

# TOASTER: A MNEMONIC FOR POETRY

**TITLE** The title is part of the poem; consider any multiple meanings.

**ORGANIZATION** Identify organizational patterns: visual, temporal, spatial...

**ATTITUDES** Identify the tone—both the speaker's and the poet's attitude

**SHIFTS** ↓ Locate shifts in speaker, tone, setting, syntax, diction...

**TOOLS** ↘ Which literary devices enhance the poem's meaning?

**ECHO** Locate sound repetition: (1) rhythm, pace, (2) rhyme, alliteration, assonance, consonance...

**REASON** What is the poem's theme?

## SHIFTS (STP)

**Signals** Key words (*still, but, yet, although, however...*)  
Punctuation (consider every punctuation mark)  
Stanza or paragraph divisions  
Changes in line length or stanza length or both

**Types** Structure (how the work is organized)  
Changes in syntax (sentence length and construction)  
Changes in sound (rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, assonance...)  
Changes in diction (slang to formal language, for example)

**Patterns** Are the shifts sudden? progressive? recursive? Why?

## TOOLS (FRIED)

**Figurative Language** metaphor, simile, irony, personification, allegory, apostrophe, metonymy/synecdoche, hyperbole, overstatement/understatement

**Reference & Allusion** a symbol or a mention, direct or indirect, intended to bring something or someone to mind

**Imagery** an appeal to the senses—usually visual, but also auditory, tactile, olfactory...

**Extended Meaning** denotation and connotation: literal meaning and suggestion

**Diction** the choice of a word or phrase (or a pattern of words and phrases) to fit a specific purpose