

Poetry Explication

As shown in class, an explication process allows a critic to explain the entire poem in detail, breaking down all of the components of the work itself. Although paraphrasing is involved during this process, typically an explication concentrates more on the various literary devices and the individual elements which make-up a poem.

OBJECTIVES

1. Choose a poem to explain from the list below.
2. Read the poem closely, more than once. In your opening paragraph establish the literal meaning of the work. Create a thesis statement regarding the poem.
3. Go through the piece, in detail. In your second paragraph state what situation is presented to the reader, stanza by stanza.
4. In the third paragraph, explain the use of rhymes used in the verse, stanza by stanza. Are they perfect, true rhymes or slant rhymes?
5. In the fourth paragraph, explain the meter, *line by line*. Is it standard throughout the piece?
6. Mention the use or the lack of: (indicate line numbers)
 - allusions, such as Greek myths or Biblical stories
 - denotations and connotations of words (have a dictionary handy)
 - possible symbols: Why are some words shown with a capital letter?
 - use of metaphors, similes, personification, alliteration
 - How do all of these elements contribute to the poem's message?
7. In the next paragraph, discuss the use of persona: Who is speaking in the poem? What type of emotional voice is used? What epiphany moment is reached?
8. Essay Length: 2 full pages due Monday 12/28.

Donald Hall "My Son My Executioner" p 523

William Blake "London" p 585

Emily Dickinson " Wild Nights—Wild Nights" p 722

assignment 01