**A Close Reading of “Casey at the Bat” by Ernest Thayer**

**Vocabulary: Draw a picture clue for each word.**

1. Preceded – go before
2. Melancholy – sadness
3. Dell – small valley
4. Doffed – lifted; tipped
5. Visage – appearance
6. Spheroid – sphere; ball

**As you read the poem, answer complete the tasks on the right of the text. Write the answer beneath the task and underline the textual evidence – where you found the answer in the text.**

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| **Text** | **Task** |
| The outlook wasn’t brilliant for the Mudville nine that day;  The score stood four to two with but one inning more to play.  And then when Cooney died at first, and Barrows did the same,  A sickly silence fell upon the patrons of the game.  A straggling few got up to go in deep despair. The rest  Clung to that hope which springs eternal in the human breast;  They thought if only Casey could but get a whack at that–  We’d put up even money now with Casey at the bat.  But Flynn preceded Casey, as did also Jimmy Blake,  And the former was a lulu and the latter was a cake;  So upon that stricken multitude grim melancholy sat,  For there seemed but little chance of Casey’s getting to the bat.  But Flynn let drive a single, to the wonderment of all,  And Blake, the much despis-ed, tore the cover off the ball;  And when the dust had lifted, and the men saw what had occurred,  There was Johnnie safe at second and Flynn a-hugging third.  Then from 5,000 throats and more there rose a lusty yell;  It rumbled through the valley, it rattled in the dell;  It knocked upon the mountain and recoiled upon the flat, For Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.  There was ease in Casey’s manner as he stepped into his place;  There was pride in Casey’s bearing and a smile on Casey’s face.  And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly doffed his hat,  No stranger in the crowd could doubt ‘twas Casey at the bat.  Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt;  Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on his shirt.  Then while the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his hip,  Defiance flashed in Casey’s eye, a sneer curled Casey’s lip.  And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through the air,  And Casey stood a-watching it in haughty grandeur there.  Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped–  “That ain’t my style,” said Casey. “Strike one,” the umpire said.  From the benches, black with people, there went up a muffled roar,  Like the beating of the storm-waves on a stern and distant shore.  “Kill him! Kill the umpire!” shouted someone on the stand;  And it’s likely they’d have killed him had not Casey raised his hand.  With a smile of Christian charity great Casey’s visage shone;  He stilled the rising tumult; he bade the game go on;  He signaled to the pitcher, and once more the spheroid flew;  But Casey still ignored it, and the umpire said, “Strike two.”  “Fraud!” cried the maddened thousands, and echo answered fraud;  But one scornful look from Casey and the audience was awed.  They saw his face grow stern and cold, they saw his muscles strain,  And they knew that Casey wouldn’t let that ball go by again.  The sneer is gone from Casey’s lip, his teeth are clenched in hate;  He pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate.  And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it go,  And now the air is shattered by the force of Casey’s blow.  Oh, somewhere in this favored land the sun is shining bright;  The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light,  And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout;  But there is no joy in Mudville–mighty Casey has struck out. | Task: (stanza 1)- What mood does the author suggest at the beginning of the poem? Underline the textual evidence to support your answer.  Task: (stanza 2)- What evidence does the author give to support the idea that the team is disappointed with the game, but haven’t given up hope?  Task: (stanza 3) - Did the fans have any confidence in Flynn and Jimmy? How do you know?  Task: (stanza 4)- Who’s team is Flynn on? How do you know?  Task: (Stanza 5)- According to details from the poem, how does the audience feel? Why?  Task: (Stanza 6)- The author uses descriptive language throughout the poem to describe Casey and the game. How would you describe Casey’s character? Use evidence to support your answer.  Task: (Stanza 7)- What tone does the author suggest in this stanza? Use evidence to support your answer.  Task: (Stanza 8)- What important event just happened? Why is this surprising?  Task: (Stanza 9)- How does the audience feel? Why? How is this different from the way Casey feels?  Task: (Stanza 10)- What did the umpire call the second pitch? How do you think the crowd will react?  Task: (Stanza 11)- How does the author show that Casey has a powerful influence over the crowd?  Task: (Stanza 12)- What emotions does Casey display now that he has two strikes? Use evidence to support your answer.  Task: (Stanza 13)- How does the author build excitement and anticipation up to this point? How did the ending surprise you? |

Reading 2 – Label the rhyme scheme of the poem. Reread the poem and find examples of each figurative language. Highlight and label the example.

* 1. Alliteration
  2. Hyperbole
  3. Imagery
  4. Metaphor
  5. Personification
  6. Repetition
  7. Simile

1. What is the theme of this poem?
2. Describe the change in **mood** from the beginning, middle, and end. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
3. Describe the change in **tone** from the beginning, middle, and end. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.