**Strategies to Understand Literature**

1. Read the Title. Write down predictions for this piece based totally on the title alone. What does the title hint?
2. Read the text all the way through. Do not worry about anything except trying to get a basic understanding of what is being said.
3. Re-read the text all the way through again. This time, be a *critical* reader.
4. Underline new vocabulary (any words you question).
5. In the left column,
   1. Ask questions regarding the text. Consider sentences and references you do not understand.
   2. Write the definitions to the words you underlined (obviously you will have to look them up!)
6. In the right column,
   1. Write personal comments about the text. Focus on the following ideas:
      1. Character traits, motivation
      2. Literary devices (foreshadowing, figurative language, mood, tone, allusion, setting, etc.)
      3. Observations and inferences
7. Highlight key concepts, in this case, key sentences regarding theme. Theme is the general topic the author is trying to convey throughout the text.
8. Step away from the text for a little time. Then, discuss references, vocabulary, and key concepts. Re-read the text a final time and summarize the section. Try to break it up so that it will not be overwhelming.

**Predictions**

What does the title mean/hint?

“This is the time of year when the guavas back home are ripened,” Mother would tell the family at dinnertime.

So far from home, Mother nevertheless took her reference points in autumn, her favorite season. Autumn, the dark season, came in the form of letters she received from relatives and friends left behind. Brown and flimsy thin like dead leaves, recycled who knows how many times, the letters threatened to dissolve with a single tear.

**Right Column**

1. Write down personal comments about the text. (Character traits, motivation, literary devices, observations, inferences.)

**Highlight**

Highlight key concepts, in this case, regarding theme.

**Summarize**

Summarize in sections.

**“Child of Two Worlds” Excerpt from *Perfume Dreams* by. Andrew Lam**

**Left Column**

1. Ask questions regarding the text.
2. Write down definitions of words you underline.

**Underline**

Underline under new vocabulary.