



Abandoned Farmhouse

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Name _____ Date _____

THEMES, ISSUES, CONCEPTS

- rural setting
- failure, loss
- poem of evidence
- success and failure

LITERARY TERMS

- images & details
- mood
- figurative language
- making inferences

He was a big man, says the size of his shoes
 on a pile of broken dishes by the house;
 a tall man too, says the length of the bed
 in an upstairs room; and a good, God-fearing man,
 says the Bible with a broken back
 on the floor by the window, dusty with sun;
 but not a man for farming, say the fields
 cluttered with boulders and the leaky barn.

A woman lived with him, says the bedroom wall
 papered with lilacs and the kitchen shelves
 covered with oilcloth, and they had a child,
 says the sandbox made from a tractor tire.
 Money was scarce, say the jars of plum preserves
 and canned tomatoes sealed in the cellar hole.
 And the winters cold, say the rags in the window frames.
 It was lonely here, says the narrow country road.

Something went wrong, says the empty house
 in the weed-choked yard. Stones in the fields
 say he was not a farmer; the still-sealed jars
 in the cellar say he left in a nervous haste.
 And the child? Its toys are strewn in the yard
 like branches after a storm—a rubber cow,
 a rusty tractor with a broken plow,
 a doll in overalls. Something went wrong, they say.

1) Make an inference about the father who lived in this farmhouse based on the evidence in stanza 1.

2) Make an inference about whether or not the mother who lived in the farmhouse enjoyed her life there.

3) Based on the evidence in the poem, make an inference about what exactly went wrong? Be an investigating detective and deduce what happened to the family.

Part 1: Practice Paraphrasing in *Abandoned Farmhouse*

Directions: Take the following lines and rewrite them in your own words (paraphrase).

Poet's Words	Your Words
A woman lived with him, says the bedroom wall papered with lilacs and the kitchen shelves covered with oilcloth, and they had a child, says the sandbox made from the tractor tire.	
Money was scarce, says the jars of plum preserves and canned tomatoes sealed in the cellar hole.	
And the winters cold, say the rags in the window frames. It was lonely here, says the narrow country road.	

Part 2: Analyzing Details in *Abandoned Farmhouse*



Sensory details—appeal to the reader’s five senses (sight, touch, taste, smell, hearing)

<i>Characters</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>Sense</i>
Farmer		
Wife		
Child		
Farmhouse		

Part 3: Analyzing Mood in *Abandoned Farmhouse*

MOOD

WORDS the poet uses

<i>What feelings did you have as you read the poem?</i>	<i>What words/phrases/lines in the poem helped elicit your feelings and create the mood?</i>

Part 4: Analyzing Word Choice in *Abandoned Farmhouse*

Diction- the specific word choices an author makes. These choices distinguish a writer's voice from other writers.

1. Circle all the adjectives in the poem. (Remember, an adjective is a part of speech that modifies/describes a noun or pronoun.)

2. In the chart below categorize all the adjectives in the poem as positive, neutral, or negative.

Positive	Negative	Neutral

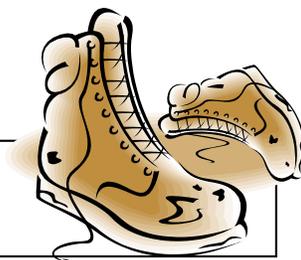
3. In which category did most of the adjectives fall? _____

4. What other words or lines in the poem fall into the same category? (List at least 4 examples)

Part 5: Analyzing Tone in *Abandoned Farmhouse*

Tone—the author's attitude towards the subject or topic of the work

Tone Words	mysterious depressing	uplifting frightening	serene amusing	bleak perplexing	optimistic enlightening
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The author uses _____ to create a/an _____ tone in the

poem. For example, when the author writes, _____
