Questions for a Literary Analysis

Consider the following questions before, during, and after your reading of the literary work you will analyze:

- **Plot**
  - What happens? What conflicts occur? How are the conflicts resolved? Or are the conflicts left unresolved? Did any of the events in the story surprise you?

- **Characters**
  - Who are the main characters? Who are the less important characters? How do they interact with each other? What do they reveal about themselves through their actions and words? Do any characters change from the beginning of the story to the end? If so, how do they change and why?

- **Setting**
  - What is the setting of the story? Does the setting influence the plot or characters? Does the setting influence the tone of the story? Is the setting dark and gloomy or bright and happy? Why did the author choose this setting?

- **Point of View**
  - Who is telling the story (or saying the poem)? Is this person trustworthy? Does the point of view influence the way the story is told? Why did the author choose this point of view?

- **Tone**
  - Does the person telling the story sound happy? Sad? Angry? Neutral? Does the narrator use irony by saying something that really means another thing? Does the author use formal language or informal (colloquial) language? How does the tone reflect the plot, characters, or setting?

- **Images**
  - Do any images seem especially important in the story? What images does the author use over and over? Are any images similar to each other? How do the images influence the tone of the story? Why did the author choose these images?

- **Theme**
  - What does the story (or poem) mean? Did the author intend this meaning? If so, why did the author choose this theme? If not, what aspects of the story reveal this unintended theme?

If your analysis is too short or seems a little weak, refer to these questions to help you further develop your analysis by more deeply analyzing and/or by adding new analyses.