POEM ANALYSIS

The poem is a map.

The theme is the treasure.

Your analysis tells how you used the map to arrive at the treasure—where you stopped along the way and how each stop steered you in the right direction.

Example For Practice:

The Past is such a Curious Creature
by Emily Dickinson

The past is such a curious creature,
To look her in the face,
A transport may reward us,
Or a disgrace.

Unarmed if any meet her,
I charge him, fly!
Her rusty ammunition
Might yet reply!

The THEME (important statement that the author makes about an aspect of life or the world):

______________________________________________________________________________

One example of a literary device, what it might mean, and how it reinforces the theme:

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Acquainted with the Night  by Robert Frost
I have been one acquainted with the night.
I have walked out in rain -- and back in rain.
I have outwalked the furthest city light.

I have looked down the saddest city lane.
I have passed by the watchman on his beat
And dropped my eyes, unwilling to explain.

I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet
When far away an interrupted cry
Came over houses from another street,

But not to call me back or say good-bye;
And further still at an unearthly height,
A luminary clock against the sky

Proclaimed the time was neither wrong nor right.
I have been one acquainted with the night.

[i carry your heart with me(i carry it in] by e.e. cummings

i carry your heart with me(i carry it in
my heart)i am never without it(anywhere
i go you go,my dear;and whatever is done
by only me is your doing,my darling)
    i fear
no fate(for you are my fate,my sweet)i want
no world(for beautiful you are my world,my true)
and it’s you are whatever a moon has always meant
and whatever a sun will always sing is you

here is the deepest secret nobody knows
(here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud
and the sky of the sky of a tree called life;which grows
higher than soul can hope or mind can hide)
and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart

i carry your heart(i carry it in my heart)
Don’t Tell Anyone  by Tony Hoagland
We had been married for six or seven years
when my wife, standing in the kitchen one afternoon, told me
that she screams underwater when she swims—

that, in fact, she has been screaming for years
into the blue chlorinated water of the community pool
where she does laps every other day.

Buttering her toast, not as if she had been
concealing anything,
not as if I should consider myself

personally the cause of her screaming,
nor as if we should perform an act of therapy
right that minute on the kitchen table,

—casually, she told me,
and I could see her turn her square face up
to take a gulp of oxygen,

then down again into the cold wet mask of the unconscious.
For all I know, maybe everyone is screaming
as they go through life, silently,

politely keeping the big secret
that it is not all fun
to be ripped by the crooked beak

of something called psychology,
to be dipped down
again and again into time;

that the truest, most intimate
pleasure you can sometimes find
is the wet kiss

of your own pain.
There goes Kath, at one pm, to swim her twenty-two laps
back and forth in the community pool;

—what discipline she has!
Twenty-two laps like twenty-two pages,
that will never be read by anyone.
An Old Story  by Richard Hoffman

A few days after my mother died
the furnace went out, and my father,
who had been sitting in his chair
across from hers since the funeral,

his unshaven chin on his chest,
heaved himself up and went down
the cold gray cellar stairs to see if
he could relight the pilot himself

or would have to call for help.
I know what it must have been like
because I remember him other times
on his back down there, cursing

match after match, god damning
each for burning his fingers, as he
reached through the tiny metal door
as many times as it took. This time

it lit, caught, and roared back to life.
When my father sat up he faced
the washer, the dryer, the empty
laundry basket, the ironing board,

and my mother’s radio above the sink,
her absence so vivid that climbing
the stairs he thought he heard her
behind him, and he turned around.
At Home with Dollface  by Robert McDowell
I stepped down into the little cardboard town.
All day and night we were posing.
I did not need to water or cut
Our plastic lawn, and I gave up shaving because
In my beloved’s world no hair or green thing grew.
My teeth were exquisitely white,
My body fat absolutely zero.
We dressed from wardrobes without end,
And drove our pink convertible to the river each day.

One might think that we yearned for some controversy,
A little spice mixed into the bland stew of our days.
In fact, we were deliriously happy, content with our clothes
And gadgets, determined to look out
At the world’s woe through the wise eyes of toys.

