



# POETRY ANNOTATION

HOW TO AND WHY

# WHAT DOES ANNOTATE MEAN?

- ▶ It is a fancy way of saying “take notes”.
- ▶ A well-annotated poem should be highlighted and have notes written everywhere.

# WHY DO I NEED TO ANNOTATE A POEM?

- ▶ To help really, REALLY understand the deeper meaning of a poem
- ▶ Every time you read a poem, you can see details you didn't see the first time.
- ▶ Every word and punctuation mark are chosen deliberately by the poet.

# HOW DO I ANNOTATE A POEM?

- ▶ Step 1: Read the title of the poem
- ▶ *What questions do you have based on the title?*
- ▶ *What might be the meaning of the title?*

# HOW DO I ANNOTATE A POEM?

- ▶ Step 2: Read the poem twice. Aloud if you can. (Yes, I said twice)



# HOW DO I ANNOTATE A POEM?

- ▶ Step 2: Read the poem twice. Aloud if you can. (Yes, I said twice)
- ▶ Step 3: Jot down any questions you may have about the poem – no matter how trivial or silly they may seem.

# HOW DO I ANNOTATE A POEM?

- ▶ Step 4: Define all unknown or partially-known words. Also, look up words that are familiar but perhaps used in a different context.

# HOW DO I ANNOTATE A POEM?

- ▶ Step 5: Now, read the poem again with the words defined.
- ▶ *Does it make more sense now?*
- ▶ *This is the literal meaning of the poem.*



# HOW DO I ANNOTATE A POEM?

- ▶ Step 6: Look up any people or places (or other Capitalized words) referred to in the poem.

# HOW DO I ANNOTATE A POEM?

- ▶ Step 7: Look for tone words; Is there a pattern? Does the pattern change?

# HOW DO I ANNOTATE A POEM?

- ▶ Step 7: Look for tone words; Is there a pattern? Does the pattern change?
- ▶ Step 8: Look for interesting phrases
- ▶ *Is there a pattern in the wording?*
- ▶ *Do they relate to any of the notes you have “scribbled” in the margins?*

# HOW DO I ANNOTATE A POEM?

- ▶ Step 9: Look for literary devices (such as personification, symbolism, metaphors, etc.)
- ▶ *Think about why the poet used these.*
- ▶ *What effect does it have on the poem?*

# HOW DO I ANNOTATE A POEM?

- ▶ Step 10: Read the poem again. Then read all your notes and “scribble scrabble”.
- ▶ *NOW, does it make sense?*
- ▶ *If not, start over at Step 1*



# HOW DO I ANNOTATE A POEM?

- ▶ Step 11: Think about the meaning of the poem. What is the poet saying about “life in general”? What lesson can be learned from the poem?
- ▶ *This is the THEME.*

# HOW DO I ANNOTATE A POEM?

1. Title
2. Read poem aloud...twice
3. Questions?
4. Define unknown words
5. Read again...literal meaning
6. Define people/places/Capitalized words
7. Tone
8. Interesting phrases?
9. Find literary devices
10. Read again...figurative meaning
11. Theme – Lesson learned?