## **Close Reading Worksheet**

Use this worksheet to help you perform an in-depth analysis of a passage from a literary work. In addition to recording your ideas directly on this sheet, it's often a good idea to interact directly with the passage itself: circling, underlining, highlighting, and/or writing in the margins.

## 1. **<u>COLLECT</u>**: Gather information on the *surface* level.

Place the passage into context (speaker, setting, plot); work through difficult sentence structure; look up unfamiliar language; and make note of any images, comparisons, or allusions/references.

2. <u>**DISSECT</u>**: Look for patterns, inconsistencies, ambiguities—anything that "sticks out." Consider the passage's *formal* elements, including punctuation, syntax, language choices, rhetorical schemes, puns, and speech sounds. Make note of repetitions, contradictions, [competing] discourses, and linguistic or syntactical anomalies.</u>

## 3. **<u>INTERPRET</u>**: Ask why it matters ("So what?").

- a. Entertain the possible function of one or two of the formal elements you noted above: How might these inform, reinforce, or contradict the passage's content?
- b. Consider the passage's relation to the whole text: How does it work to reinforce, destabilize, or challenge certain concerns or ideas discussed in the work? What connections can be made between this and other passages/events in the text?
- c. Reflect on how this passage could speak to certain historical/cultural concerns circulating in early modern England: In what ways does it contribute to specific conversations or debates?