Revelation

We make ourselves a place apart
Behind light words that tease and flout,
But oh, the agitated heart
Till someone find us really out.

'Tis pity if the case require
(Or so we say) that in the end
We speak the literal to inspire
The understanding of a friend.

But so with all, from babes that play
At hide-and-seek to God afar,
So all who hide too well away
Must speak and tell us where they are.

- Robert Frost
Purpose: to explicate Robert Frost’s “Revelation”

Thesis: Frost’s poem urges all people to reveal their true selves to the rest of the world and thus not live in fear of their false personas being discovered.

Plan:
1. to introduce the poem by discussing the title
2. to analyze the first quatrain
3. to analyze the second quatrain
4. to analyze the third quatrain
5. to conclude by explaining thesis

Outline Itself:

I. Analysis of the title, “Revelation” and two definitions
   A. Meaning “the act of revealing” (oneself) or “the dramatic disclosure of something not previously known or realized”
      i. Revealing oneself to the world
      ii. “Dramatic” disclosure = drama = acting
   B. Meaning “a manifestation of divine will or truth”
      i. Realization of divine truth after revealing oneself
      ii. Divine truth = happier if not hiding
   C. Thesis

II. Analysis of First Quatrain
   A. Rhyme scheme = ABAB CDCD EFEF = sonnet – GG = ellipsis (artful omission because one must reveal the meaning for oneself)
   B. Summary – hide ourselves by making fun of others but then everyone is flouted (made fun of with contempt)
   C. Word analysis of light (lights = One’s individual opinions, choices, or standards” and missing stress for emphasis of meaning) and really (syntax or placement and also stress on the syllable “real”)
   D. Heart = agitate
   E. Find (not finds) = subjunctive = uncertainty
   F. 1st person plural = poet included in revelation

III. Analysis of Second Quatrain
   A. Summary – wait until friendship to reveal ourselves (paradox → friend with wrong person)
   B. Diction = case, word analysis
      i. Sealed in (case meaning box)
      ii. Formality of all acquaintances
C. Parentheses → away from rest of stanza → not really required because we could have never pretended in the first place
D. Choice of literal (meaning “not embellished”) instead of just real
E. Inspire = friends were not inspired before = always doubted

IV. Analysis of Third Quatrain
A. Summary – tells everyone to expose their true selves and take action
B. Even babes - well, children - play hide-and-seek (encouraged to hide from others and make the seeker feel alone)
C. God afar – no one knows God, but He still inspires
D. Hide too well = sometimes or a little is okay, but it can be taken too far
E. Where instead of who reinstates hiding (in a place)
F. Says must but gives no consequence

V. Conclusion
A. Movement from we to they = poet is taking action thru poem
B. Final sum-up of thesis
The title "Revelation" is appropriate for this poem because of its double meaning. First, revelation can mean "the act of revealing" or "the dramatic disclosure of something not previously known or realized." This "dramatic" revealing suggests a revealing of oneself to the world but also, through the term "dramatic," a false presentation filled with drama. However, revelation can also mean "a manifestation of divine will or truth." This divine truth, which comes after revealing oneself, is that a person will be happier if he is not hiding anything. Frost's poem urges us all to reveal our true selves to the rest of the world and thus not live in fear of our false personas being discovered.

After looking at the rhyme scheme and finding it to be ABAB CDCD EFEF, I realized that this is the form of a Shakespearean sonnet without the GG couplet "revealed." This ellipsis, or artful omission, occurs because Frost wants the meaning of the poem to remain hidden and the reader to come to his own revelation.
The first quatrain tells us that we hide ourselves by making fun of others. This idea presents us with what many call the "real world." That is harsh and full of teasing andfloating. However, Frost suggests that this "real world" is actually not real at all. Frost uses the word light, coupled with its being un stressed, to ostensibly show the joking to be light-heart ed. However, light also means "one's individual opinions and standards," and hints that we place our "lights" apart by teasing and floating. Another word Frost carefully chose and placed was readily. Frost places this word so that it both is next to us and has the stress on the syllable "read." Finally, Frost uses the subjunctive of the verb find to show uncertainty because, in fact, some people never are "found out."

The second quatran shows us a paradox in which a person waits until he is friends with another person to reveal his true self. This action is a paradox because the other person had become friends with the first man's false persona and may never had become friends if the truth had been revealed earlier. In this quatrain, is tung the words that I believe reveals the poems
meaning. Frost refers ambiguously to this whole situation as a case. Case first give a connotation of formality, as in a lawyer's case. However, case can also signify where something, like a person's true self, is held in storage and sealed in. I believe that Frost puts the phrase (or so we say) in parentheses, referring to the case requiring a revelation because this revelation would not be required had the person not hidden himself in the beginning. In this quatrain, Frost says that we should speak the literal instead of speaking the truth. I believe that Frost chose this word, literal, because it has the unique meaning of "something not embellished," or the truth in its simplest form. Finally, the word inspire (that only comes in the end) suggests that, before the end, the understanding of a friend had always doubted our false persona.

This poem that is not a sonnet ends then with a third quatrain. In this last stanza, all hiding persons are asked to speak and tell us where they are. Frost makes the point the even little children, babies, are taught
to hide from others in the game hide-and-seek.
Frost also points out that even God himself
has never revealed his true self to the
people. The paraphrasing hide too well away is
interesting because it suggests that a
little hidden personality is okay, but this
hiding can be taken too far. The word
where instead of the word “who” furthers
this sense of a persona being hidden
away. Frost ends this stanza with a
threat (must) but no consequence. I
believe that he wants the reader to have a
revelation about this consequence by himself.

A careful eye will notice that this
poem begins with the first person plural
but ends with the third person. This
change implies that by writing the poem,
Frost has revealed his revelation. By
revealing his, Frost gives us a model with
which we can come to our own conclusions.