



# Steps to Close Reading

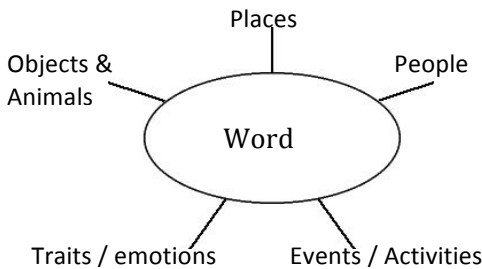
Toolkit # \_\_\_\_\_

Understanding a poem or passage in literature requires **multiple readings** and close study to discover the many layers of meaning. It's like looking at the text through a magnifying glass the same way a detective does in search of small clues for meaning. Here are the steps you take.

- Context** (if the passage is part of a longer text)
  - Identify the speaker, setting & situation (what has just occurred). This requires reading several pages before the scene begins.
- Box names** and references to people and **label** who they are and what is known about them especially **the speaker**. This includes pronouns like I, we, they, him/her, us, them, etc.
- Definitions:** circle and write down the definitions of at least 2 words you don't know **or** words that are interesting and seem important.
- Summary:** Write a one-sentence summary that captures the overall meaning about what is happening in the passage/ poem.

## 5. Identify & **EXPLAIN** three **Stylistic Devices**

\*Makes sure you draw a line to the specific part of the text you are talking about



- Connotations:** Choose 3 key words in the text connected to the stylistic devices and brainstorm people, objects, places,

## 7. **Tone:**

- What is the speaker or author's attitude about the topic(s) he/she is writing about?
- Note where any shifts or changes in the tone occur.

See Back 

- Topics:** name 3 major topics the text is **MOSTLY** about (ex: friendship, education, injustice, etc.).

## 9. **Theme** – What message is being suggested about people and life outside the text?

Example: \***TIP:** Look for a connection between two or more of the topics you identified above

- **Cruelty** can often have a tremendous effect on **identity**, causing those affected by it to become cruel themselves.

# Tone = Author's attitude

Positive Tone Words		Neutral Tone Words	Negative Tone Words	
Admiring	Inspirational	Casual	Accusatory	Haunting
Adoring	Interested	Candid	Ambiguous	Hopeless
Affectionate	Introspective	Contemplative	Ambivalent	Hostile
Amused	Jovial	Direct	Angry	Heartbroken
Appreciative	Joyful	Impartial	Annoyed	Impatient
Approving	Light	Indirect	Antagonistic	Incredulous
Calm	Lively	Informative	Anxious	Indifferent
Celebratory	Loving	Matter of Fact	Apathetic	Insecure
Cheerful	Modest	Meditative	Appalled	Irreverent
Comforting	Nostalgic	Objective	Apprehensive	Jaded
Comic	Optimistic	Questioning	Alarmed	Judgmental
Compassionate	Passionate	Speculative	Bewildered	Lethargic
Complimentary	Placid	Understated	Biting	Melancholy
Confident	Playful		Bitter	Mischievous
Content	Poignant		Blunt	Miserable
Curious	Proud		Boastful / Bragging	Mocking
Delightful	Reassuring		Bossy	Mournful
Determined	Reflective		Cold	Nervous
Earnest	Relaxed		Conceited	Ominous
Ecstatic	Respectful		Concerned	Outraged
Elated	Reverent		Condescending	Paranoid
Empathetic	Romantic		Confused	Patronizing
Encouraging	Scholarly		Critical	Pessimistic
Excited	Self-assured		Cynical	Pretentious
Exhilarated	Sentimental		Dark	Psychotic
Friendly	Serene		Defiant	Rebellious
Funny	Silly		Demanding	Resigned
Gleeful	Sincere		Depressed	Sad
Gushy	Soothing		Derogatory	Sarcastic
Happy	Sympathetic		Despairing	Scornful
Hilarious	Tender		Desperate	Secretive
Hopeful	Tranquil		Detached	Selfish
Humorous	Warm		Disappointed	Serious
Humble	Whimsical		Disapproving	Severe
	Worshipful		Disgusted	Shocked
			Disrespectful	Sinister
			Doubtful	Skeptical
			Embarrassed	Solemn
			Enraged	Somber
			Fearful	Suspicious
			Foolish	Tense
			Forceful	Threatening
			Foreboding	Tired
			Frantic	Tragic
			Frightened	Uncertain
			Frustrated	Unconcerned
			Furious	Uneasy
			Gloomy	Unsympathetic
			Greedy	Upset
			Grim	Urgent
			Harsh	Vengeful
			Haughty	Violent

