

Poetry Analysis Essay



Timed Write on Friday!

What does it mean to “analyze” a poem?

- We are trying to figure out what the theme of the poem is...

AND

- How the poet uses literary devices (figurative language, imagery, repetition, symbolism, etc) to make their point about the theme in the poem

First things first!

- You have to understand what the poem is about!

- Then, you need to take a look at the elements- list them out!
 - Figurative language
 - Imagery
 - Repetition
 - Allusion/Symbolism
 - Tone/Mood
 - Rhyme

Elements Adding Meaning

- How does the poet use these elements to make his/her point?
 - For example:
 - “My love is like a bright sun, shining for you always” (l. 17).

A simile might be used to get the reader to understand the comparison of their love to a brightly burning sun.
 - “Come back to me / Come back to me” (ll. 14, 18)

Repetition might be used to make a point very clear; to show that they are desperate to get their love back.

Directions

- You are to write an in-depth analysis of a poem/song. Focus specifically on the use of **three** literary devices: imagery (smell, taste, touch, sight, hear), tone/mood, figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification, onomatopoeia, alliteration), symbolism, allusion, repetition, or rhyme.
- *Be sure to include a copy of the poem/lyrics + NUMBER THE LINES.

Introduction

- Attention getter/ hook; introduce the title of the poem and poet's name. Explain the overall theme/message. What is the author trying to tell readers about life? End with your thesis statement (mention topic and attitude).

Examples of Hooks

- The standard hooks:
 - Everyone has experienced...
 - Imagine...
 - Anecdote (story): The man's heart broke into a thousand pieces as she walked away.
 - Quote: It's better to have loved and lost than never loved at all.

Thesis

- The thesis is the _____ point of your essay!
- SIMPLE THESIS: A number of literary devices can be found throughout ____'s poem, "_____".

But that's too easy- you can do better!

A Better Thesis

- In “A Dream Deferred”, Langston Hughes uses the literary devices of figurative language, tone, and diction to show that keeping people from achieving their dreams can have destructive consequences.
 - Introduce the poem/poet, tell what literary devices are being used, and explain what theme the literary devices are showing the reader.

Sample Introduction Paragraph

The man's heart broke into a thousand pieces as he watched his former love walk away. Everyone has been through heartbreak and Pablo Neruda expresses his sadness in the poem, "Tonight I Write". The poem speaks of heartbreak and sorrow, but ends with a promise to stop loving the woman once and for all. Neruda uses a variety of literary devices to show the pain and suffering he went through.

Body Paragraphs

- For each body paragraph, choose a literary device:
 - Imagery, Figurative Language, Tone/Mood, Rhyme, Repetition, Allusion, Symbolism

- In each body paragraph, you will give examples of your literary device and how it adds importance/significance to the meaning of the poem.

Body Paragraphs

- Topic Sentence
 - Evidence/Support (Lines from the poem)
 - Commentary
 - Evidence/Support (Lines from the poem)
 - Commentary
 - Concluding Sentence
-
- **YOU MUST ANSWER THIS QUESTION: How is the poet using this literary device to make his point?**

Elaboration

- How is the poet using this literary device to make his point?

Neruda uses figurative language to make his pain understandable to his readers. Personification can be seen again and again, as he describes “his soul calling out to her” (l. 23) and “the starry night crying over the heartbreak” (l. 14). By using personification, Neruda makes the pain come alive, almost as though it is human. He also uses another type of figurative language: simile. In line 37, he states “My verses fall to the soul like dew to the pasture.” He is trying to show that his verses, the poem, is helping his soul just like dew helps a pasture grow its grass. The figurative language brings Neruda’s pain to the reader’s attention and lets us understand his pain.

Use Quotes As Evidence

- Neruda expresses his pain by saying “my soul is not satisfied without her” (l.13). He uses this personification to show that even his soul is alive and wants to be with her.
- Neruda uses end rhyme to emphasize [point out] how difficult it is to forget her, stating “although she may be far / she is always my shining star” (ll. 16-17).

Incorporating Quotes

- For one line: "... wish that we were in his place" (l.12).
- More than one line: "So on we worked.../
And went without the meat..." (ll. 13-14).

The family's hunger can be seen when they recall "so on we worked.../And went without the meat..."(ll.13-14).

Sample Body Paragraph

- Neruda uses figurative language to make his pain understandable to his readers. Personification can be seen again and again, as he describes “his soul calling out to her” (l. 23) and “the starry night crying over the heartbreak” (l. 14). By using personification, Neruda makes the pain come alive, almost as though it is human. He also uses another type of figurative language: simile. In line 37, he states “My verses fall to the soul like dew to the pasture.” He is trying to show that his verses, the poem, is helping his soul just like dew helps a pasture grow its grass. The figurative language brings Neruda’s pain to the reader’s attention and lets us understand what he is going through.

Conclusion

- How can you relate to this poem?
Possibly, give examples of how the poem relates to today. End with some strong, general advice about life that the poet teaches readers.
- Example: Everyone has experienced the pain of heartbreak. Neruda expresses his pain in "Tonight I Write" because he not only wants his old love to know, but for readers to know they are not alone.

Sample Conclusion Paragraph

Everyone can relate to the idea of heartache. We know that Neruda's pain was so hard that he decides that he can no longer love this woman, or write poems for her. People who experience heartbreak know that they must get closure, otherwise, the pain keeps going. Neruda writes this poem as a way to get rid of his feelings for this woman, but at the same time, gives us a beautiful poem that we can all relate to.

Citing a Poem

- ONE LINE: (l. 15)
- Multiple lines: (ll. 14-16), (ll. 1-2, 6-8)