**Imprints**

For My Delinquent Son

When you were minutes old,

you blinked at your first mug shot.

They inked the soles of your feet

and you made your first marks on the world.

A few years later

I loosened my grip

as you toddled off to another land

of finger paints and silhouettes,

a crew-cut innocence of upturned noses

and slippery new feelings.

From the pages of your yearbook,

a sullen face I didn’t recognize

clenched its square jaw,

the open stare closed

in misunderstanding

then disbelief

then anger.

Now the slap of a gavel

echoes that earlier slap

as you bury smudged hands

deep in your pockets.

I only see the back of your head.

Your footprints disappear down the hall.

PAT JASPER

To guide you along as you read and analyze “Imprints” by Pat Jasper, please complete the following with your groupmates:

1. **First, read the poem on your own.** Do this a few times, as it will definitely better your understanding. Remember, consider **M (Meanings), P(Punctuation), W(Word choice and use), LL(Line Length) and F(Figurative Language)**. In the space below, **write any questions** that come up as you read (what might the members of you group help you to understand?).

1. **Take turns, and tell each other your own summaries of the poem.** Learn, share, and take from the thoughts and opinions of your peers. Write your summaries in the space below (a few lines will do).
2. **Break down each stanza.** With your group, discuss and arrive at a clear understanding of what, exactly, is happening in each stanza, and indicate your shared thoughts on the poem page (notation, right?). This will help you better determine the poet’s purpose for each stanza, and how it is effective. Write a few lines below to summarize each stanza, after your discussion.
3. Identify and discuss how the poet has used **parallelism** in this poem. Hint: look to the first and last stanzas. Explain it in the space below.
4. With your group, determine the **overall** **FEELING** or **TONE** of this poem. **HOW DOES THE POET CREATE THIS TONE OR FEELING?** Write your thoughts in the space below.

When you have completed this analysis page, please move on to the next step – analyzing the poem, “The Man Who Finds That His Son Has Become A Thief.”

**The Man Who Finds That His Son Has Become A Thief**

Coming into the store at first angry

At the accusation, believing in

The word of his boy who has told him:

I didn’t steal anything, honest.

Then becoming calmer, seeing that anger

Will not help in the business, listening painfully

As the other’s evidence unfolds, so painfully slow.

Then seeing gradually that evidence

Almost as if slowly tightened around the neck

Of his son, at first vaguely circumstantial, then gathering damage.

Until there is present the unmistakable odour of guilt

Which now seeps into the mind and lays its poison.

Suddenly feeling sick and alone and afraid,

As if an unseen hand had slapped him in the face

For no reason whatsoever; wanting to get out

Into the street, the night, the darkness, anywhere to hide

The pain that must show in the face to these strangers, the fear.

It must be like this.

It could hardly be otherwise.

RAYMOND SOUSTER

**The Man Who Finds That His Son Has Become A Thief** by Raymond Souster

1. Tap into your background knowledge:

If you were to commit a crime this afternoon, who would be affected? Brainstorm, then list all of those people here:

1. Read the poem a few times. Remember, only one read will not allow you to pick up on much of what the poet is trying to say. In less than 20 words, summarize what is going on in the poem:
2. To better help you analyze each stanza, fill out the following boxes (one for each stanza):

PROOF (How do you know?)

Stanza 1 - FEELING

PROOF (How do you know?)

Stanza 2 – FEELING

Stanza 4 - FEELING

Stanza 3 - FEELING

PROOF (How do you know?)

PROOF (How do you know?)

Stanza 5 - FEELING

PROOF (How do you know?)

Stanza 6 - FEELING

PROOF (How do you know?)

4. List all of the references to pain, sickness or violence you can find.

5. What is the poet trying to do with all of these references? What effect do these references have on YOU, the reader? (You’re thinking about author choice here)

6. What do you think the last two lines might mean?

7. In your opinion, why did the poet write this poem?

After completing your analysis of “The Man Who Finds That His Son Has Become A Thief,” please complete the **Venn diagram** to compare and contrast that poem with “Imprints” by Pat Jasper.

