

*The Stolen Child*  
**Explication Worksheet**

**In your reading response journal, record answers to the following;**

**Rhyming Pattern:**

- record the rhyming pattern for a verse;
- record the rhyming pattern for the entire poem;
- record examples of “line breaks” and discuss their significance, effectiveness, originality;

**Meter:**

- identify and record the meter;

**Metaphor:**

- record at least two examples of metaphors;
- develop the meaning or aptness of these metaphors relative to the themes of the poem;

**Imagery:**

- record at least two examples of Yeats’ use of imagery;
- are there any image patterns that lend unity to the poem, recurring images?
- Develop the meaning, significance, aptness of these images relative to the poem’s central themes;

**Symbolism:**

- Record examples of words that have a symbolic meaning; and discuss/assess their aptness relative to the poem’s themes;

**Myths:**

- Record examples of the poem’s mythic contents, and develop the significance of each relative to the poem’s themes;

**Place Names:**

- Record examples of place names, and discuss/assess their significance relative to the poem’s themes;

**Refrain:**

- Discuss the significance of the italicized refrain, relative to the poem’s themes and aesthetics; how does it function thematically and aesthetically?

**Themes/ Meaning**

- Record examples of words, phrases, or lines that underscore, reveal the poem's central themes?
- What role is assigned to nature in the poem?
- What role is assigned to a mythic past in the poem?
- What is problematic about the present circumstances of the "human child?"
- How is this poem more than just a celebration of nature?
- What is the meaning of the title, *The Stolen Child*?
- What images are associated with the civilized world that is offered in counterpoint to the Edenic realm of nature?
- List the poems central themes.

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### **Close Textual Analysis: Line-by-Line Explication**

- *Explicate*/develop the meaning of “where flapping herons wake/ the drowsy water-rats;”
- *Explicate*/develop the meaning of “faery vats/ full of berries/ and of reddest stolen cherries”;
- *Explicate* the meaning of “with a faery, hand in hand”;
- *Explicate* “the world’s more full of weeping than you can/ understand.” What might be the source/cause of the weeping to which Yeats refers?
- *Explicate*/ develop the meaning of “the wave of moonlight glosses/ The dim grey sands with light.”
- *Explicate*/develop the meaning of “weaving olden dances,” and “to and fro we leap.”
- *Explicate*/develop the meaning of “chase the frothy bubbles/ while the world is full of troubles/ and anxious in its sleep.”
- *Explicate*/ develop the meaning of “wandering water gushes;”
- *Explicate*/ develop the meaning of the “we seek for slumbering trout/ And whispering in their ears/ Give them unquiet dreams.”
- *Explicate*/develop the meaning of “ferns that drop their tears/ Over the young streams.”
- *Explicate*/ develop the meaning of “Away with us he’s going,” and “For he comes, the human child/ to the waters and the wild/ with a faery, hand in hand
- *Explicate*/ develop the meaning of “kettle on the hob,” “brown mice bob/ round and round the oat-meal chest.’