

English 12: British Literature and Composition

Poetry Out Loud explication and recitation assignment

You are preparing for the national Poetry Out Loud competition. To get ready, you need to first choose one poem about love or some type of relationship by a British or Commonwealth author from the Poetry Out Loud list. You will write an explication of the poem as well as recite it for the class. The winner from each class will compete in the school competition on 10 February 2010.

Necessary elements of a poetry explication:

- Clearly state the theme of the poem early in your explication.
- Remember that your task is to explain what the poem means and how it means.
- Explain how the theme is developed through literary devices and the poem's structure (if applicable) with multiple, specific examples from the text in each paragraph.
- Do not write one giant paragraph. Organize your ideas so that each paragraph is unified around a specific idea and so that each paragraph leads logically to the next.
- Only discuss literary elements that enhance the meaning of the poem.
- Do not mention literary devices and then fail to explain them with supporting evidence.
- End your explication with a conclusion that suggests what this poem teaches you about humanity.

Assessment Rubric for explication (75 points possible per poem):

1. Stimulating Ideas (30 points)
addresses a single poem, focuses on theme of poem; contains supporting details and examples from poem; maintains a clear and consistent view from start to finish
2. Logical Organization (10 points)
includes an effective beginning, strong supporting details, and a convincing conclusion; presents information in paragraphs that are unified by idea; provides effective transitions between ideas and paragraphs
3. Engaging Voice (5 points)
speaks in a convincing and knowledgeable way to the audience; shows that the writer clearly understands the poem
4. Original Word Choice (15 points)
explains or defines relevant literary terms; chooses diction that is precise and vivid
5. Effective Sentence Style (5 points)
uses a variety of sentence types
6. Correctness (10 points)
observes the rules of grammar, spelling, and punctuation; reveals effective proofreading; adheres to MLA format

Assessment Rubric for recitation (75 points possible):

- Accuracy (25 points)
reciting the exact words with correct pronunciation and in proper order
- Fluency and pace (20 points)
reciting at appropriate speed; speaking without pausing or being prompted
- Delivery (20 points)
using appropriate volume, body language, and gestures while maintaining eye contact with audience
- Understanding (10 points)
conveying the theme and revealing meaning of the poem

Memorization Tips:

- Rewrite the poem by hand over and over. Each time, try to write more and more of it from memory.
- Read your poem aloud before going to sleep at night and repeat it when you wake up.
- Carry around a copy of your poem with you all day. You'll find several moments throughout the day to reread it or recite it.
- Practice your poem aloud by reading and reciting to family and friends.
- Rehearse with a partner who checks your accuracy.
- Recite your poem in the mirror, working on gestures, pace, and body language.