

Steps to follow when reading a poem....

- 1) First reading. Read the poem out loud; making mistakes is ok. Be sure to look up any words or references you don't understand.
- 2) Paraphrase the poem; put it into your own words. What is the "story" of the poem? Who is speaking in the poem? Are there characters in the poem? Is there a plot?
- 3) Figure out how the poem is put together. Are there images? Similes? Metaphors? What about sound devices (like rhyme, rhythm, alliterations, etc)? What about line length, punctuation, placement on the page (some poems actually form shapes on the page).
- 4) What is the poem's "big idea" or theme? What is the poet trying to teach you?
- 5) Now that you really understand the poem, it is time to PERFORM THE POEM