Peer review guidelines for song title poems

Today you’re tasked with reading over your friends’ song title poems. Recall I’ve asked that you construct these poems solely out of the titles of songs by a single musical artist. Repeating a song title in the poem is permissible, but if possible please try not to break the song titles up at all (except across lines, as desired...that is, please don’t jam one song title into the middle of another). After your poem has been reviewed once, I’ll ask you each to read your poems aloud to the class, so that we can get some sense of their aural effects.

The guidelines below will help you to provide some feedback as we review one another’s work in a laid-back “workshop” setting. Before getting to the assignment-specific guidelines, as before, let me (more briefly) review some general guidelines for peer review in our course.

Rules of Engagement.

1. Be helpful.
2. Be respectful and kind.
3. Be constructive.

Guidelines for this assignment. As you read your peer’s work, take a few notes in response to the following prompts and be prepared to share your notes in conversation with your peer about their piece.

1. Constraint. Is the constraint applied correctly? If you’re unfamiliar with the artist in question, ask your friend if the song titles are indeed intact. Have any liberties been taken in constructing the poem?

2. Subject. What person, place, or thing is the subject of each poem? Does the poem tell a story? Describe this story, if there is one, in a single sentence. Keep in mind, as Roubaud pointed out, that many Oulipian pieces refer to the constraint being applied. Bonus points for this!
3. **Tone.** Does the poem have a definitive tone, mood, or feel to it? In one sentence apiece, describe the way the poem makes you feel.

4. **Word choice.** Are the titles chosen apt ones? Do any of the titles seem out of place, ineffectively jarring, or otherwise weak?

5. **Other comments.** Is there anything else you’d like to talk to your friend about regarding her or his poems?