How To Write A Poetry Critique

**The following is list of items you can discuss in your poetry critique. If there is something you would like to discuss that is not on this list, please feel free to take your own route! Remember to read your poems more than once, and even out loud.**

**Opinion**

What is your opinion of the poem? Did you make any personal connections with the poem? Were there specific parts of the poem that stood out to you? Did this poem trigger any emotions?

*Remember, always explain yourself – give your readers the WHY and the HOW!*

**Subject**.

What is the poem about? Usually a poem will have a literal meaning (what is *appears* to be about) and a nonliteral meaning (the true, deeper, hidden meaning). Be sure to discuss what your poem is actually about!

**Poetic Devices**

Be sure to identify and discuss the different poetic devices, such as rhyme, alliteration, metaphors or personification. Why did the author use them, and what are their meanings within the context of the poem? Did you enjoy them and did they add meaning to the poem for you, or did they confuse you and/or distract from the poem?

**Layout and line breaks**

Some poems seem to follow a pretty simple format and do not stand out; however, many poems depend on their format and allow the reader to get a deeper meaning because of it. Think about concrete poems and diamond poems.

Consider also the decisions the writer makes when they arrange words and lines. For example, one line may have five words on it, but the following could have only one or two? If the writer put one word on a line, all to itself: why would they do this?

**Title**. Not all poems necessarily have a title, but if they do, it should add something to the piece. This is optional – some poems have titles that stand out more so than others.