

Engl 68B: American Lit, 1865 to the Present
Poetry Explication Assignment
Due: November 3rd, 1:30 pm on Canvas

An explication is a detailed analysis of a literary work. Such an explication, for poetry, might involve everything from the meter and rhyme, through word choice and usage, to images and themes—all working together to give a focused, precise interpretation of the poem. Your assignment is to explicate one of the following poems, by Robert Frost: “The Mowing,” “The Oven Bird,” or “Design.”

Because this is such a short assignment (a page or two, typed and double-spaced, but no more than 500 words), be sure that whatever you discuss contributes to your analysis. In other words, do not give a summary of the poem, unless that summary is somehow necessary for your explication, do not mention the rhyme scheme or the meter unless you have a point to make about it that relates to your analysis, and so on. Instead, explain what you think the poem is about by using its various attributes as evidence for your argument. You are not required to use secondary sources but, if you do, be sure that they are peer-reviewed and that you follow MLA guidelines in citing them. Then proofread thoroughly before submitting your work online at Canvas by the beginning of the class on November 3rd, in either Rich Text Format (.rtf) or Word (.doc or .docx). Your submission will automatically be sent to Turnitin.com, as well.