

Directions: Read the poems provided and take notes on them as you read. Complete the following TPCASTT form about ONE of the following poems.

TP-CASTT : A Method for Poetry Analysis

<p>TITLE—Examine the title before reading the poem. Consider the various connotations of this title.</p>	
<p>PARAPHRASE—Translate the poem into your own words (literal/denotation). Resist the urge to jump to interpretation. A failure to understand what happens literally, inevitably leads to an interpretive misunderstanding.</p>	
<p>CONNOTATION—Examine the poem for meaning beyond the literal level. Look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diction • Imagery (especially metaphor, simile, personification) • Symbolism • Irony—paradox, understatement, oxymoron • Allusions • Effect of sound devices (alliteration, onomatopoeia, assonance, consonance, rhyme) 	
<p>ATTITUDE—tone; Examine both the speaker’s and the poet’s attitudes. Remember, don’t confuse the author with the person that he or she creates in the poem. Look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaker’s attitude toward self, other characters, and the subject of the poem • Attitudes of characters other than the poem’s speaker • Poet’s attitude toward speaker, other characters, subject, and finally, toward the reader 	
<p>SHIFTS—Note shifts in speaker, attitudes,</p>	

<p>rhetorical stance Look for :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Occasion of poem (time and place)• Key words (e.g. but, yet, although, for)• Punctuation (dashes, periods, colons...)• Stanza divisions• Changes in line and/or stanza length• Irony (sometimes irony hides shifts)• Effect of structure on meaning	
<p>TITLE—Examine the title again, this time on an interpretative level.</p>	
<p>THEME—First list what the poem is about (subjects); then determine what the poet is saying about each of those subjects (theme). Remember, the theme must be expressed as a complete sentence.</p>	

The Writer by [Richard Wilbur](#)

In her room at the prow of the house
Where light breaks, and the windows are tossed with linden,
My daughter is writing a story.

I pause in the stairwell, hearing
From her shut door a commotion of typewriter-keys
Like a chain hauled over a gunwale.

Young as she is, the stuff
Of her life is a great cargo, and some of it heavy:
I wish her a lucky passage.

But now it is she who pauses,
As if to reject my thought and its easy figure.
A stillness greatens, in which

The whole house seems to be thinking,
And then she is at it again with a bunched clamor
Of strokes, and again is silent.

I remember the dazed starling
Which was trapped in that very room, two years ago;
How we stole in, lifted a sash

And retreated, not to affright it;
And how for a helpless hour, through the crack of the door,
We watched the sleek, wild, dark

And iridescent creature
Batter against the brilliance, drop like a glove
To the hard floor, or the desk-top,

And wait then, humped and bloody,
For the wits to try it again; and how our spirits
Rose when, suddenly sure,

It lifted off from a chair-back,
Beating a smooth course for the right window
And clearing the sill of the world.

It is always a matter, my darling,
Of life or death, as I had forgotten. I wish
What I wished you before, but harder.

The Hand by [Mary Ruefle](#)

The teacher asks a question.

You know the answer, you suspect
you are the only one in the classroom
who knows the answer, because the person
in question is yourself, and on that
you are the greatest living authority,
but you don't raise your hand.

You raise the top of your desk
and take out an apple.

You look out the window.

You don't raise your hand and there is
some essential beauty in your fingers,
which aren't even drumming, but lie
flat and peaceful.

The teacher repeats the question.

Outside the window, on an overhanging
branch,

a robin is ruffling its feathers
and spring is in the air.