Whitman and Dickinson Poetry Assignment

Due: __________

You will be writing 2 poems: one modelled after Walt Whitman and one after Emily Dickinson

Whitman poem: At least 20 lines written in free verse.
• Uses parallel structure (repetition of initial words or phrases).
• Uses imagery (show don’t tell)
• Uses at least two of these other poetic devices we learned: figurative language (metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole), alliteration, assonance, consonance and/or onomatopoeia.
• Annotation: Required elements are highlighted and labeled to show you’ve written with intention.
• Short paragraph (5 sentences) explaining the inspiration and intent of your poem and explaining its connection to Walt Whitman.

Dickinson poem: At least 12 lines written with a rhyme scheme (traditional or slant).
• Experiment with capitalization, punctuation, and line breaks
• Uses imagery (show don’t tell)
• Uses at least two of these other poetic devices we learned: figurative language (metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole), alliteration, assonance, consonance and/or onomatopoeia.
• Annotation: Required elements are highlighted and labeled to show you’ve written with intention.
• Short paragraph (5 sentences) explaining the inspiration and intent of your poem and explaining its connection to Emily Dickinson.

You will choose one poem to present to the class on ______________

Scoring
• Adequately utilizes style of Whitman/Dickinson: 15 points
• Correctly used & annotated poetic devices: 20 points
• Thoughtfully expresses a deeper meaning, explained in paragraph: 15 points
  = 50 points x 2 = 100 points
• Presentation: 20 points = 120 total points

Try to express some “deeper” meaning; avoid trite, cliché and overdone ideas. Try to make your images express something beyond themselves the way that Emily Dickinson uses a beheaded flower to represent the callous indifference of nature, or Whitman uses his every day people to represent the democratic spirit of America.
Annotation Example:

I felt a Funeral, in my Brain, (340)

BY EMILY DICKINSON

Rhyme

A  I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,
B  And Mourners to and fro
C  Kept treading - treading - till it seemed
D  And when they all were seated,
E  A Service, like a Drum -
F  Kept beating - beating - till I thought
G  And then I heard them lift a Box
H  And creak across my Soul
I  With those same Boots of Lead, again,
J  As all the Heavens were a Bell,
K  And Being, but an Ear,
L  And I, and Silence, some strange Race,
M  And then a Plank in Reason, broke,
N  And I dropped down, and down -
N/ And hit a World, at every plunge,

Consonance: F

Consonance: R

Assonance: “eh”

Simile

Metaphor

Onomatopoeia; Consonance: Cr

Consonance: M

Assonance: “ah,” “uh”

Alliteration

Consonance: S, R

Consonance: D, R

Having trouble starting? Try this:

1. The first thing you should do is to think of the subject you’d like to write a poem about and begin brainstorming.

2. Try to choose a **topic** that would appeal to a **romantic poet**: truth, beauty, nature, nostalgia, youth, desire, independence, feelings and emotions (over logic and facts), the nature of life and death...

3. Write down anything at all that you associate with that subject: images, smells, sounds, tastes, feelings, memories, experiences, people, places, anything at all that you associate with your main subject.

4. Then, begin to transform those things into poetic verse.