

AP English 12 Literature and Composition

Explication assignment:

You are preparing for the national Poetry Out Loud competition, for which you will recite two poems, one of 25 or fewer lines and one written before the twentieth century. Choose your two poems and clearly explain the meaning of each in separate essays.

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 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:

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 (10 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

Recitation *bonus* element:

You are competing in the national Poetry Out Loud competition, for which you must prepare two poems, one of 25 or fewer lines and one written before the twentieth century. You will recite one poem for the class.

Assessment Rubric:

- Fluency and pace (15 points)
reciting at appropriate speed; speaking without pausing or being prompted
- Accuracy (15 points)
reciting the exact words with correct pronunciation and in proper order
- Delivery (15 points)
using appropriate volume, body language, and gestures while maintaining eye contact with audience
- Understanding (15 points)
conveying the theme and revealing meaning of the sonnet

Memorization Tips:

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