

**Summer Reading, 2017**  
**World Literature (H)**  
**Mr. Murphy**

**Carefully read and follow these instructions:**

According to editor Liz Rosenberg, the poems contained in your summer reading selection (all were of her original choosing in the book *Earth Shattering Poems*) “are some of the ways we talk to ourselves...comfort ourselves ...boast...remember...express” (xiv).

In other words, poetry, like all forms of art, contains within it the human experience. Art is us.

Of Rosenberg’s selected poems, I chose 37 poems by 28 different poets. The poets are mostly famous, anthologized poets, but the poems are not necessarily their best known works. Thus, while many of these are names you will likely encounter again in college, you may not work with these particular poems.

1.

I would like you to **begin by reading all of the poems** contained in the selection. In doing so, please take your time. Poetry’s brevity can be deceptive...just because it is “short” doesn’t mean it is “easy!” Read a few poems at a time, rather than reading all of them at once. **As you read, mark your text/record your initial reactions.**

When you have read all of the poems, **choose 10 poems** (which is about 1/3 of the total number of poems) which you feel you have more to say about, and complete an **Initial Reaction Organizer** for each (10 total).

When you return to school in the fall, I will check (and eventually collect) these.

This portion of Summer Reading is worth 30% of the Summer Reading grade.

You will **use** your Initial Reaction Organizers in a **small group discussion** activity on the **first day of school**. The small group discussion activity will be worth 10% of the Summer Reading grade.

2.

After you have read all of the poems and completed the Initial Reaction Organizers, choose **ONE** poem **which speaks to you in a particular sort of way.**

Think about my (and Rosenberg’s) initial comments above when making your choice.

Once you have made your choice, complete a 2-3 page **explication** structured as follows:

A. Begin by researching the **poet**. Find out what you can about this person’s life and work. Consider the important **historical context** of the poet’s life: where did he/she live and when? What was going on in the world which influenced the poet? Ultimately, be able to **draw some conclusions**, based on your reading, **about how the poet’s life/circumstances/world specifically entered into the poem you are writing about.** (this should NOT be simply random biographical information)

B. Explore what the poet **does** in the poem **to say about humanity/life** (in other words, what does he/she say about humanity/life and how?).

This is your analysis of the poem.

Examine **every word** (including the title!). Why were certain words chosen?

Examine **every line**. Are there patterns? Why? What is the effect? What are the effects of lines breaking where they do, or punctuation used where/how it is? (see other suggestions in the links)

C. **Conclude** by discussing what in particular speaks to **you** in this poem. “Synthesize” you/your life and the poem. In this section, you may use first person point of view.

**Please follow the format/outline I have provided here.** For **additional** information about poetry explications and examples, you can access the following resources:

<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/poetry-explications/> (fairly detailed for the purposes of this assignment, but quite thorough, 1 sample, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill)

[https://engl.utoledo.edu/english/?page\\_id=733](https://engl.utoledo.edu/english/?page_id=733) (list of elements to consider and 2 samples, University of Toledo)

<http://www.unm.edu/~aobermei/Eng200/samplepapers/> (10 papers by frosh/soph. students at the University of New Mexico, posted by their professor)

### **Guidelines:**

MLA format (you should be citing the poem in parts B and C), typed, double-spaced, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, 3 paragraphs or more, academic language, carefully proofread

The poetry explication is **due** on the **first day of school** and is worth **50%** of the summer reading grade.

**\*\*Please note:** this also serves as your incoming writing sample for the course, so please make sure it represents your best efforts at thinking and writing!

3.

Finally, find a **different** poem by the **same poet** (the same poet from your poetry explication) which you consider **powerful and important** in some way—one which people need to hear for some reason.

Bring this poem with you to class on the first day and be prepared to **read** it to the class and **explain** what about it is important and why. (prepare this; do not “wing it!”)

This assignment is worth **10%** of the Summer Reading grade.



## Poetry Explication Rubric

	<b>A Excellent</b>	<b>B Above Average</b>	<b>C Average</b>	<b>D Below Average</b>	<b>F Poor/INC</b>
<b>Part A. Context: Poet, History, etc.</b>	Makes thorough and explicit connections between poet's life/historical context and poem; informs deep understanding of poem; very well-developed  <b>25 24 23</b>	Makes several connections between poet's life/historical context and poem; informs understanding of poem; well-developed  <b>22 21 20</b>	Makes some connections btwn. poet/context and poem; does not contribute much to understanding of poem; moderate developmnt.  <b>19 18</b>	Makes few connections btwn. poet/context and poem; mostly random details; contributes little to understanding of poem; underdeveloped  <b>17 16 15</b>	Makes no connections btwn. poet/context and poem; all random details; does not contribute to understanding of poem; very underdeveloped  <b>10 5 0</b>
<b>Part B. Analysis: What poem says about humanity and how</b>	Fully explores everything poet does and how meaning is generated; insightful and original; very well-supported  <b>25 24 23</b>	Explores nearly everything poet does and how meaning is generated; some insight; well-supported  <b>22 21 20</b>	Explores some of what poet does and how meaning is generated; basic; support somewhat lacking  <b>19 18</b>	Explores little of what poet does or how meaning is generated; very basic; more summary than analysis; errors; support is lacking  <b>17 16 15</b>	Summarizes poem; does not explain how poet generates meaning; all summary; many errors; little or no support  <b>10 5 0</b>
<b>Part C. Synthesis: How poem connects to writer</b>	Makes deep and meaningful connections to poem; thorough and well-developed; very well-supported  <b>25 24 23</b>	Makes some meaningful connections to poem; moderately-developed; well-supported  <b>22 21 20</b>	Makes connections to poem; basic; Some support; somewhat lacking  <b>19 18</b>	Connections to poem insincere, weak, or strained; very basic; lacking support  <b>17 16 15</b>	Severely underdeveloped; does not make personal connections to poem; missing support  <b>10 5 0</b>
<b>Grammar Mechanics Language</b>	Few-no errors. Language is clear, varied, sophisticated, accurate/precise. <b>20 19 18</b>	Some errors. Language is mostly clear and somewhat varied. <b>17 16</b>	Number of errors needs improvement. Language is basic. <b>15 14</b>	High rate of error, confusing language. <b>13 12</b>	Unacceptable amount of errors; very confusing <b>10 5</b>
<b>Organization</b>	Paragraphs are logically organized to prove points.  <b>5</b>	An organizational issue or two within paragraphs but still logical overall  <b>4</b>	Several organizational issues within paragraphs; approaching difficult to follow  <b>3</b>	Paragraphs disorganized; difficult to follow  <b>2</b>	Very disorganized; paragraphs not organized to prove points; very hard to follow  <b>1</b>

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_/100

**Summer Reading, 2017  
Final Performance Rubric**

**Initial Reaction Organizers**

10 total

Graded 0-10 points each

completeness, thoughtfulness, support,  
originality, sincerity

           /100 X 30% =           

**In-Class Small Group Activity**

Using Initial Reaction Organizer

           /100 X 10% =           

**Explication**

See rubric

           /100 X 50% =           

**Additional Poem Presentation**

See Instructions

           /100 X 10% =           

**Final Grade =**