



English Language Arts

Grade 12

Days 1 & 2

Genre: Poetry

Task: Read and annotate several poems, concentrating on meaning, form and style.

Directions:

Read multiple poems from the attached sources.

- <http://www.loc.gov/poetry/180/>
- <https://allpoetry.com/famous-poems>
- <http://www.poets.org/>

*These web sites are not controlled or approved by the NYC Department of Education

While you read and annotate:

- **Preview the poem** -- Read the title (often a great deal of information is conveyed through the title). Notice the structure of the poem (stanzas, number of lines, even the shape may have meaning). Notice possible writing techniques (rhyme scheme, use of repetition, invented words).
- **Read the poem aloud** – Listen to the sound of the poem, noticing the rhythm and possibly the rhyme. Pay attention to the punctuation. If there is no punctuation at the end of a line, don't pause at the end; continue reading right into the next line.
- **Expect that there will be more to the poem that can be seen in just one reading** – Reread the poem two or three times looking for what you discover on each reading.
- **Determine who is telling the poem** – Keep in mind that even if the poem is written in the first person, the "I" of the poem is not necessarily the poet, it may be a character the poet has created.
- **Determine the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases** – Some poems may have footnotes or annotations. If these aren't present, you may use context clues, a dictionary or ask someone for assistance.
- **Analyze the structure and imagery of the poem** – Determine how the organization, word choice, word order, figurative language, and imagery contribute to the meaning of the poem.
- **Interpret the theme of the poem** – What specifically is the poet suggesting about the topic of the poem? Is the author suggesting one single idea or presenting two or more possible perspectives on the topic?



Days 3 & 4

Genre: Poetry

Task: Write an original poem.

Day 3 Directions:

Write a poem or two, using the poems you read on Days 1 & 2 as inspiration. Brainstorm and draft your poems today.

Day 4 Directions:

Revise and finalize your poems today.

Review the poems that you found to help you with examples in using your poetic devices that you might like to add into your own poems. Use Quizlet for definitions and examples of some devices.

<https://quizlet.com/27720773/english-10-poetic-devices-terms-examples-flash-cards/>

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While you write:

- Brainstorm a list of ideas or topics you want to explore. Reread a few poems from Day 1 for inspiration.
- Choose a poetic form (sonnet, sestina, ode, ruba'i, haiku, etc.), or write in free verse.
- Choose precise words; poems are concise with each word chosen carefully to convey meaning.
- Lean toward concrete imagery vs. vague abstraction.
- Employ poetic devices that will support your meaning – rhyme, meter, repetition, etc.
- Employ literary techniques that will support your meaning – repetition, alliteration, onomatopoeia, etc.
- Conclude the poem with a powerful insight, emotional appeal, or twist to change the overall meaning.
- Read the poem aloud when editing; it will help to hear the rhythm and flow of the words. Determine if changes or additions of punctuation are needed to guide the reader. Look closely at your line breaks, often the words that end a line are most remembered.
- Look at the layout of the poem. You may use white space, shape, font, or even illustrations to assist the reader interpreting your poem.



Days 5 & 6

Genre: Informational Texts

Task: Read and annotate articles about the position of Poet Laureate, specific Poets Laureate, and the special projects they led during their term.

Directions:

Read about the Library of Congress' Poetry and Literature Center and the position of Poet Laureate.

- <http://www.loc.gov/poetry/about.html>
- http://www.loc.gov/poetry/about_laureate.html

To read about specific Poets Laureate:

- <http://www.loc.gov/poetry/laureate-2011-present.html>

To read about the special projects of the Poets Laureate:

- <http://www.loc.gov/poetry/laureate-projects.html>

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While you read and annotate:

- Jot notes that explain your understanding of what a Poet Laureate is, how they are selected, and what the responsibilities of the position are.
- Consider the importance of having a Poet Laureate for the nation. What influence does the Poet Laureate have on our nation's relationship to poetry?
- Record specific projects led by each of the Poets Laureate. You might also note whether these projects have been continued after their tenure as Poet Laureate.
- Form your own thoughts about the position of Poet Laureate. You might consider the lasting impact they have had. You might look at the persons chosen to be Poet Laureate and whether there are any groups of poets that seem over or under represented. You might look collectively at the projects undertaken by the Poets Laureate and consider whether there is any critical action that has not yet been addressed.

Days 7 & 8

Genre: Argument Essay

Task: Write an argument essay taking a precise position on an issue concerning the post or work of a Poet Laureate.

Day 7 Directions:

Using the articles you read on Days 5 and 6, and the notes you took while reading, write an argument essay taking a precise position on an issue concerning the post or the work of a Poet Laureate. Brainstorm and draft your essay today.

Day 8 Directions:

Revise and finalize your essay today.

While you write:

- Create a claim for your argument by making a:
 - **Claim of FACT** – Concerns matters that in theory could be described and verified. For example: *Al Gore received more popular votes in the 2000 election*. In theory there should be one correct answer, but in actuality one could argue that there is not one right answer and that we may never know the answer. (What counts as a popular vote? What were the error rates?) OR
 - **Claim of DEFINITION** – Deals with meaning and interpretation. *Capital Punishment is Murder* some would say, but how do we understand the meaning of the word murder? OR
 - **Claim of VALUE** – Concerns judgment – like if something is right or wrong, good or evil, beautiful or ugly, satisfactory or unsatisfactory. *It is wrong to expect professional athletes to be role models*. (Sometimes claims of value have to do with something being more important than something else). OR
 - **Claim of POLICY** – Involves action and what should be done about a given situation. These claims usually contain the word should or ought and often deal with the future. Policy claims deal with the question: *What should you do?*
- Create supporting reasons for your claim by crafting two or three reasons that reveal why your claim is true and organize the supporting reasons logically. Use varied evidence from the texts that you read on Day 3 to prove each of your supporting reasons.
- Attend fairly to both the claim and opposing views. You might create a separate section of your essay to consider opposing views or you might weave the opposing view(s) into your consideration of each supporting reason.
- Provide an introduction that establishes the context of the essay and a conclusion that follows from the argument presented.
- Use a formal writing style. Use transitions to reveal the relationships between claim(s), counterclaims(s), reasons and evidence.

Explanation of types of claims is excerpted from *Writing to Persuade* by Karen Caine, Heinemann.



Days 9 & 10

Independent Reading

Directions:

Read a book of your choosing. Write the title and author below.

** A note to parents and guardians: Talk with your children about the books they are reading.*

If you would like an e-book, go to <https://www.nypl.org/books-music-movies/ebookcentral>

Title: _____

Author: _____

While Reading:

Jot down your ideas about what you're reading.

After Reading:

After reading several of the next chapters in your book...

For Fiction: write a one page response analyzing the characters, and their motivations. Consider the conflict, setting, relationships of characters and any other significant details that you find important.

For Non-Fiction: write a one page explaining what you learned and how it confirmed, challenged or changed your thinking today. Tell your reader how you became smarter about that topic.