

Poetry Annotation

Part One:

This assignment requires the following:

- You will be asked to text mark (or mark critically) an entire poem, such a passage should not just be important to the plot – in fact, it might not be important to the plot at all – but should also contain imagery, binaries, references, themes, etc. that you deem essential to understanding the greater meaning of the text... or at least essential to working towards understanding the greater meaning of the text. Textual marks are also a great place to simply ask questions you may have regarding certain themes or binaries.
- Text mark the passage THOROUGHLY. Basically, an annotation asks you to demonstrate a close reading- that is, to demonstrate just how much meaning you can squeeze out of that bit of text.
- Text marking does NOT summarize a poem. Do not simply state what is going on in the poem/paragraph. The plot or story is obvious; what you want to get at is *under* the story.

Why do we text mark?

- Most people read poetry for an emotional response. The question is why are certain poems revered while others are left by the way side? Great poems trigger more than an emotional response; they stimulate readers intellectually as well. We return to the same poems time and time again because they hold a deeper meaning. It is our job as readers to comprehend what great poems are trying to tell us. A poem may be lovely, but if it cannot go deeper than emotions and images, it's not worth a second read.
- Poets don't just write for themselves; they have a particular audience in mind. Poetry is their mode of communication, a way to get their message out to the world, whether it is one of great social importance or merely a venting of the soul. Again, readers must take on the task of comprehending these messages.
- Finally, it is incredibly satisfying to come to a conclusion about the meaning of a poem. Text marking can lead to great discussions or even realizations about life.

When completing a text marking, look for the following elements:

- Literary Devices – note them and then try to discover why they are used.
- Binaries – ideas that oppose one another; good/evil, light/dark, young/old, etc.
- Allusions – these abound in poetry. Discover *why* they are there and *what* they are implying.
- Structure and form – examine the shape, meter, and rhyme of the poem. Each means something different.

Part 2 – Visual Presentation of your Annotation Poem

Visual Representation of your Poem – you will complete a visual representation of your poem. This may be any type of art, a painting, a collage, a cross-stitch, a sculpture, anything that represents the poem. You'll be required to read your poem in class and present your visual representation to the class.