Would it have been worth while,  
To have bitten off the matter with a smile,  
To have squeezed the universe into a ball  
To roll it toward some overwhelming question,  
To say: "I am Lazarus, come from the dead  
Come back to tell you all, I shall tell you all"--  
If one, settling a pillow by her head,  
Should say: "That is not what I meant at all.  
That is not it, at all."

And would it have been worth it, after all,  
Would it have been worth while,  
After the sunsets and the dooryards and the sprinkled streets,  
After the novels, after the teacups, after the skirts that trail along the  
floor--  
And this, and so much more?--  
It is impossible to say just what I mean!  
But as if a magic lantern threw the nerves in patterns on a screen:  
Would it have been worth while  
If one, settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl,  
And turning toward the window, should say:  
"That is not it at all,  
That is not what I meant, at all."

.....

No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;  
Am an attendant lord, one that will do  
To swell a progress, start a scene or two,  
Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool,  
Deferential, glad to be of use,  
Politic, cautious, and meticulous;

Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse  
At times, indeed, almost ridiculous--  
Almost, at times, the Fool.

I grow old . . . I grow old . . .  
I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled.

Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach?  
I shall wear white flannel trousers, and walk upon the beach.  
I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.

I do not think that they will sing to me.

I have seen them riding seaward on the waves  
Combing the white hair of the waves blown back  
When the wind blows the water white and black.

We have lingered in the chambers of the sea  
By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown  
Till human voices wake us, and we drown.

**AP Literature – Farris**  
**Poetry Analysis Tools: TPCASTT**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>Title</b> What does the title suggest BEFORE reading the poem?</p>	
<p><b>Paraphrase</b> What is the dramatic situation (the LITERAL “translation”?)</p>	
<p><b>Connotation</b> Identify words with multiple meanings.</p>	
<p><b>Attitude</b> What is the tone of the poem? What is the attitude of the speaker? At the beginning? At the end?</p>	
<p><b>Shifts</b> Where does the poem shift in tone? Are there pauses? Caesura?</p>	
<p><b>Title</b> Revisit the title. What is its significance to the meaning of the poem?</p>	
<p><b>Theme</b> Identify the “big idea” or universal message of the poem.</p>	

**AP Literature – Farris**  
**Poetry Analysis Tools: DIDLS (Tone)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Period: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

<b>D</b>	<b>DICTION</b> Identify and discuss words with multiple meanings	
<b>I</b>	<b>IMAGERY</b> Identify and discuss sensory descriptions	
<b>D</b>	<b>DETAILS</b> Identify and discuss specifics that were included or omitted by the author	
<b>L</b>	<b>LANGUAGE</b> Identify style employed (formal, clinical, jargon, antiquated) and discuss	
<b>S</b>	<b>SYNTAX</b> Identify sentence structure (run-on, incomplete sent., punct., shape) and discuss how it affects meaning.	

**AP Literature – Farris**  
**Poetry Analysis Worksheet**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Period: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is the *dramatic situation* of the poem? (What is taking place literally?)
2. Who is the speaker in the poem? (Or, at least, what do we know about him/her?)
3. To whom is he or she speaking? Who is the audience of the poem?
4. Where is the setting of the poem? Where is the speaker? When does it take place?
5. What are some possible themes of the poem?
6. Write one line from the poem that you think tells a theme or main conflict of the poem.
7. Why does the speaker feel compelled to speak out?
8. What kinds of patterns are there in the poem? Does the poem rhyme? Does it have a particular rhythm or beat? Does it have a visual pattern when you look at it?
9. How does the poet use language? Is it elevated or fancier language? Is it more vernacular, colloquial, or casual? Does the poet use a particular dialect or accent?

10. What do you think is the most important line of the poem? Why do you think so?

11. What images does the poet use to make his or her point?

12. What is the *tone* (mood) of the poem at the beginning, at the end, and overall?

## Poetry Explications

A **poetry explication** is a relatively short analysis which describes the possible meanings and relationships of the words, images, and other small units that make up a poem. Writing an explication is an effective way for a reader to connect a poem's plot and conflicts with its structural features.

### Preparing to Write the Explication

1. READ the poem silently, then read it aloud (if not in a testing situation). Repeat as necessary.
2. Consider the poem as a dramatic situation in which a speaker addresses an audience or another character. In this way, begin your analysis by identifying and describing the speaking voice or voices, the conflicts or ideas, and the language used in the poem.

