Poetry Group Project

Goal: to complete a deep reading of a chosen poem, learn about the author’s life and time period, create questions for engagement, and then lead the class in discussion about the poem.

Process:

You’ll choose your group of four. You’ll have Thursday and Friday to complete the work in class. All other work needs to be completed outside of class. All people in the group are expected to work and lead the class equally.

Product:

You will complete an informative handout about the author and his/her time period in literature.

Components of the Handout:

1. Author biography: Your focus for the author biography will be information that helps the reader to better understand the author’s craft, decisions to write, etc. Remember that you’re going to probably find a lot of information about the author—zone in on and share the most pertinent, that which helps us to better understand why/how he/she came to be a writer, events that affected/influenced his/her writing career, information about his/her ideology as it bleeds into his/her work, the affect that the author has had on poetry or literature in general, etc. Points will be taken off for information that has nothing to do with the aforementioned topics.
2. Information about the author’s writing style –how is it characterized?
3. Information about the author’s literary period (which may cross borders—a writer may be a part of the Romanticism movement but writing in a style leaning more toward Realism, for example). This is where you will explain some of the tenets of the author’s literary period—if you have Walt Whitman, for example, you will zone on tenets of Romanticism) Focus in on tenets that help us especially to gain a new appreciation of the poem.
4. All URLs where you got information should be noted at the bottom of the handout.
5. Questions about the poem that you will use to engage the class with discussion
6. The poem itself should be handed out in hard copy form. If you don’t have room on your handout, put it on a separate piece of paper. (Don’t choose a poem that is so long that you can’t fit it onto a piece of paper!)

25 points

You will also lead discussion about the poem and, afterwards, share any insights that you as a group had about the poem that were not discussed. Every group member leads a part of the discussion.

1. You should have at least five questions for group discussion
2. At least two questions concerning literary devices within the poem/how they create meaning – only one of these questions may focus on imagery, similes, or metaphors. Zone in on other literary devices within the piece.
3. At least one question focused on author ideology/biography as we may be able to apply it to the poem.
4. At least one question concerning theme or tension

25 points

Finally, you will turn in a written analysis of the poem to me from your group—your analysis should be at least a page long and articulate what you believe is the meaning of the poem and how that meaning is created—you should have at least two main points to explore (but this is NOT a five paragraph essay). This analysis should be in Times New Roman, 12 point font. It should highlight grammatical perfection and utilize evidence from the poem as proof to support your ideas concerning meaning.

25 points

Literary Periods your author/poem may fall into:

Native American (before 1600)

Puritan or Colonial

Revolutionary, Age of Reason, Enlightenment

Romanticism, American Gothic, Dark Romanticism

Transcendentalism

Realism, Naturalism, Regionalism (Local Color)

Modernism (also-- Lost Generation and Harlem Renaissance)

Beat Generation

Post-Modernism