

Points to Consider in Writing an Explication

adapted from a now defunct website http://www.hancock.cc.ca.us/peopledir/fac_pages/bisaac/explication.html

INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH

- ❑ might include a brief paraphrase of poem or this poem is a about statement
- ❑ includes a clear thesis—point, purpose, message, or meaning of the poem

SUPPORTING PARAGRAPHS

- ❑ take your reader through the poem depending on the organizational structure of the poem. Let the organization of the poem help you organize your own essay.
 - line by line
 - sentence by sentence
 - stanza by stanza
- ❑ Use the following points to help you generate ideas
 - Define the Situation
 - who is speaking?
 - to whom?
 - what is the situation?
 - what does the title suggestion?
 - is there more than one speaker?
 - Identify and Speculate on the Difficult Portions of the Poem
 - what words, phrases or lines are troubling or difficult?
 - what possible meanings do you see in them?
 - Speculate about Possible Meanings and Foci of the Poems
 - overall what is the focus of the poem?
 - what do we take away from the poem?
 - what is the mood of the poem?
 - what is the tone of the poem?
 - Explore the language and poetic devices of the poem
 - how does diction (word choice) affect the message?
 - how does syntax (sentence structure) affect the message?
 - how does imagery and sensory language affect the message?
 - how does figurative language affect the message?
 - how does the sound of the words affect the message?
 - how does the connotation affect the message?
 - how does the use of line breaks affect the message?

CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH

- ❑ Draw conclusions concerning the overall meaning of the poem
- ❑ Discuss what this poem leaves its reader
- ❑ Discuss the dominant impression of the poem