

Close Reading: Analyzing Poetry and Passages of Fiction

The Keys to Understanding Literature

Close Reading

— [a. small details suggest larger ideas

— [b. **HOW** does the meaning of a piece come about

Close Reading

Follow Guidelines for Annotations

1. **QCC**: Write **questions, comments, and connections** in the margins.
2. **Triangle** characters' names so they are easy to locate on each page.
3. **Box** each word you do not know. Write brief definitions beside them if you do not figure them out from context clues.
4. **○Circle and label** literary elements and devices. (Here are some of the literary elements that you may find: allusion, ambiguity, analogy, apostrophe, archetype, cliché, colloquialism, conceit, ethos, flashback, foreshadowing, hyperbole, irony, logos, litotes, idiom, metaphor, metonymy, motif, paradox, parallelism, pathos, personification, satire, simile, symbol, synecdoche, theme, etc. You do not have to find all of them; you may find some that are not listed. If you need definitions for any of the literary terms, use the following link: <http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/litgloss/>.)
5. **≈Put wavy lines** under patterns or repetitions. If the patterns or repetitions are literary elements or devices, label them with alliteration, anaphora, assonance, chiasmus, catalog, epanalepsis, epistrophe, motif, sibilance, parallelism, theme, etc.
6. **Lightning bolt** shifts or turns in the text resulting from an epiphany, realization, insight, style choice, etc.
7. **Highlight** key phrases or sentences that give insight into a character, relate to the theme, indicate the tone, indicate setting or effect of setting, effective or unusual diction, critical events, etc. Highlighting stands out from the page and allows you to scan a page quickly for information. Be careful not to mark too much. If you feel that several lines are important, bracket them. See step eight.
8. **<>Bracket** important ideas or passages that are several lines in length. Place a bracket around the entire passage and only highlight key phrases within the bracket.

Close Reading

— [1. First Impressions: QCCs

(Questions, Comments, Connections)

— [2. Stylistic Elements: Diction, Figurative Language, Imagery,
Syntax, Tone and Mood

Diction

author's word choice

LEAD

L=level of diction-formal, neutral or informal

E=description of level i.e. elevated, colloquial, slang, jargon, dialect, etc.

A=abstract or concrete words

D=denotations and connotations

Figurative Language

— [simile, metaphor, personification, analogy, conceit (extended metaphor), hyperbole (overstatement), paradox, irony

— [allegory, apostrophe, cliché, idiom, metonymy, synecdoche, pun

Imagery

— [appeals to the five senses

— [synesthesia

Syntax

arrangement of words, phrases, clauses, sentences

long or short sentences (telegraphic, short, medium, long)

simple, complex, compound, compound-complex

interrogative, declarative, imperative, exclamatory, rhetorical question, rhetorical fragment

cumulative, periodic, balanced, asyndeton, polysyndeton

natural s-v-o, inverted

parallelism, chiasmus/antimetabole, zeugma (patterns, repetitions)

Tone and Mood

— [Tone: speaker's attitude or author's attitude toward subject of work DIDS: D=diction, I=imagery, D=details, S=syntax

— [Mood: feeling readers get because of the tone

Close Reading: Poetry

— [More to consider when actively reading and analyzing poetry

— [Rhyme, Meter, Form, Poetic Syntax, Sound

Rhyme

— [free verse or rhyming

— [types of rhyme-internal, end, near, eye, slant, feminine, masculine,

— [rhyme scheme

Meter

— [pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables (feet)

— [iambic, trochaic, spondaic, pyrrhic, anapestic, dactylic

— [monometer, dimeter, trimeter, tetrameter, pentameter,
hexameter, heptameter, octometer

— [blank verse

Form

HOW does structure reinforce meaning?

narrative (epic, ballad)

lyric (elegy, ode, idyll, sonnet, villanelle)

song (dirge, ballad, hymn, rap, blues)

light (limerick, epigram)

cause-effect, patterns, chronological, question and answer, dramatic monologue

open (free verse, projective verse) or closed (blank verse, couplet, tercet, quatrain, cinquain, sestet, septet, octet or octave)

Poetic Syntax

— [end-stopped, enjambment, caesura, long/short lines,
projective verse

Sound

musical quality

rhyme, enjambment, caesura, cadence, alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia

in text citations for poetry spanning two lines “word / word”

use I. for one line and II. for more than one line in parenthetical citations

Tools for Close Reading

— [**Follow Guidelines for Annotations**

— [**1. Find devices**

— [**2. Analyze their effect**

— [**(Don't forget to consider titles)**