

Pick of ONE of the following sonnets for ALL your Sonnet Journals:

“On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer” by John Keats

“Ozymandias” by Percy Best Shelley

These Journals will help you analyze and research your chosen sonnet.

Sonnet Journal 1

MEANING & CONTEXT

Purpose: to help you parse the basic meaning of the sonnet.

1. **Paraphrase** the sonnet, translating it word-for-word into simple, clear modern English prose. Pay attention to the sentence, not the line, as the principal unit of organization. Look for the main subject and verb and straighten out the syntax where you need to.
2. **Summarize** the sonnet in one- or two-sentences.
3. **Context & Tone** Who is speaking and why? What situation or event inspired the poet to write the sonnet? What is the speaker’s attitude towards his topic?
4. **Primary Source** Identify a source that gives the text of your sonnet. (Don’t use the Assignment Sheet.) Write out a Works Cited entry for the source.

DUE: 3 April

Sonnet Journal 2

LANGUAGE

Purpose: to analyze how the poet uses language in the sonnet.

1. **Vocabulary** Identify at least **three** key words in the sonnet, words that seem particularly important or that are unfamiliar to you. Look them up in good dictionary (preferably the *Oxford English Dictionary*) and write down their most relevant meaning or meanings. What new insights into the sonnet arise from understanding its key words?
2. **Imagery** List the images in the sonnet. Do the images relate to each other in some way? Do they form a pattern or cluster together? How do the images develop or clarify the subject?
3. **Figurative Language** Identify and analyze any similes, metaphors, symbols, understatements, hyperboles, personifications, or paradoxes. (Analyze metaphors with an eye on the *tenor* [the thing described], the *vehicle* [the thing used to describe it], and the connotations of the comparison.) How do the figure of speech help articulate the ideas in the sonnet?
4. **Biographical & Historical Sources** Identify at least ONE source of biographical information about your poet and ONE source about the historical context of the sonnet. (Your historical source could provide information about the time the sonnet was written or about historical references that appear *in* the sonnet.) Write out Works Cited entries for the sources.

DUE: 8 April

Sonnet Journal 3

STRUCTURE

Purpose: to understand the poetic, linguistic, and rhetorical structures of the sonnet.

1. **Outline** the sonnet's main points. Identify the progression of ideas. Think about the order in which the sonnet presents its ideas. How does the progression of ideas reflect the speaker's attitude or state of mind?
2. **Syntax** How are the words arranged into sentences? Is word order normal or inverted? Do sentences seem simple or complex? How does the syntax reflect the subject matter of the sonnet?
3. **Sound** List any examples you find of alliteration, rhyme, assonance, or consonance. How do the sound patterns contribute to the sonnet's effect on a listener?
4. **Critical Sources** Identify at least TWO critical commentaries on your sonnet. Write out Works Cited entries for the sources.

DUE: 10 April

Sonnet Journal 4

CRITICAL QUESTION, WORKING THESIS, & INFORMAL OUTLINE

1. Compose a **critical question** you want to ask about this sonnet in your essay. What makes this an interesting and significant question? What competing answers to this question might various readers of the sonnet give?
2. Make an **informal outline** that explores your answer to this question. Your informal outline should include a **working thesis** and a bullet-points list of **evidence** you will use to support that thesis. Use details from the text and your own critical thinking to create an argument supporting your answer. (See Short Story Journal 4 for a sample informal outline.)
3. Make a full **Works Cited** page based on the sources you've identified in your journals.

DUE: 15 April