SMART™ Lesson

Literary Analysis: Poetry Analysis

Poetry is a type of literature that uses words to evoke emotions, paint pictures, and capture the essence of a moment or experience. To understand poetry, it's important to analyze it. In poetry analysis, we examine the various elements of a poem to understand how they work together to create meaning and impact.

Elements of Poetry

When analyzing a poem, there are several elements to consider:

- **Form:** The structure of the poem, including the number of lines, stanzas, and rhyme scheme.
- **Speaker:** The voice of the poem, who is "speaking" the words and their perspective.
- **Tone:** The attitude or mood conveyed by the poem.
- **Theme:** The central message or idea of the poem.
- **Figurative Language:** Language that uses words or expressions with a meaning that is different from the literal interpretation.

Questions to Ask

When analyzing a poem, ask yourself the following questions:

1. What is the form of the poem?
2. Who is the speaker and what is their perspective?
3. What is the tone of the poem?
4. What is the theme of the poem?
5. What figurative language is used in the poem? How does it contribute to the meaning and impact of the poem?

Practice

Read the following poem and answer the questions:

The tree held up the sky With branches lifted high Its roots dug deep and strong Through dirt and rock and sand.

1. What is the form of the poem?
2. Who is the speaker of the poem?
3. What is the tone of the poem?
4. What is the theme of the poem?
5. What figurative language is used in the poem?

Answers

1. The form of the poem is quatrain (a four-line stanza).
2. The speaker of the poem is not specified.
3. The tone of the poem is reverential or awe-struck.
4. The theme of the poem is the strength and stability of nature.
5. The poem uses personification (the tree holding up the sky) and metaphor (the tree's roots being described as "strong").

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