

Annotation Notes and Instructions for Poetry

First off, understand poetry can be difficult to understand and interpret. The nature of the poetry can make it challenging, so always do your best, but KNOW that you will need to work hard to “get” at their meanings.

Step 1: Read the poem all the way through without making notes or anything.

Step 2: Read the poem again, looking for and marking words you do not know/understand and LOOK THEM UP!

*Remember, some words have multiple meanings; make sure you use the right one!
When in doubt, right down the top 2 or 3 and figure it out later!*

Step 3: Look for and mark any references the poet makes that you do not know. Then, LOOK THEM UP!

These are called **allusions** and the writer expects you to know them. Help them and yourself with this step. Learn something new!

Step 4: Mark any connections made in the poem. This can be repetition of words, symbols, images or references.

Repetition means that something is important and the writer wants you to see it.

Step 5: Explain lines/pieces of the poem in your own words to make it easier to understand.

Breaking it apart can help you understand the pieces to better understand the whole thing.

Step 6: Read the WHOLE POEM again to put the pieces you understand together to understand the whole thing.

Don't be afraid to ask questions or get help!

It's how we learn!