Name: Date:

**Freshman Poetry Unit**

**Reading & Understanding a Poem: The Process**

1. **Pre-Reading**

* Actively read any introductory material that might precede the poem.
* Read the title of the poem. Write the word *title* next to it.
* Think about what the poem might be about. Write a comment and/or question next to the title.
* Find the poet’s name. Write the word *poet* next to it.
* If the poem is broken into stanzas, identify and bracket the stanzas. Write the word stanza next to each bracket. **Note:** A stanza is an arrangement of a certain number of lines, usually four or more, sometimes having a fixed length, meter, or rhyme scheme, forming a division of a poem.
* Number each line of the poem.
* If the poem has a rhyme scheme, identify and letter the rhyme scheme of the poem.

1. **During Reading**
2. **Read the poem to yourself and aloud to others.**

It is important to “hear” the poem, for oftentimes the phrasing and sound of a poem can help you unlock its meaning.

1. **Unfamiliar vocabulary**

Identify and carefully define all unfamiliar vocabulary words in the poem. Don’t overlook key words in the title.

1. **Visualize the Poem**

Paying close attention to the language of the poem, draw a picture (or series of pictures) of the situation or experience that the poem presents. Label the details of your drawing.

1. **Plain Sense**

Relate, line by line, what is going on in the poem. When doing this, change the original language of the poem into a simpler language.

1. **Figurative Language**

Look for any figurative language, label any you find, and explain the example. Please use the notes in class to identify the figurative language.

1. **Tone**

Tone is the speaker’s attitude toward his or her subject. Use your tone handout to determine the tone the speaker has toward his/her subject. Support your choice of tone with examples from the poem. Make sure you define the tone you have chosen and explain how particular words, phrases, and/or lines from the poem demonstrate that tone.

1. **Post-Reading**

**Drawing Conclusions**

1. What two values are presented in the poem? What does the speaker seem to value most? Support your choices with evidence from the poem.
2. What theme does the poem convey? **Remember:** A theme is a statement about how life and/or people are, as opposed to how they should be. Write down two theme words gleaned from the poem, support your theme words with evidence from the poem, and write a theme statement.
3. **Guidelines for the Oral Presentation**

* Students will be placed into assigned groups.
* Students will be given one poem to learn following the aforementioned steps, or letters A-C.
* Once the process has been completed, students will prepare a Power Point and aesthetically pleasing poster prior to their oral presentation.

1. **Additional Activities & Follow-up**
2. Before working in small assigned groups, students will learn one poem from a whole class teaching of it. We will follow the guidelines detailed in letters A-C.
3. Students watching presentations will be required to take notes on each presentation.
4. Once students have taken notes on and been taught all the poems, they may be required to write a personal essay on one of the poems they themselves did not teach or write a full explication of a poem they did not teach.