

# **THE POWER SYSTEM FOR THE ESSAYS**

**A MAGIC PROCESS FOR ATTACKING THE EXAM....**

# QUESTIONS 1& 2: POETRY & PROSE

1. Find your task....
    - Find & mark verbs in the imperative and all conjunctions.
  2. Read the passage attentively and mark it up.
  3. Watch for patterns of organization: repetition, echoing, or precedence.
-

4. Identify speaker, the audience, the setting, and the occasion.
  5. Mark shifts in point of view, tone, or the like; mark any significant punctuation/pointing.
  6. In poetry, note if a rhyme scheme or punctuation or the arrangement on the page helps reveal organization.
  7. Identify the main purpose & tone.
-

## QUESTION 3: 'THE OPEN QUESTION'

1. Cover the list of suggested works.
  2. Ignore any opening quotations or other material.
  3. Find your task: mark all verbs in the imperative.
    - Identify all parts of the task, including any that might be implied rather than explicit.
-

4. Go back and read the opening of the prompt.
  5. Decide on a work to use.
  6. Decide on an appropriate “meaning of the work as a whole.”
  7. *(optional)* Uncover and read the suggested titles.
-

## 2000, Q3

Many works of literature not readily identified with the mystery or detective story genre nonetheless involve the investigation of a mystery. In these works, the solution to the mystery may be less important than the knowledge gained in the process of its investigation. Choose a novel or play in which one or more of the characters confront a mystery. Then write an essay in which you identify the mystery and explain how the investigation illuminates the meaning of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

~~Many works of literature not readily identified with the mystery or detective story genre nonetheless involve the investigation of a mystery.~~ In these works, the solution to the mystery may be less important than the knowledge gained in the process of its investigation. Choose a novel or play in which one or more of the characters confront a mystery. Then write an essay in which you identify the mystery and explain how the investigation illuminates the meaning of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

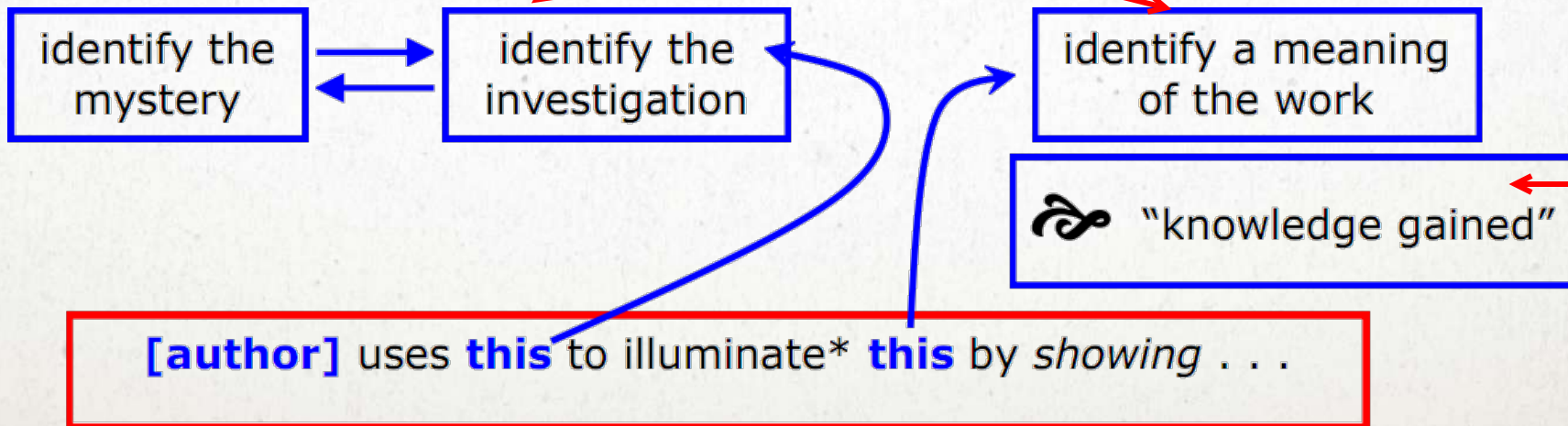
~~Many works of literature not readily identified with the mystery or detective story genre nonetheless involve the investigation of a mystery. In these works, the solution to the mystery may be less important than the knowledge gained in the process of its investigation.~~ Choose a novel or play in which one or more of the characters confront a mystery. Then write an essay in which you identify the mystery and explain how the investigation illuminates the meaning of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.



