

Name: _____ Title of Poem: _____

Poetry Analysis Sheet

Use this handout to read and analyze a poem and to uncover the meaning of the poem.

1. What does the title mean? Take a look at the title and reflect (think) on what you think it means:

2. Put it in your own words

Read the poem two or three times. You will see something different each time you read the poem. Write a brief summary of the poem in your own words. Highlight or list some of the words (nouns, verbs, phrases) that are important to understanding the poem.

3. What do you think the poem means?

Now think about the meaning of the poem. Remember that some poems have a deeper meaning.

Try to answer these questions. Your poem may not need all of these questions.

- Who is the subject of the poem? _____
- What are they talking about? _____
- Why do you think the author wrote the poem? _____
- When is the poem happening? _____
- Where is the poem happening? _____
- What is the poet's attitude? _____
- How does the poem shift from person to person or between different times or places? _____

Is there anything else that you would like to note about the poem?

Most poems tell us about a poet's understanding of an experience. The beginning will be different from the end. The change may be in feelings, language (slang to formal), or connotation (positive to negative). Explain how these shifts (changes) convey (give/tell/show us) the poem's message.

4. Poetic devices: Tools of the poet. Identify different poetic devices in your poem. Your poem may only have some of these items.

- Simile – comparison using like or as _____
- Metaphor – a direct comparison _____
- Personification – giving human qualities to nonhuman things _____
- Imagery – descriptions that appeal to our five senses:
 - Taste _____
 - Touch _____
 - Sight _____
 - Sound _____
 - Smell _____

- Tone – what emotion does the speaker use as he talks _____
- Point of view – who is the telling the poem _____
- Imagery – creating pictures with words _____
- Alliteration – repeating the same letter _____

5. Theme. Identify the theme (central idea) of the poem. How does the theme convey the poem's message?

6. Look at the title again

Now look at the title again. Do you now have a different interpretation of the title?

7. Write a short analysis of the poem.

8. Is there any cultural or historical information about the poem or the poet that you think is important to the poem?

Can you explain how this is important?
