Name: Date:

**Directions:** After reading poem background and the actual poem, please complete the following steps on a separate sheet of white-lined paper.

**Poem Background:** “Invictus” is a [lyric](http://www.cummingsstudyguides.net/xLitTerms.html) poem written in four quatrains (four-line stanzas). William Ernest Henley wrote it in 1875 but did not publish it until 1892 in a collection entitled *Echoes*. “Invictus” is Latin for unconquerable, invincible, undefeated. It is said that this was written as a demonstration of his resilience following the amputation of his foot due to tubercular infection. Unfortunately, not many poetry enthusiasts regard it as an inspiring work, however, Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela both recited from it to stir their listeners. Nevertheless, many critics ridicule the poem as mediocre at best, and most modern anthologies refuse to admit it to their pages. One reason for the snubbing is the poem's seemingly melodramatic tone, like that of a windy politician declaiming from a soapbox. Another reason is its singsong versification.

“Invictus”

William Ernest Henley

 Out of the night that covers me,

 Black as the Pit from pole to pole,

 I thank whatever gods may be

 For my unconquerable soul.

 In the fell clutch of circumstance

 I have not winced nor cried aloud.

 Under the bludgeonings of chance

 My head is bloody, but unbowed.

 Beyond this place of wrath and tears

 Looms but the horror of the shade,

 And yet the menace of the years

 Finds, and shall find me, unafraid.

 It matters not how straight the gait,

 How charged with punishments the scroll,

 I am the master of my fate;

 I am the captain of my soul.

1. Highlight and label any examples of figurative language.
2. Discuss the poem’s tone using your tone notes
3. Discuss how this poem relates to *Anthem.* Explain your answer using an example from the novel.
4. Write two theme words and a one-sentence theme statement that would best describe the poem.