

Name: _____ Date: _____

Poetry Analysis Sheet

For this project you will read and analyze a poem written by a Latino poet. The following instructions will help you uncover the meaning of the poem.

1. What does the title mean?

Take a look at the title and reflect on what it means: _____

(You will need this for the introductory paragraph.)

2. Put it in your own words

Read the poem two or three times. You will see something different each time you read the poem. Write a brief summary of the poem in your own words. Highlight or list some of the words (nouns, verbs, phrases) that are important to understanding the poem.

3. What do you think the poem means?

Now think about the meaning of the poem, not just the obvious meaning of each word but what they mean beyond the literal. Do these words suggest something else?

Answer these questions:

- Who is the subject of the poem? _____
- What are they talking about? _____
- Why do you think the author wrote the poem? _____
- When is the poem happening? _____
- Where is the poem happening? _____
- What is the poet's attitude? _____
- How does the poem shift from person to person or between different times or places? _____

Most poems tell us about a poet's understanding of an experience so the beginning will be different than the end. The change may be in feelings, language (slang to formal), or connotation (positive to negative). Explain how these shifts convey the poem's message.

continued

Poetry Analysis Sheet (continued)

4. Poetic devices: Tools of the poet

Identify different poetic devices and how they convey the poem's message.

- *Simile* – comparison using like or as _____
- *Metaphor* – a direct comparison _____
- *Personification* – giving human qualities to nonhuman things _____
- *Tone* – what emotion does the speaker use as he talks _____
- *Point of view* – who is the telling the poem _____
- *Imagery* – creating pictures with words _____
- *Alliteration* – repeating the same letter _____

5. Theme

Identify the theme (central idea) of the poem. How does the theme convey the poem's message?

6. Look at the title again

Now look at the title again. Do you now have a different interpretation of the title?

7. Begin writing your analysis

Start with the introductory paragraph. It should contain the title, the author, and an explanation of the writer's position as well as the significance of the title. Include a brief overall statement of the meaning of the poem. This will lead you into the body of the analysis. In the body of the analysis, discuss how the poem was written, which poetic devices were used, the tone, the poet's attitude, and the shift of the poem from the beginning to the poet's ultimate understanding of the experience in the end. Add your interpretation of the poem.

8. Historical and cultural context

Integrate the research you have done on your author into your poetry analysis. Explain how the author's history and culture have influenced the poem.

List two important experiences that influenced the author:

1. _____
2. _____

List two conditions in the author's country that influenced his/her life (poverty, political unrest, war, lack of opportunities, social constraints especially for women):

1. _____
2. _____