**Practice Exploring Imagery and a Poem’s Situation**

Introduction: Some poems, like Emily Dickinson’s “Fame is a Bee” require *thinking* rather than *experiencing*. That poem, you’ll recall, has no speaker or situation to describe. It’s a brief and intellectual poem. Other poems, like the one below, create a speaker (narrated by “I”) and use rich imagery to create an experience the reader must experience to express the situation of the poem. Most poems utilize visual imagery; however, others use olfactory imagery (what we smell), tactile imagery (what we physically feel), auditory imagery (what we hear) and taste imagery.

Directions: Read the poem below. Assign each type of imagery a different-colored highlighter (in MS Word). Label specific phrases or lines with different colors to practice identifying various forms of imagery. Then, in the space below, articulate the basic situation of the poem

Meeting at Night

The gray sea and the long black land;

And the yellow half-moon large and low;

And the startled little waves that leap

In fiery ringlets from their sleep,

As I gain the cove with pushing prow,

And quench its speed i’ the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;

Three fields to cross till a farm appears;

A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch

And blue spurt of lighted match,

And a voice less loud, through its joy and fears,

Than the two hearts beating each to each!

Robert Browning

1. The poet never tells us directly, but what is this poem about?

2. Describe the basic situation of the poem:

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3. The poem invites a number of questions. What information is left out that makes the poem ambiguous? What confuses you about this poem?