~~Many works of literature not readily identified with the mystery or detective story genre nonetheless involve the investigation of a mystery. In these works, the solution to the mystery may be less important than the knowledge gained in the process of its investigation.~~ Choose a novel or play in which one or more of the characters confront a mystery. Then write an essay in which you identify the mystery and explain how the investigation illuminates the meaning of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

~~Many works of literature not readily identified with the mystery or detective story genre nonetheless involve the investigation of a mystery. In these works, the solution to the mystery may be less important than the knowledge gained in the process of its investigation.~~ Choose a novel or play in which one or more of the characters confront a mystery. Then write an essay in which you identify the mystery and explain how the investigation illuminates the meaning of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

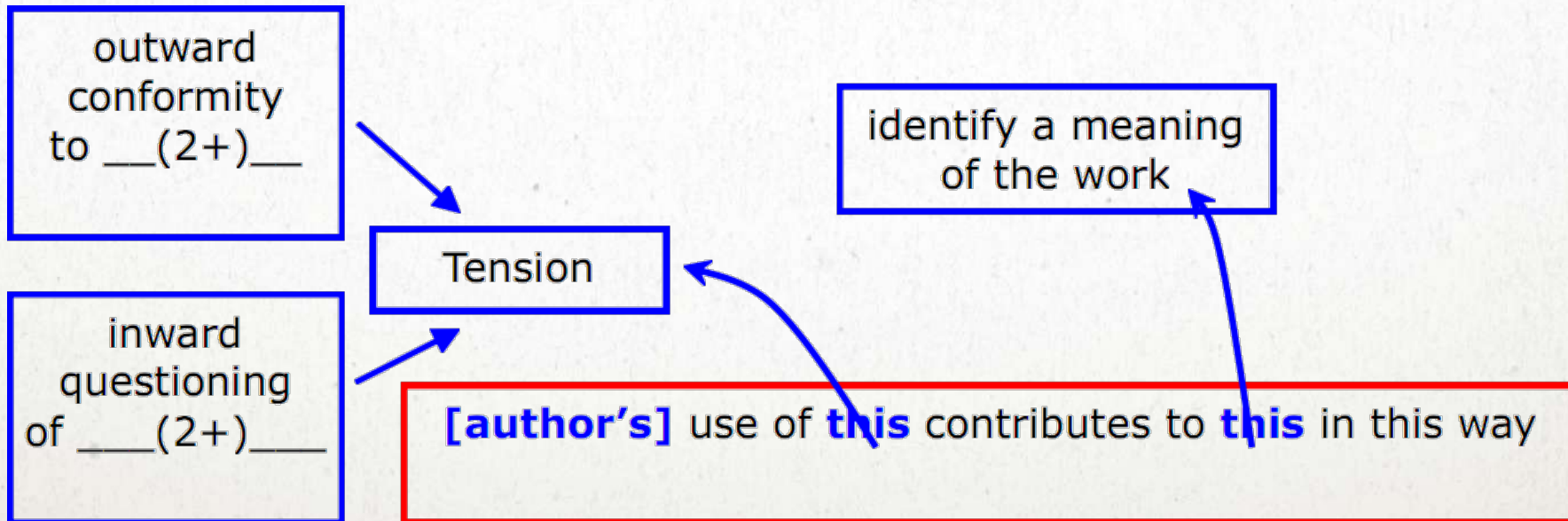
Many works of literature not readily identified with the mystery or detective story genre nonetheless involve the investigation of a mystery. **In these works, the solution to the mystery may be less important than the *knowledge gained in the process* of its investigation.** Choose a novel or play in which one or more of the characters confront a mystery. Then write an essay in which you identify the mystery and explain how the investigation illuminates the meaning of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.



## 2005, Q3

In Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* (1899), protagonist Edna Pontellier is said to possess "that outward existence which conforms, the inward life which questions." In a novel or play that you have studied, identify a character who conforms outwardly while questioning inwardly. Then write an essay in which you analyze how this tension between outward conformity and inward questioning contributes to the meaning of the work. Avoid mere plot summary.

In Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* (1899), protagonist Edna Pontellier is said to possess "that outward existence which conforms, the inward life which questions." In a novel or play that you have studied, identify a character who conforms outwardly while questioning inwardly. Then write an essay in which you analyze how this tension between outward conformity and inward questioning contributes to the meaning of the work. Avoid mere plot summary.



# ALL 3 QUESTIONS

1. Write down a plan.  
Do not let the prompt dictate your organization.
  2. Leave a space for an introduction.
  3. Remember your audience.
  4. Write legibly in ink.
-

5. Refer often to the text but avoid direct quotations of more than four words.
6. Follow all detail from the text with your commentary; use the ratio of two pieces of your commentary to every one of detail from the text.
7. If you have leftover time, add an introduction.
8. Avoid 'name calling,' the identification of literary elements without explaining why the writer is using them. **NO WHAT WITHOUT WHY.**

**GOOD  
LUCK!**

...and plan so that you won't need it.



