### **The SMILE Method**

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| **Structure** | * Does the poem literally have some kind of shape?
* Is it in free verse or set in a traditional meter?
* What kind of rhyming pattern and punctuation (if any) does it use?
* Is there any repetition?
* How long are the lines, and what/where are the line breaks?
* *Anything you notice about the poem’s structure will also relate to the next point…*
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| **Meaning** | * What is the subject of the poem? How do you know this? What details are pointing us to that meaning?
* Who is the character speaking in the poem? (Hint: it is rarely the poet themselves!)
* Create a hypothesis (and a secondary hypothesis, if you like) on what the meaning of a poem is and then try to show how everything else you mention relates back to this meaning. For example, if the poem is about how old age can be lonely, the structure of the poem (perhaps lines gradually decreasing in length) may reflect this.
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| **Imagery** | * How are things described?
* Underline or highlight where you note imagery. The poet has created that imagery to deliberately draw your attention to it.
* Note what kind of imagery you see - is it visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, kinesthetic, etc.?
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| **Literary Devices & Language** | * What literary devices and language are in the poem? Metaphors, similes, alliteration, personification, sibilance, assonance, word-class analysis (noun, adjective, adverb, verb), connotations or words, strings of certain word-types?
* Is the poem written in a dialect? Does it use foreign words that you need to look up?
* Does it make allusions you need to look up to understand?
* Why do you think the poet has specifically chosen each particular device, and how do they contribute to the meaning of the poem?
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| **Effect & Emotion** | * How do you, as the reader, feel or think after reading the poem?
* Does the language make you feel something for the subject of the poem? If so, what?
* Does you see something in a new light?
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Important note re: SMILE: this is not an exhaustive method of tackling a poem, but it’s a good place to start jotting down ideas, even if not in that particular order. If you’re comparing two poems, it’s a quick way to see – and then show – how the same devices can be used to different effect, or similar meanings be backed up by different uses of language.

Text adapted from: <https://www.mytutor.co.uk/blog/poem-analysis-smile/> & <https://slideplayer.com/slide/14286693/>

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| **Engussi Wedzin Kwah**by Jennifer Wickham, Gidumt’en of the Wet’suwet’enShe is my healera consoling frienda life giver, a grandmothera sister to the ancient onesshe heard the songs and touched the skinof the original Wet’suwet’ensacred knowledge in every dropbut we forgotwe try to listen with our earstime has made us deaf to herthere’s too much background noisethe smog is in our soulsEngussi Wedzin Kwahshhhhhhhhhhhh….. can you hear her cry for you?I need a job, I need a new carI just bought an eco-friendly travel mug from \*fillin the blank\*… it’s funny right?the love of my life is not my cell phonea flat screen tv or my shoesEngussi Wedzin Kwah!I don’t need to tell you how beautiful she ishow her clear blue/green sparkles in the sunor how her glacial currents take your breath awayand jumps starts your soul and every cell in your bodyhow her voice sings you alivethis isn’t that kind of love poemLet’s get back to listening…..What are the names of your rivers?Can you hear them inside you?Let’s resurrect those words togetherALL our words, all at onceI want to feel all those hard and soft soundshitting me at the same timejust let me absorb the words of our ancestorslike Wedzin Kwahbut I’m not a riverI am a Wet’suwet’en womanand my purpose is clearLike ancient protocol and boundariesI’ll show you where the line iswe were born her guardianswarriors watch over Wedzin Kwah | **Structure** |  |
| **Meaning** |  |
| **Imagery** |  |
| **Literary Devices & Language** |  |
| **Effect & Emotion** |  |