

"TP-FASTT" Poetry Analysis

Directions: Mark (annotate) the poem as you read and make notes on the following. **Make sure you underline and look up any words for which you do not know the meaning.** Make sure you make all of your annotations on the same sheet as the poem. Also, make sure you label each "section" appropriately so I do not have to search for your answers. For example – if you are commenting on the "Title" for the first time, write *Title 1* – Then write out your thoughts.

1) **T = Title**

Ponder the title before reading the poem; predict what the poem may be about.

3) **F = Figurative Language**

Examine poetic devices, focusing on how such devices contribute to the meaning, the effect, or both, of a poem. You may consider imagery, figures of speech (simile, metaphor, personification, etc.), diction, point of view, and sound devices (alliteration, onomatopoeia, rhythm, rhyme), repetition. Use your list of poetry terms to help you identify different instances of figurative language. It is not necessary to identify EVERY poetic device present, but the ones you do should help support the conclusions you will draw about the poem. Complete this step using highlighters on your copy of the poem. **** MAKE SURE YOU INCLUDE A KEY ****

4) **A = Attitude**

Observe both the speaker's and the poet's attitude (tone). Diction, images, and details suggest the speaker's attitude and contribute the meaning. Usually the tone or attitude cannot be named with a single word, think complexity.

5) **S = Shifts**

Rarely does a poet begin and end the poetic experience at the same place. As is true for most of us, the poet's understanding of an experience is a gradual realization, and the poem is a reflection of that epiphany. Trace the changing attitudes of the speaker from the beginning to end, paying particular attention to the conclusion. To discover shifts, watch for the following:

- key words: but, yet, however, though
- punctuation: dashes, periods, colons, ellipsis
- stanza and/or line divisions: changes in line or stanza length or both
- irony: sometimes irony hides shifts
- effect of structure on meaning, how the poem is built
- changes in sound that may indicate changes in meaning
- changes in diction: slang to formal language, for instance, or positive connotation to negative

NOTE: Mark all these items carefully on the copy.

6) **T = Title**

Examine the title again, this time on an interpretive or explanatory level. What new insight does the title provide in understanding the poem.

7) **T = Theme**

What is the poem saying about the human experience, motivation, or condition? What subject or subjects does the poem address? What do you learn about the subject? What idea does the poet want you to take away with you? Remember that the theme of any work of literature is stated in at least one complete sentence.

