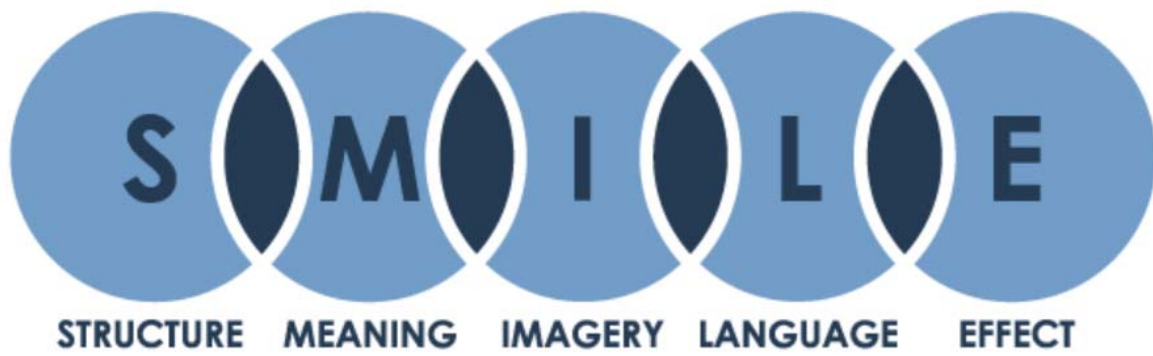


Students unfamiliar or uncomfortable with poetry often struggle to understand new poems. In many cases, students do not know how to analyze a poem, let alone the most effective steps with which to approach a challenging poem. When this is the case, simple mnemonic devices like SMILE can help them get started, and makes analyzing a poem easy and fun.

SMILE is an acronym that helps students remember important aspects of a poem to interpret. Each letter stands for a separate poetic element as outlined below.

S	Structure	<p>The structure refers to the physical and grammatical composition of the poem. For this element, you should consider the following for the analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of verses/stanzas • comparative length of verses/stanzas (regular or irregular) • line length • rhyme scheme • repetition, including refrains • enjambment • sentence structure and grammar • punctuation or lack thereof
M	Meaning	<p>In identifying the meaning, you should be able to articulate the basic subject of a poem along with its deeper significance. To truly capture meaning, a reader must also be able to accurately identify a poem’s message or theme. Often this requires you to work out a poem’s figurative meaning. It is often useful to establish a poem’s basic meaning and then revisit step M for a poem’s deeper significance following further analysis of other elements.</p>
I	Imagery	<p>Imagery refers to language that appeals to one of the five senses—touch, taste, smell, sound, and sight. Imagery helps strengthen a writer’s description by providing physical details that enable the reader to better imagine the scene or understand the speaker’s feelings. Imagery can contain figurative language but does not have to have it.</p>
L	Language	<p>Language refers to a writer’s diction, or word choice. Use of figurative language should be noted here and interpreted, along with sound devices, repletion, the speaker’s dialect, and particularly significant words.</p>
E	Effect	<p>In determining a poem’s effect, readers can include their initial reactions. How do you feel after reading it? What is the mood of the poem? You should also review this element after studying/reviewing the other four elements. In this way, you can consider the effect of the poem’s structure, imagery, language, and message as they work together.</p>



S	Structure	
M	Meaning	
I	Imagery	
L	Language	
E	Effect	