

## P.A.S.T. /L.A.S.T. - Poetry Response Prompt

Consider this mnemonic and the associated questions in your first readings of a poem. However, artificial, it may lead you to consider aspects of a poem that you would otherwise neglect. Once you begin to become familiar with it, you may want to move more freely among the terms; eventually you will sense whether or not another set of elements is important to a poem--and focus there. As we discuss poems in class, you will also learn more precise literary terms. Remember that PAST/LAST is a deliberately simple prompt for reading which you will eventually outgrow!

<b>Paraphrase</b> - Can you briefly restate the most obvious thread of the poem? Think content.)	
<b>Argument</b> - Can you briefly recap its 'point' or claim if one is obvious?)	
<b>Speaker</b> - Is the speaker identifiable (singular)? gender, age, time period...?	
<b>Title</b> - What is the title? what expectations does it raise? how does it fit what follows?	
<b>Language</b> - Is it literal or figurative (symbol, metaphor, hyperbole, etc.)? Can you describe the diction?	
<b>Attitude</b> - Does the language suggest an attitude, tone mood, emotion, or general "feel"? What and how?	
<b>Structure</b> - What formal features seem worth noting: lines, stanza, rhyme, rhythm? Look for patterns and shifts.	
<b>Theme</b> - Does the poem suggest an overall theme (often an abstract idea, such as the familiar <i>carpe diem</i> )?	