**Poem Research Paper Outline**

**Section 1: Introduction**

* Begin your paper with a creative hook that will grab the attention of your reader. Particularly avoid employing a generalized statement, rhetorical question, or quotation. Be careful to avoid first or second person narration.
* Include the title of your poem and the topic you’re researching. Introduce the connection between the poem and the research topic.
* Include the basic background of the topic you researched (make the reader informed and interested enough to read the rest of your paper). This section could include a brief and well-chosen summary of the poem, itself if that is relevant and adds to the reader’s upcoming understanding of your thesis.
* Your THESIS should be the last sentence of your introduction. It should include the poem title, should address your research topic, contain a three part plan of development that will correspond with your main body paragraphs, and include the larger significance upon which your paper will focus.

\*\*\*Be careful to really spend time analyzing each and every piece of evidence you include.

**Section 2: Definition Defense (You must establish the basis for your argument before you begin)**

* Define the operative word in your thesis as it will be used in the paper
* Play around with this word to see what will give you the most wiggle room
* Explore the connotations and association of your operative word
* Choose the **most** appropriate definitions
  1. Ex: If your thesis starter is “Movies use books,” “use” means 1) manipulate or exploit, 2) derive value or benefit, 3) create a desired end state
* Explain WHY that is the most appropriate definition given the topic it describes
* Define any other terms the reader might not know or are important/specific (e.g. if you’re drawing a distinction between the way classics versus popular literature is adapted, you might want define what a “classic” is).

**Section 3: Entire section based on first definition using quotations from the poem and outside evidence**

* Ex: Movies manipulate or exploit books.
* 2-3 sources/quotes
* 2-3 real examples or one rockstar example accompanied by an extensive and detailed analysis

**Section 4: Second definition**

* Ex: Movies derive value or benefit from books.
* Etc.

**Section 5, ETC.: Third definition**

* Ex: Movies’ habitual or customary usage of books [as a part of] group custom.
* Etc.

**Section 6: Conclusion**

* Briefly touch on the main points discussed in your paper, but keep this short. The next point should be the main focus.
* Cumulative paragraph: Why is your argument significant?
* Discuss the significance and/or implications of your paper (why do we care now, or why will we care in the future?) Be careful to keep this section sounding as academically-oriented as the rest of your paper. This is not the place to descend into first and second person narration.
* **Keys:** Breaking down your argument and making your point as you defined your tools
* Avoid “this is important because,” “this is significant because,” “this means,” “this shows,” “this quote…” etc.
* Use spin in your different definitions: one can have a positive spin and one a negative.
* Avoid block quotations. Examining smaller chunks of information will help you be more successful. If it were me, I would not include a quote that goes for more than a single line at once. Break it up.
* Use strong transitional words and phrases at the beginning of every paragraph except the introduction.