

## Form + Content = Meaning

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**Directions: Follow these simple instructions on how to read and explicate a poem.**

- Read the poem through entirely.
- Summarize the poem in one or two sentences.
- Read the poem again.
- If you get stuck on a word you don't know, use a dictionary. Write that word down along with any other unfamiliar words.
- If you come to a sentence or a phrase you don't understand, write it down. Some sentences are written as inverted sentences (placing the verb in various locations). Rewrite the sentence.
- Identify any figurative language (metaphor, personification) and write down the literal meaning.
- Analyze the poet's language. Ask yourself why certain words are used. Is a certain connotation meant?
- Read the poem again; this time to see if there is a rhythm or rhyme scheme.