

- Read extensively to become as familiar as possible with a wide range of poetry.
- Think about how language is used and make a note of any interesting features, lines, images, etc. that you come across in your reading of poetry.
- Think about the ideas contained in the poems you read.
- Read other responses to poetry—not as a substitute for forming your own ideas but as a ‘broadening’ influence (these responses could be found in study guides, literary journals, reviews or critical works). They might suggest things that have not occurred to you or they might stimulate your own thoughts if you disagree with their view.
- Read poems aloud- either in company or alone. Quite often this helps deepen understanding and it certainly gives you insight into features such as tone and rhythm.
- Listen to poems being read if you can manage to get hold of some recordings. This is possible through web sites.
- Adopt a questioning attitude. Whenever you read a poem ask yourselves questions about it. The three key questions to ask are: ‘what is this poem about?’; ‘how is written?’; ‘why has the poet chosen to write the poem in this particular way?’

### III. The Basic Elements of Poetry (Tools for Analyzing Poetry):

You analyze a poem in order to arrive at an intelligent interpretation and understand what you read. As stated before, a poem should be read several times in order to hear it and feel its emotions. The more times you read the poem, the more you can perceive and understand it. Before starting to understand the poem, you should do just a bit of research on the poet: knowing something about the poet is crucial, because a bit of biography can give you a great deal of insight into the preoccupations, themes and thoughts on life.

#### 1- Poetic voice/Speaker:

The created narrative voice of the poem (the person the reader is supposed to imagine is talking). The speaker is **not** necessarily the poet. The poet often invents a speaker for the poem in order to give him/herself more freedom to compose the poem.

When the poet creates another character to be the speaker, that character is called the **persona**.

◦ **Persona:** a character created by the poet to narrate the poem. When the poet uses one persona to narrate the entire poem, the poem is called a dramatic monologue.

◦ **Dramatic monologue:** a poem in which the poet uses a persona, or a narrative voice other than his own, to tell the entire poem. This tends to sound like one-sided conversations, like the character is talking to him/ herself.

◦ **Audience:** the person or people to whom the speaker is speaking.

Identifying the audience within a poem helps you to understand the poem better. There are different people the speaker can address in the poem:

- The speaker can address another character in the poem.