

Poetry Slam

Due Thursday, May 21

Compose and submit an original poem. It must be a minimum of 4-5 stanzas containing at least 4 lines (or if you choose free verse, let's say a poem of at least 16 lines or 150 well-chosen and insightful words. It should contain strong diction, at least three examples of figurative language, vivid images and be based on one of the following themes:

- ✓ Love/Emotions
- ✓ Death
- ✓ Animal/Nature
- ✓ Social Commentary/Satire (poverty, prejudice, abuse, war, etc.)
- ✓ Dreams/Goals

In order to demonstrate the Speaking and Listening requirements of this course, a Poetry Slam will be held. The purpose of a Poetry Slam is to provide an opportunity for reading original poetry to an audience, using your best emotional voice and gesturing. All students are required to recite (hopefully from memory) poems to the crowd. Each student shall be marked on his/her performance (rubric on reverse). After each student performs his/her poem, good copies (informal cover pages) shall be turned over to Coffin for assessment (rubric on reverse).

Music as Poetry Analysis

Due Friday, May 22

This assignment asks you to find a well-written song that you like and take it apart as a poem. Although almost any song can be viewed as poetry, some are better than others, since they contain more of the poetry elements. Please make sure you choose a song which contains a lot of these poetry elements as it will make this assignment easier. You may complete this activity in whichever style most appeals to you. No matter what style you choose, you must either provide the lyrics on paper or mp3 (if you do a PowerPoint show, for example).

The Structure

Section One - Introduction

This paragraph will let us know the name of your song and the person who wrote it. You should also try to find out why it was written, based on what you can find out about the singer/song writer (providing context). You should also add a line or so telling the reader why it is an important song to know about.

Section Two - First Poetry Element/Literary Device

This section outlines the most effective technique that the songwriter uses to create imagery or effect in this song. Look at all the notes you made when chopping through your song and decide on one you would like to examine. Remember to indicate in which verse and line the technique can be found, and quote it.

Example:

The most effective technique that Bob Dylan uses in "Masters of War" is that of repetition. By repeatedly using the words "You that...", Dylan creates the image that he is speaking directly to these 'Masters' as he levels his accusations. A great example of this technique can be found in the first verse:

*Come you Master of War
You that build all the guns
You that build the death beds
You that build all the bombs
You that hide behind walls
You that hide behind desks
I just want you to know I can see through your masks.*

As this is the introductory verse, it becomes clear to the listener that, although this is a song for everybody, it is certainly directed to a specific audience.

All rubrics listed on reverse:

- ✧ Poetry Slam Oral Presentation Rubric
- ✧ Original Poetry Rubric
- ✧ Music as Poetry Rubric

Section Three - Second Poetry Element/Literary Device

Basically the same as Section Two - find and outline a second, effective literary technique.

Section Four - Other Elements

In this section, you mention other effective literary devices, word choices, or structural techniques used by your singer/song writer. Another topic to explore is the overall tone or mood of the song and how these literary devices contribute to it. You may even want to discuss how the music plays a role in connection with the lyrics.

Section Five - Conclusion

Discuss what effect your song has had in society - many songs are reminders of a time on our history. If your song doesn't have this worldly significance, maybe you could outline its importance in your life or the lives of your friends and family. Remember you chose this song for a reason.

The goals of this assignment is to have you: a) take apart a poem that you have chosen, and b) organize your writing into distinctive sections. If you have different ideas for this piece that you would like to discuss, please see Coffin.

Good luck...this assignment is short, yet complex. But you wouldn't have received it if you couldn't do it.

Specifics

- ✓ May be completed as essays or presentations.
- ✓ Formal cover pages or title slides required.
- ✓ Use terms that we have discussed that relate to poetry analysis and the poetry elements.
- ✓ Make personal connections to the song.
- ✓ Make original insights by reading between the lines.
- ✓ Include points about the artist's life and time period that may be important to the message in your essay.
- ✓ Should be approximately 750 words.
- ✓ Copies of songs (on paper or mp3) must be provided.

Music as Poetry Analysis Assessment

MRHS English - Music as Poetry Rubric

Remember, you were instructed to study this rubric before you chose your song to make sure you can satisfy each of the categories below. If you cannot reveal information to satisfy each of these categories, then you may have chosen unwisely. When you look at your song, you should be able to discover information for each category listed below AND you should be able to support any notions with actual evidence from the song itself.