### I. The Large Issues

- Determine the basic design of the poem by considering the who, what, when, where, and why of the dramatic situation.
- What is being dramatized? What conflicts or themes does the poem present, address, or question?
- Who is the speaker? Define and describe the speaker and his/her voice. What does the speaker say?
- Who is the audience? Are other characters involved?
- What happens in the poem? Consider the plot or basic design of the action. How are the dramatized conflicts or themes introduced, sustained, resolved, etc.?
- When does the action occur? What is the date and/or time of day?
- Where is the speaker? Describe the physical location of the dramatic moment.
- Why does the speaker feel compelled to speak at this moment? What is his/her motivation?

### II. The Details

To analyze the design of the poem, we must focus on the poems' parts, namely how the poem dramatizes conflicts or ideas in language. By concentrating on the parts, we develop our understanding of the poem's structure, and we gather support and evidence for our interpretations. Some of the details we should consider include the following:

- **Form:** Does the poem represent a particular form (sonnet, sestina, etc.)? Does the poem present any unique variations from the traditional structure of that form?
- **Rhetoric:** How does the speaker make particular statements? Does the rhetoric seem odd in any way? Why? Consider the predicates and what they reveal about the speaker.
- **Syntax:** Consider the subjects, verbs, and objects of each statement and what these elements reveal about the speaker. Do any statements have convoluted or vague syntax?
- **Vocabulary:** Why does the poet choose one word over another in each line? Do any of the words have multiple or archaic meanings that add other meanings to the line? Use the *Oxford English Dictionary* as a resource.

### III. The Patterns

As you analyze the design line by line, look for certain patterns to develop which provide insight into the dramatic situation, the speaker's state of mind, or the poet's use of details. Some of the most common patterns include the following:

- **Rhetorical Patterns:** Look for statements that follow the same format.
- **Rhyme:** Consider the significance of the end words joined by sound; in a poem with no rhymes, consider the importance of the end words.
- **Patterns of Sound:** Alliteration and assonance create sound effects and often cluster significant words.
- **Visual Patterns:** How does the poem look on the page?
- **Rhythm and Meter:** Consider how rhythm and meter influence our perception of the speaker and his/her language.

## Writing the Explication

### The first paragraph

The first paragraph should present the large issues; it should inform the reader which conflicts are dramatized and should describe the dramatic situation of the speaker. The explication does not require a formal introductory paragraph; the writer should simply start explicating immediately. According to UNC 's Professor William Harmon, the foolproof way to begin any explication is with the following sentence: "This poem dramatizes the conflict between ..." Such a beginning ensures that you will introduce the major conflict or theme in the poem and organize your explication accordingly. Here is an example. A student's explication of Wordsworth's "Composed upon Westminster Bridge" might begin in the following way:

*This poem dramatizes the conflict between appearance and reality, particularly as this conflict relates to what the speaker seems to say and what he really says. From Westminster Bridge, the speaker looks at London at sunrise, and he explains that all people should be struck by such a beautiful scene. The speaker notes that the city is silent, and he points to several specific objects, naming them only in general terms: "Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples" (6). After describing the "glittering" aspect of these objects, he asserts that these city places are just as beautiful in the morning as country places like "valley, rock, or hill" (8,10). Finally, after describing his deep feeling of calmness, the speaker notes how the "houses seem asleep" and that "all that mighty heart is lying still" (13, 14). In this way, the speaker seems to say simply that London looks beautiful in the morning.*

### The next paragraphs

The next paragraphs should expand the discussion of the conflict by focusing on details of form, rhetoric, syntax, and vocabulary. In these paragraphs, the writer should explain the poem line by line in terms of these details, and he or she should incorporate important elements of rhyme, rhythm, and meter during this discussion. The student's explication continues with a topic sentence that directs the discussion of the first five lines:

*However, the poem begins with several oddities that suggest the speaker is saying more than what he seems to say initially. For example, the poem is an Italian sonnet and follows the abbaabbacdcd rhyme scheme. The fact that the poet chooses to write a sonnet about London in an Italian form suggests that what he says may not be actually praising the city. Also, the rhetoric of the first two lines seems awkward compared to a normal speaking voice: "Earth has not anything to show more fair. / Dull would he be of soul who could pass by" (1-2). The odd syntax continues when the poet personifies the city: "This City now doth, like a garment, wear / The beauty of the morning" (4-5). Here, the city wears the morning's beauty, so it is not the city but the morning that is beautiful...*

### The conclusion

The explication has no formal concluding paragraph; do not simply restate the main points of the introduction! The end of the explication should focus on sound effects or visual patterns as the final element of asserting an explanation. Or, as does the undergraduate here, the writer may choose simply to stop writing when he or she reaches the end of the poem:

*The poem ends with a vague statement: "And all that mighty heart is lying still!" In this line, the city's heart could be dead, or it could be simply deceiving the one observing the scene. In this way, the poet reinforces the conflict between the appearance of the city in the morning and what such a scene and his words actually reveal.*