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Assignment 2: Detailed Analysis of Poetry

- The poem emphasizes the value of experiential and explorative learning of poetry. The speaker advises the reader of poetry to be open to adapting various methods to understand a piece literature instead of seeking a "correct" answer or interpretation of it by making a reference to the use of senses.
 - Sight: "take a poem / and hold it up to the light / like a color slide" (1-3)
 - Through this suggestion, the speaker asks the reader to explore a poem from multiple perspectives.
 - Hearing: "press an ear again [a poem's] hive" (4)
 - The use of the word "hive" implies that a poem naturally generates sound, or impact, and the speaker advises that simply listening to the sound and rhythm created by the poem and experiencing the impact it creates.
 - Touch: "walk inside the poem's room / and feel the walls for a light switch" (7-8)
 - Although the poem's message may not be apparent, by taking a step by step approach to appreciate the poem will bring the reader to an "ah ha" moment as the light does in darkness.
- The word choices and imagery employed suggest the importance of reading poetry for aesthetics not just for efferent or academic purposes.
 - The image of "[dropping] a mouse ... / and [watching] him probe his way out" (5-6) reminds of mouse racing, with which some people take great joy in watching and gambling. Such picture seems to add to the idea of entertainment and fun.
 - The suggestion "to waterski / across the surface of a poem" (8-9) not only adheres to the established theme of entertainment but also validates all kinds of reading, including literal one, seeking superficial understanding only.
- In alignment with the poem's theme to simply enjoy the poem and consider multiple perspectives and interpretations of it, the speaker expresses disappointment and frustration with the current literary phenomenon to find out the "true meaning" of the poem.

- Diction (“tie ... to a chair with rope” (13), “torture” (14), “beating ... with a hose” (15)) suggests that the speaker views the approach of reading a poem with a single view is not only favourable but wrong; the actions listed are considered criminal for which there are consequences.
- The poem promotes the use of reader response lens to understand a poem as opposed to new critical lens, which claims that there is the “right” understanding and meaning of a poem. The line “waving at the author’s name at the shore” (11) reinforces the idea of impact over intention. The act of saying farewell to the author reflects the act of discarding or ignoring what the author had intended in composing the poem, and focusing on the personal understanding of the poem based on the interaction between the reader and the text.

Collins, Billy. “Introduction to Poetry.”

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46712/introduction-to-poetry>

- The original poem.

PBS Newshour Extra. “Discovering your voice through poetry.”

<http://d3i6fh83elv35t.cloudfront.net/newshour/extra/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2014/03/Guide-How-to-Read-a-Poem.pdf>

- This guide from Great Books Foundation suggests multiple perspectives reading and reinforces the idea of “postponing closure” by embracing ambiguity as a part of the poem.