

Name: _____ Period: _____ Date: _____

January

The days are short,
The sun a spark,
Hung thin between
The dark and dark.

Fat snowy footsteps
Track the floor.
Milk bottles burst
Outside the door.

The river is
A frozen place
Held still beneath
The trees of lace.

The sky is low.
The wind is gray.
The radiator
Purrs all day.

--John Updike

Speaker: _____

Occasion: _____

Audience: _____

Purpose: _____

Subject: _____

Tone: _____

Answer the following questions with complete sentences.

1) Read the poem. *What do you notice? What are your first impressions?* _____

2) Read it again. *What do you notice that you didn't notice the first time?* _____

3) What feelings or memories does this poem conjure in you? _____

4) SOAPSTone the poem (above).

5) Analyze/Torture a Confession out of it (other side).

6) Some scholars say that every text is an argument. Do you agree? Is this short poem making some kind of argument, or is it just a description? Explain your answer.

Poetry Analysis: Torturing a Confession Out of “January” by John Updike*

Title of Poem _____ Poet _____

What is the **point of view** of the poem?

Who is the **narrator**? What do you know about him/her?

What is the **tone** of the poem? (How does the narrator feel about the subject matter?)

What **mood** is created by the poem? (How do you feel while reading/hearing the poem?)

Paraphrase/Overview: What happens in the poem?

Imagery: List the sensory images (visual, auditory, touch, taste, smell).

Figurative Language: List **similes**, **metaphors**, **personification**, and **symbols** that appear in the poem.

Poetic Devices: List examples of **alliteration**, **assonance**, **repetition**, **rhyme**.

Irony: Identify instances of verbal, situational, or dramatic irony in the poem.

Theme: Write a sentence (that does *not* state a moral, give advice, or identify right and wrong) that expresses a generalization about life that is supported by the poem.