**HOW TO READ A POEM WORKSHEET**

Consider the following short poem by Robert Frost and then, using the Four Step Approach as stated on the sheet, discuss and analyse the text with your partner, summarising your thoughts in note form at the end of the sheet:

**Dust of Snow**

The way a crow

Shook down on me

The dust of snow

From a hemlock tree

Has given my heart

A change of mood

And saved some part

Of a day I had rued.

**Make notes under the following headings to assist in structuring your writing:**

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 3:

Step 4:

**HOW TO READ A POEM**

Step 1:

Read the poem through three times:

* Silently for first and initial impression
* Aloud noting shifts in pattern, thought, voice, movement
* Again to adjust the first impression
* Reflect upon the title
* What is the single, most dominant impression of the poem?

Step 2:

Ask yourself the following questions and locate evidence in support of your opinions:

* What is the situation here? Is there a dramatic aspect to it? (View it as a brief glimpse into a scene from a play, an overheard conversation, a momentary exposure to a person’s thoughts or feelings).
* Who is the narrator? What is his/her attitude to the situation? What is the tone of the poem?
* How reliable is the speaker? Is his/her attitude consistent?

Step 3:

Consider the following aspects of the poem:

* Patterns: What is interesting about the structure of the poem? What do you notice about the structure of the stanzas? Can you notice any rhyme, repetition, or other types of sound patterning?
* Does the poet employ the senses such as sound or sight? What imagery does the poet employ?
* Can you notice any particularly interesting choice and/or positioning of words? Are any words particularly significant?

Step 4

Finally consider how all of the above contribute to the poem as a whole. How successful is the poem for you? What response do you have to it, and what impression are you left with? Does the poem have an overarching message?

In your notes try to employ some of the following terms: tone; imagery; metaphor; symbolism; juxtaposition; rhyme; stanza; connotation; enjambment and any further terminology you think is applicable from your previous study.