Once By the Pacific  by Robert Frost
The shattered water made a misty din.
Great waves looked over others coming in,
And thought of doing something to the shore
That water never did to land before.
The clouds were low and hairy in the skies,
Like locks blown forward in the gleam of eyes.
You could not tell, and yet it looked as if
The shore was lucky in being backed by cliff,
The cliff in being backed by continent;
It looked as if a night of dark intent
Was coming, and not only a night, an age.
Someone had better be prepared for rage.
There would be more than ocean-water broken
Before God's last Put out the Light was spoken.
**Sea-Fever by John Masefield**

I must down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by,
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face, and a grey dawn breaking.

I must down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea-gulls crying.

I must down to the seas again, to the vagrant gypsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.

**All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace by Richard Brautigan**

I like to think (and
the sooner the better!)
of a cybernetic meadow
where mammals and computers
live together in mutually
programming harmony
like pure water
touching clear sky.
I like to think
(right now, please!)
of a cybernetic forest
filled with pines and electronics
where deer stroll peacefully
past computers
as if they were flowers
with spinning blossoms.
I like to think
(it has to be!)
of a cybernetic ecology
where we are free of our labors
and joined back to nature,
returned to our mammal
brothers and sisters,
and all watched over
by machines of loving grace.
Counting the Beats  by Robert Graves

You, love, and I,
(He whispers) you and I,
And if no more than only you and I
What care you or I?
Counting the beats,
Counting the slow heart beats,
The bleeding to death of time in slow heart beats,
Wakeful they lie.
Cloudless day,
Night, and a cloudless day,
Yet the huge storm will burst upon their heads one day
From a bitter sky.
Where shall we be,
(She whispers) where shall we be,
When death strikes home, O where then shall we be
Who were you and I?
Not there but here,
(He whispers) only here,
As we are, here, together, now and here,
Always you and I.
Counting the beats,
Counting the slow heart beats,
The bleeding to death of time in slow heart beats,
Wakeful they lie.

Death, Be Not Proud  by John Donne

DEATH, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so,
For, those, whom thou think'st, thou dost overthrow,
Die not, poor death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure, then from thee, much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and souls’ delivery.
Thou art slave to Fate, Chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy, or charms can make us sleep as well,
And better then thy stroke; why swell'st thou then;
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more; death, thou shalt die.
Indian Boy Love Song  by Sherman Alexie

Everyone I have lost
in the closing of a door
the click of the lock

is not forgotten, they
do not die but remain
within the soft edges
of the earth, the ash

of house fires and cancer
in sin and forgiveness
huddled under old blankets

dreaming their way into
my hands, my heart
closing tight, like fists.

When Autumn Came  by Faiz Ahmed Faiz

This is the way that autumn came to the trees:
it stripped them down to the skin,
left their ebony bodies naked.
It shook out their hearts, the yellow leaves,
scattered them over the ground.
Anyone could trample them out of shape
undisturbed by a single moan of protest.

The birds that herald dreams
were exiled from their song,
each voice torn out of its throat.
They dropped into the dust
even before the hunter strung his bow.

Oh, God of May have mercy.
Bless these withered bodies
with the passion of your resurrection;
make their dead veins flow with blood again.

Give some tree the gift of green again.
Let one bird sing.
You Begin by Margaret Atwood

You begin this way:
this is your hand,
this is your eye,
that is a fish, blue and flat
on the paper, almost
the shape of an eye.
This is your mouth, this is an O
or a moon, whichever
you like. This is yellow.

Outside the window
is the rain, green
because it is summer, and beyond that
the trees and then the world,
which is round and has only
the colors of these nine crayons.

This is the world, which is fuller
and more difficult to learn than I have said.
You are right to smudge it that way
with the red and then
the orange: the world burns.

Once you have learned these words
you will learn that there are more
words than you can ever learn.
The word hand floats above your hand
like a small cloud over a lake.
The word hand anchors
your hand to this table,
your hand is a warm stone
I hold between two words.

This is your hand, these are my hands, this is the world,
which is round but not flat and has more colors
than we can see.

It begins, it has an end,
this is what you will
come back to, this is your hand.