

10 Step Poetry Explication

Directions: Using the ten steps below, and the associated organizing handouts, analyze and explicate the poem assigned to you.

Step 1. Title. What is it? What do the words mean or suggest to you? How might they apply to the poem?

Step 2. Dramatic Situation. Using the SOAPS organizer, identify the following:

a. **Subject:**

b. **Occasion:**

c. **Audience:**

d. **Purpose:**

e. **Speaker:**

Step 3. Images. What language in the poem gives you powerful images in your mind? What specific words are used to convey these images?

Step 4. Figures of Speech. Does the poem use similes, metaphors, or other types of figurative language?

Step 5. Tone. What feeling do you associate with the poem? How is this related to the speaker or voice you identified in Step 2? What specific words, lines, or images in the poem give you this impression?

Step 6. Structure. How many stanzas does the poem have? Is it a particular type of poem, such as a sonnet, epic, lyric, or ballad? Does it have a connection between the look of the poem and the message of the poem?

Step 7. Symbol. What are some symbols in the poem? What is the literal symbol, and the interpretation? Do your interpretations fit the meaning of the poem?

Step 8. Rhyme. Does the poem have a specific rhyme scheme? If so, what is it? What words in the poem rhyme? Give examples of internal, slant, and end rhyme in the poem.

Step 9. Meter. What is the metrical identity of the poem? In other words, is there rhythm to the flow of the poem? Is it iambic, trochee, dactylic, or another? Use your handbook of literary terms to identify. What lines are the best examples of this meter?

Step 10. Diction. What words do you think are particularly meaningful to the poem? Does the author's choice of one word over a synonym for that word help to make the poem what it is? Does the author use alliteration or assonance? How do these techniques help the poem's message?