***Guide to Actively Reading Poetry***

***Question***

An active reader becomes involved. Ask questions as you read. If the poem tells a story, as questions about the events and the characters. If the poem relates strong feelings, ask questions about what is evoking these feelings. Stop to think about the use of language and imagery. What do the words make you see and feel?

***Clarify***

Most poetry is written economically, which means that each word packs a lot of meaning. Take time to clarify the meaning of words. Monitor your reading by checking the answers to your questions.

***Listen***

Poetry has a musical quality. To fully appreciate it, listen to the music of the words. What effect is created by musical devices such as rhythm, rhyme, and repetition?

***Summarize***

Narrative poems tell a story. If the poem you are reading relates events, stop at appropriate times to summarize.

***Paraphrase***

Put the poem in your own words. By doing this, you will make its meaning clear.

***Pull It Together***

The poet Robert Frost has written, “A poem begins in delight, but ends in wisdom.” Start reading poetry by reacting to it with your emotions; but at the end, pull the details together and find what the poem has to say to you.