

## **English 12: British Literature and Composition**

### **Sonnet Explication assignment**

#### Task:

You are a tutor for a tenth-grade student who is learning about sonnets in her English class. In order to help this confused student understand sonnets and realize that sonnets are not simply sappy love poems, you need to choose a nontraditional sonnet and write an explication essay of it to help the student understand its theme and realize that the structure and literary devices in the sonnet reinforce the theme.

#### Necessary elements of a poetry explication:

- Clearly state the theme of the sonnet early in your explication.
- Explain how the theme is developed through literary devices and the sonnet's structure with 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 sonnet teaches you and your tenth-grade student about humanity.

#### Assessment rubric:

1. Stimulating Ideas (35 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 (20 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 (10 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