English 2342 1 Paper 2: Poetry Explication Paper Overview On this assignment, write a formal essay that performs an explication of one of the short poems we read and discussed in class between weeks 6 and 7. Length: 2 to 3 pages. NOTE: The set of poems you can write about for Paper 2 does not include two longer poems: Coleridge’s “Rime” and Wordsworth’s “Tintern Abbey.” You can write about either (or both) of these longer poems on Paper 3, to be completed after the midterm. Assignment Due Date Your completed essay in Microsoft Word format must be submitted to Blackboard by or before 9:00 a.m. on Friday, October 14, the morning of the midterm exam. What’s an Explication? Also known as a “close reading,” an explication explains and interprets details and meanings in a work of literature. Reread Gardner’s explanation of this type of writing assignment on pages 26-27 in our course poetry packet. A passage from her explanation to note here: “The job of an explication is twofold: to point out particular, salient elements of style and to explain the purpose and effect of these elements within the text” (26). Example Essays See the example student explication essays in our poetry packet, pages 28-29 and 53-56. Needed Sections of This Essay Three main sections. NOTE: Do not label the sections or use subheadings in your essay text. The section names below are only for explanatory purposes on this assignment sheet. Section A. Interpretive Introduction • Write an opening interpretive statement on the significance of the poem in your own words. • Write a brief paraphrase of the poem in prose (in conventional sentences, not lines of verse). NOTE: Paraphrase main passages of the poem, not every single part of every line. • Your paraphrase needs to clarify the occasion of the poem, the poem’s speaker(s), and the statement the poem makes about its occasion. Section B. Analysis • Discuss two wording features and two sound features that, in your view, reinforce the poem’s message. Example analytical look at wording features (imagery, metaphor, simile, word choice, or syntax) . . . in line 1, Herrick inverts “my Julia goes” with “in silks” to emphasize the importance of . . . Example analytical look at sound features (rhyme, alliteration, assonance, or consonance) . . . the rhymes at the ends of the lines in stanza 2—see, free, me—reinforce the idea that . . .