Whether it was accomplished as a written composition or a multimedia presentation, the following criteria must be satisfied:

4 = Outstanding 3 = Strong 2 = Adequate 1 = Weak

Content and Subject Matter

Interpretation of the work is accurate and well argued; avoids summary and comments critically.

Introduction, context, subject matter, title, and purpose title have been identified and explored.

The first analysis and commentary of the poetry elements contained in the song has been explored effectively.

The second analysis and commentary of the poetry elements contained in the song has been explored effectively.

Other present poetry elements are explored and discussed, including mood, tone, diction, structure, music and lyrics.

Support

All figures of speech and images are identified and explained within the context of the poem for clarity and understanding.

Lines/phrases are used to develop the interpretation of the work/support assertions, not to summarize.

Conclusion and Evaluation

The evaluation of a poem is a final summing up of the critical reader's thoughts about the poem.

Evaluation offers a judgement about the poem's relevance to our own time, and relevance to the reader.

Organization, Writing Style, and Mechanics

The paper has a strong and sophisticated style. If not, the paper may include the following stylistic issues:

- ❖ wordiness or repetition
- ❖ sentence structure
- ❖ weak verb structures (overuse of be verbs)
- ❖ informal tone and diction.

The paper is free of grammatical errors. If not, the paper may include the following grammatical issues:

- ❖ spelling or typographical errors
- ❖ verb errors/tense shifts
- ❖ comma splices/sentence boundary problems
- ❖ sentence fragments.

Guidelines: points will be taken off if students do not follow instructions carefully (like not including a copy of the song, etc)

Total Score: /44

Poetry Slam & Personal Poem Assessment

MRHS English - Poetry Slam Oral Presentation Rubric

Poetry slam presentations allow students to read their own poems with emotion, gestures, body language, facial expressions. Typically, the poet will have his/her poem memorized and be able to deliver it without the use of prepared notes. Think of any concert you've been to: do the lead singers need to look off sheet music? Not if the concert is any good!

| Categories & Criteria | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|-----|
| <u>Eye Contact</u> Addressing the audience directly. Not simply reading. | | | | |
| <u>Verbal Cues</u> Tone of voice, pace of delivery, volume, pauses for effect. | | | | |
| <u>Non-Verbal Cues</u> Gestures, facial expression, body language. | | | | |
| <u>Enthusiasm</u> Positive energy, speaking in animated tones, no monotone. | | | | |
| <u>Planning/Preparation</u> Showing rehearsal and practice. Planning is very evident. | | | | |
| <u>Overall Impression</u> Was the slam successful? Was the performance worthy? | | | | |
| <u>Pauses & Prompts</u> Points deducted for long pauses to remember and/or prompts needed. | | | | |
| Poetry Assessment Sub-Total | | | | /24 |

MRHS English - Original Poetry Rubric

After you present your poem in the poetry slam, you will submit a good copy of the poem for a poetry assessment. Before writing your poem, make sure you look at the criteria listed below to ensure you have satisfied all the poetry elements.

| Categories & Criteria | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|---|---|---|-----|
| <u>Subject and Theme</u> Is the focus on the subject throughout poem? In other words, does the focus of the poem remain consistent throughout? | | | | |
| <u>Poetry Elements 1 (Sensory Details)</u> Do sensory details and figurative language create vivid images that contribute significantly to the meaning of poem? | | | | |
| <u>Poetry Elements 2 (Diction)</u> Is word choice vivid and exact throughout the poem? Try to avoid mundane choices. Stay away from the regular ones. | | | | |
| <u>Organization</u> Is the form of the poem appropriate to the subject. Is it organized clearly to ensure easy reading? | | | | |
| <u>Presentation</u> Does the poem show evidence of exceptional/insightful care and planning? Does it resemble a rush job? | | | | |
| <u>Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, and Spelling</u> Are there no intentional errors in mechanics, usage, grammar, and/or spelling? | | | | |
| <u>Overall Impact</u> Does the poem incite the senses and make the reader think about the subject in new/different ways? | | | | |
| <u>Coffin Caliber</u> Does this poem represent the best work of the student? Have Coffin's high standards been met/exceeded? | | | | |
| Poetry Assessment Sub-Total | | | | /32 |