Walt Whitman Exegesis 2017

July, 1854. Steel engraving by Samuel Hollyer of daguerreotype by Gabriel Harrison.
The engraving appeared in the 1855 and 1856 editions of *Leaves of Grass.*
text and image from http://www.whitmanarchive.org/gallery/galleryframeset_files/1850s/

An exegesis is a critical interpretation or explanation of a text. The term, "exegesis," is derived from the Greek roots *ex* ("out of") and *hēgeisthai* ("to guide or lead"). In other words, an exegesis is a "reading out" from a source text.

Please note that in order to help students learn to work through major writing assignments independently, the Walt Whitman Exegesis is <u>not</u> a guided multi-deadline process.

In preparation for the Walt Whitman Exegesis, you have read a brief biography of Walt Whitman, selected a poem worthy of your attention, and crafted a creative emulation of that poem. Here is a suggested process you might use to generate a Walt Whitman Exegesis:

1. **Prepare:** Type out your poem on a clean sheet of paper, preferably while triple-spacing the text. Also, save a single-spaced version of your poem, which you will need to submit with your final copy.

2. **Annotate:** Use the space on your triple-spaced version to mark observations, insert definitions, ask questions, and make notes that allow you better to understand your poem.

3. Outline: Prepare notes on the form, rhythm, sounds, language, imagery and themes of your poem, and then derive an exegetical claim (thesis) from these notes. Consider carefully the relationship between form and function. You may wish to complete the exegesis prewriting Q&A worksheet that will guide you from annotating your poem to generating a working thesis. Then generate an outline that will include, at minimum:

- working thesis
- body paragraph topic sentences
- textual evidence to be included in each body paragraph.

Due date: ?

4. Draft & Revise: Draft an exegetical essay of no more than three pages.

Due date: ?

5. Collaborate: Because you are familiar with the benefits of collaboration in producing literary analysis essays, enlist a peer review partner or consider forming a peer review team.

Due date: ?

6. Prepare a Final Copy: After considering the advice presented during the peer workshop process, revise your essay. Print one (1) hard copy which you will submit AND upload the document to Turnitin.com. Maximum length: 3 pages

Due date: 28/29 May 2017

N.B. This assignment does not require you to consult outside sources. In fact, if you feel compelled to research your poem, begin by consulting with your teacher.

If you elect to consult other sources, do so only after exhausting the limits of your own exegetical powers. This postponement will help you to avoid the enervating and sometimes crippling effects of consulting outside influences. In other words, the thinking of others can inhibit the thinking of your own thoughts.

- ✓ If you choose to consult outside sources, you must assume full responsibility for giving credit to the sources of words and ideas that are not your own.
- ✓ Before beginning your research, consult very carefully the Purdue OWL site or another reliable source to review the steps necessary for crafting in-text citations and for creating a "Works Cited" page in Modern Language Association (MLA) manuscript format.