Directions: *The boxing strategy is a way to chunk parts of the poem according to: theme, tone, meaning, and/or message. Traditionally there are usually two “boxes” of meaning, but sometimes—depending on the poem—there can be more. See teacher model for the following poems…*

***\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_By Robert Frost****—can you guess the title?*

The old dog barks backwards without getting up.  
I can remember when he was a pup.

***In a Station of the Metro by Ezra Pound***

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;  
petals on a wet, black bough.

***By Issa, translated by Robert Hass***

Climb Mount Fuji,  
O snail,  
but slowly, slowly.

How does the boxing strategy help with AP writing?

Robert Frost’s poem, “The Span of Life” may appear simple because of its two concise lines, but his poem reveals the complex push and pull of human life. We live life in the present, but not without the flickers of the past and hopes of the future interrupting our present day thoughts. Frost’s poem clearly focuses on the themes of the present in his opening line because the persona is presently seeing “the old dog” barking but not “getting up” (1). His tone is also specific and could be read as informative—the speaker is letting the reader know what the dog is and isn’t doing. Some might even argue the speaker appears a little amused because of his description of the dog barking “backwards”(1). If you ever had a dog, you might be able to envision the imagery—an older dog who still has the energy to bark at something bothering him, but the control, age, or even laziness that keeps him from running to the window, door, etc. Frost line does create an amusing image many dog owners can connect with. Then, you see a shift on several levels with his second line. There is a clear tone shift for the speaker who becomes more sentimental; this sentimental attitude is clear in the use of the word “pup” (2). The meaning also shifts in time, for the speaker is remembering the past years of his older dog. Collectively the poem speaks about life—life of past and present and his title, “The Span of Life” is cleverly captured in his two poetic lines. Frost’s rhetoric genius is in his simple poem, and even though it is to the point, it says so much about the human condition.

More Complex Practice: *Read the poem, annotate and make meaning, and use the box strategy as we did with the earlier poems. Lastly, try to identify some good tone vocabulary that fits this piece.*

**Blackberry Picking**

No movement, not a stir

In the trees, the pass between the houses,

but A woman in torn jeans walking

Down the white line of the pathway;

Her two girls in green uniforms dashing into the blackberry bushes

Centipedes between their teeth,

A thousand legs of conversation..

Glaring at her from beneath their eyebrows

When they return, becoming sullen:

“Shut up mother,

We are gelling our hair, painting our lips.”

Smell of moss and cobwebs that will never wash off.

This is it then –

Two girls bloomed into two self-conscious women,

Two mountain ewes with long lashes

Tossing their heads, disappearing down the pathway

All their kisses waiting –

Their mother’s face turned purple,

Like a wine glass tilted to catch the lamplight

Swollen with the berries swilling in her cheeks,

Dribbling from her chin.

*-Wendy Mooney*

*Homework: Read the poem below and use the boxing strategy (and others if need); then, write a 300-600 word response based on what you discover about the poem and use the prompts below…*

The Barred Owl

By [Richard Wilbur](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/richard-wilbur)

The warping night air having brought the boom

Of an owl’s voice into her darkened room,

We tell the wakened child that all she heard

Was an odd question from a forest bird,

Asking of us, if rightly listened to,

“Who cooks for you?” and then “Who cooks for you?”

Words, which can make our terrors bravely clear,

Can also thus domesticate a fear,

And send a small child back to sleep at night

Not listening for the sound of stealthy flight

Or dreaming of some small thing in a claw

Borne up to some dark branch and eaten raw

* **What is the poem’s message? Purpose?**
* **What does the poem say about life?**

**RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS: Make sure you keep to 250-500 words (and note the word count somewhere on your response), use a MLA header, and give your response a thoughtful title (no works cited is needed).**

Grading Rubric:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Awesome! 15pts** | **Good Work! 8-9pts** | **Almost 6-7pts** | **Not Quite 0-5pts** |
| Your response is thorough, complete, and well argued with evidence and analytical points (10pts).  You meet all of the paper requirements (word count, MLA header, title, etc.) (5pts).. | Your response is somewhat thorough, complete, and appropriately argued with evidence and analytical points (8-9pts).  You meet most of the paper requirements, but have an error (4pts). | Your response appears complete and has some valid arguments, but it needs to be pushed more with evidence, analytical points, etc (6-7pts).  You meet most of the paper requirements, but there are a couple errors (3pts). | Your response is incomplete, lacks evidence, and/or analysis. It may also be weak, unclear, or incorrect (0-5pts).  You fail to meet most if any of the paper requirements and/or there are a lot of errors (0-2pts). |

**A Barred Owl**

[**A Barred Owl**](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/179529#poem)

The warping night air having brought the boom

Of an owl’s voice into her darkened room,

We tell the wakened child that all she heard

Was an odd question from a forest bird,

Asking of us, if rightly listened to,

“Who cooks for you?” and then “Who cooks for you?”

Words, which can make our terrors bravely clear,

Can also thus domesticate a fear,

And send a small child back to sleep at night

Not listening for the sound of stealthy flight

Or dreaming of some small thing in a claw

Borne up to some dark branch and eaten raw.

The warping night air having brought the boom

Of an owl’s voice into her darkened room,

We tell the wakened child that all she heard

Was an odd question from a forest bird,

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