

## Analyzing Poetry Notes: TP-CASTT

1. **Title** Examine the **title** before reading the poem. Write down your **first reaction** or thought(s) after you read the title.
2. **Paraphrase** Translate, literally, the poem into your **own words**. **Resist the urge to jump to interpretation**. A failure to understand what happens on a literal level usually leads to a misunderstanding of the interpretive level.
3. **Connotation** Examine the poem for **meaning** beyond the literal.  
Look for:
  - Diction (word choice). Make a list of words that catch your attention & look for patterns among them.
  - Figurative Language (especially metaphors, similes, & personification).
  - Imagery (language that appeals to the senses).
  - Symbolism.
  - Irony (verbal, situational, or dramatic).
  - Allusions.
  - Effect of sound devices (alliteration, assonance, consonance, rhyme, onomatopoeia).
4. **Attitude/tone** Examine both the speaker's and the poet's **attitudes**. Remember, don't confuse the author with the speaker.  
Look for:
  - Speaker's attitude toward self, other characters, and the subject.
  - Poet's attitude toward speaker, other characters, subject, and finally toward the reader.
5. **Structure** Note the effect of the **appearance** on meaning. Look for shifts in speaker and attitudes.
6. **Title** Examine the **title** again, this time on an interpretive level.
7. **Theme** First list what the poem is about (subjects); then determine what the poet is saying about each of those subjects (theme). Remember, **theme** must be expressed as a complete sentence.