

SIMON'S 1.4 POETRY ANALYSIS

NOTE

The poem “Dreams” is for example purposes only. “Dreams” is not one of the choices for your **1.4 Poetry Analysis** assignment.

Dreams

By Langston Hughes, 1902-1967



Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.

Hughes, Langston. “Dreams.” *Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*. Ed. Arnold Rampersad. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994. 32. Print.



SIMON'S 1.4 POETRY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)

Poem	"Dreams"	
Poet	Langston Hughes	Respond below with evidence from the text (include line numbers)
Mood	<p>What mood, if any, does the poem evoke in you?</p> <p>What mood might the poet want the reader to feel?</p>	<p>The mood of the poem seems to be a bit <i>depressing</i> or <i>desperate</i>. When I read it, I feel almost like it's someone who has had his dreams die and is trying to get me to avoid the same fate. The words "broken-winged bird that cannot fly" (lines 3-4), and "a barren field" (line 7), make me feel this overwhelming sadness coming from the poem.</p>
Tone	<p>What attitude about the subject does the speaker seem to be conveying in her tone and in her words?</p>	<p>The tone or <i>attitude</i> of the speaker in the poem seems to be desperation or worry. The speaker seems desperate for the reader to understand the importance of dreams. He says, "Hold fast to dreams" (lines 1 and 5) twice to make his point, and he uses strong words like "broken" (line 3), "frozen" (line 8), and "barren" (line 7) to get across how serious he is.</p>
Personal Connection	<p>Discuss what people and events come to mind when you read this poem?</p>	<p>This poem makes me think of my brother. He always wanted to be an artist. He's really talented, but I think he felt like he needed to study something more traditional in college so he could get a good job and be able to support me. I worry he had to set his dreams aside.</p>






SIMON'S 1.4 POETRY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)

Poem's Structure	<p>Explain which of the following techniques are used in the structure of the poem to help convey key ideas and/or emotions.</p> <p>Explain how the poet arranges information to convey emotions or ideas using some or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stanzas • repetition • punctuation/lack thereof • shape of the poem's layout 	<p><i>Repetition is an important technique here. The poet tells us twice, "Hold fast to dreams" (lines 1 and 5) to emphasize his point.</i></p> <p><i>Stanzas are also used to divide up the poem into two simple sections, each one talking about what our lives will be like if we let go of our dreams.</i></p> <p><i>The first stanza deals with freedom vs. restriction and the second stanza deals with growth vs. lack of growth.</i></p>
Poem's Sounds	<p>Identify which of the following auditory devices are used in the poem to help convey key ideas and/or emotions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • alliteration • onomatopoeia • rhyme • rhythm 	<p><i>The poet uses alliteration to help set a sort of quiet, dream-like feel: "dreams die" (line 2) and "broken-winged bird" (line 3).</i></p> <p><i>The rhyming of the poem also adds to that same quiet and dreamy feel: "die/fly" (lines 2 and 4) and "go/snow" (lines 6 and 8).</i></p> <p><i>Same thing with the rhythm of the poem. It has a steady, simple beat that gives it a sort of sleepy vibe. There are four beats on most of the lines: "Hold fast to dreams/for if dreams die" (lines 1-2). But there are two lines that break the rhythm, calling even more attention to them.</i></p>
Poem's Language	<p>Explain how the poet used several of the following poetic devices to suggest ideas or emotions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allusion • hyperbole • imagery • irony • juxtaposition • metaphor • personification • simile 	<p><i>There are two main techniques used in this poem. The first is metaphor: "Life is a broken-winged bird/That cannot fly" (lines 3-4), and "Life is a barren field/Frozen with snow" (lines 7-8).</i></p> <p><i>The second main technique used is imagery: "Broken-winged" (line 3) bird is a really visual image, and "barren field/Frozen with snow" (lines 7-8) appeals to two senses: sight and feel.</i></p> <p><i>Both techniques show how bad your life will be if you let go of your dreams.</i></p>

SIMON'S 1.4 POETRY ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)

<p>Essential Questions</p>	<p>Choose the one essential question that seems the most suited to the poem and explain the poem's answer to that essential question.</p> <p>Next, write a paragraph discussing how the essential question applies to the poem, using quotations from the poem in your paragraph to support your ideas. Cite the line numbers of those quotations as well.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> What does it mean to live well in work, home, or play? <input type="checkbox"/> What roles do success and failure play in the pursuit of living well? <input type="checkbox"/> How does integrity, or a lack of integrity, affect one's ability to live well? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What are the benefits to ourselves, or to those around us, in using our skills and talents? <input type="checkbox"/> In what way can a person change the course of his or her life through a single action? <p><i>I think the essential question that best fits this poem is the one about the benefit of using your skills and talents in order to live well. If people are good at something, and love it, their lives have meaning and purpose; plus they're more likely to be happy. If people don't find a way to use their skills and talents, life is kind of empty. As the poem states, life can become "a broken-winged bird" (line 3) or a "barren field" (line 7) if we don't hold on to our dreams. Without dreams, people are just floating along, unhappy and not doing what matters to them.</i></p>
<p>Theme Statement</p>	<p>Write a one-sentence theme statement summarizing the poem's key message about life and/or the human condition.</p>	<p><i>Life can be difficult and empty if you let go of your dreams.</i></p>

SIMON'S 1.4 POETRY ANALYSIS RUBRIC

1.4 Poetry Analysis		
Value	Ideas and Impressions	
	"What Makes You Come Alive"	Check the poem you chose.
		<input type="checkbox"/> "Those Winter Sundays" <input type="checkbox"/> "Mother to Son" <input type="checkbox"/> "Still I Rise" <input type="checkbox"/> "Calgary 2 A.M."
 Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Your exploration of the poems is <i>perceptive</i> and <i>convincing</i> . <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> You provide <i>precise</i> support to reinforce your ideas. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Your notes demonstrate a <i>thorough</i> understanding of how poetic devices are used in the poems. <input type="checkbox"/> Your theme statements are <i>insightful</i> and <i>precisely</i> written.	<input type="checkbox"/> Your exploration of the poems is <i>perceptive</i> and <i>convincing</i> . <input type="checkbox"/> You provide <i>precise</i> support to reinforce your ideas. <input type="checkbox"/> Your notes demonstrate a <i>thorough</i> understanding of how poetic devices are used in the poems. <input type="checkbox"/> Your theme statements are <i>insightful</i> and <i>precisely</i> written.
 Proficient	<input type="checkbox"/> Your exploration of the poems is <i>thoughtful</i> . <input type="checkbox"/> You provide <i>specific</i> support to reinforce your ideas. <input type="checkbox"/> Your notes demonstrate a <i>significant</i> understanding of how poetic devices are used in the poems. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Your theme statements are <i>meaningful</i> and <i>effectively</i> written.	<input type="checkbox"/> Your exploration of the poems is <i>thoughtful</i> . <input type="checkbox"/> You provide <i>specific</i> support to reinforce your ideas. <input type="checkbox"/> Your notes demonstrate a <i>significant</i> understanding of how poetic devices are used in the poems. <input type="checkbox"/> Your theme statements are <i>meaningful</i> and <i>effectively</i> written.
 Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> Your exploration of the poems is <i>straightforward</i> . <input type="checkbox"/> You provide <i>adequate</i> support to reinforce your ideas. <input type="checkbox"/> Your notes demonstrate a <i>basic</i> understanding of how poetic devices are used in the poems. <input type="checkbox"/> Your theme statements are <i>general</i> but <i>clearly</i> written.	<input type="checkbox"/> Your exploration of the poems is <i>straightforward</i> . <input type="checkbox"/> You provide <i>adequate</i> support to reinforce your ideas. <input type="checkbox"/> Your notes demonstrate a <i>basic</i> understanding of how poetic devices are used in the poems. <input type="checkbox"/> Your theme statements are <i>general</i> but <i>clearly</i> written.
 Limited	<input type="checkbox"/> Your exploration of the poems is <i>superficial</i> , <i>ambiguous</i> , or <i>undeveloped</i> . <input type="checkbox"/> You provide <i>imprecise</i> or <i>ineffective</i> support to reinforce your ideas. <input type="checkbox"/> Your notes demonstrate <i>little</i> understanding of how poetic devices are used in the poems. <input type="checkbox"/> Your theme statements are <i>vague</i> and <i>inappropriately</i> written.	<input type="checkbox"/> Your exploration of the poems is <i>superficial</i> , <i>ambiguous</i> , or <i>undeveloped</i> . <input type="checkbox"/> You provide <i>imprecise</i> or <i>ineffective</i> support to reinforce your ideas. <input type="checkbox"/> Your notes demonstrate <i>little</i> understanding of how poetic devices are used in the poems. <input type="checkbox"/> Your theme statements are <i>vague</i> and <i>inappropriately</i> written.
Resubmission Needed	<input type="checkbox"/> Your attempt to respond is <i>insufficient</i> . Contact your teacher to discuss suggestions for improvement and resubmission of your work.	
TOTAL: /40 = %	18/20	/20
 Assessment	Areas of strength: Simon, you've done a really careful analysis of this poem! Sometimes it's challenging to connect the poet's techniques to their effect on the poem, but you have done that very well. Your specific examples and quotations help illustrate your points clearly.	
	Might I suggest: Your theme statement could be stronger by removing the word "you" and rephrasing to something such as "Life can be difficult and empty without dreams," which makes the theme statement reveal some insight into human nature, and that's the goal.	