

Poetry

DEFINITION

- A poem is a type of writing designed to convey experiences, ideas, or emotions in a vivid and imaginative way.
- The basic unit of poetry is the **line**. It serves the same function as the sentence in prose, although most poetry maintains the use of **grammar** within the structure of the poem. Most poems have a structure in which each line contains a set amount of **syllables**; this is called **meter**. Lines are also often grouped into **stanzas**.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF POETRY

- Poems are characterized by literary techniques such as
 - Use of meter --the regular pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables that make up a line of poetry. Meter gives rhythm and regularity to poetry.
 - Use of rhyme-- A **rhyme** is a repetition of similar sounds (or the same sound) in two or more words, most often in the final syllables of lines in **poems** and songs.
 - Use of language, meaning, sound, and rhythm to evoke a specific response.
 - Use of stanzas--A **stanza** is a division in poetry shown by a line break. In poetry, a stanza is the equivalent of a paragraph, only a stanza is made up of lines of poetry. In the poem below, each stanza is made up of four lines.

TYPES OF POEMS

- Poems can be categorized into various poetic forms based on their characteristics.
 - A **ballad** is a poem that tells a story. It is often of folk origin and intended to be sung. Ballads often consist of simple stanzas and usually have a refrain (a repeated phrase or stanza).
 - *example:*

Yankee Doodle went to town
A-riding on a pony
Stuck a feather in his hat
And called it macaroni.

Yankee Doodle, keep it up
Yankee Doodle dandy
Mind the music and the step
And with the girls be handy.

Father and I went down to camp
Along with Captain Gooding
And there we saw the men and boys
As thick as hasty pudding.

Yankee Doodle, keep it up
Yankee Doodle dandy
Mind the music and the step
And with the girls be handy
 - A **blank verse** poem is written in iambic pentameter. That means each line has ten syllables. The syllables have a pattern of unstressed syllable, stressed syllable, unstressed syllable, stressed syllable, and so on. The lines do not have an end rhyme scheme.
 - *example:*

But do not let us quarrel anymore,
No, my Lucrezia; bear with me for once:
Sit down and all shall happen as you wish.
You turn your face, but does it bring your heart?
~Robert Browning

- o A **couplet** is a pair of lines that usually rhyme. Couplets can appear in other poetry forms, such as sonnets.

- *example:*

O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
William Shakespeare

- o An **elegy** is traditionally written in response to the death of a person or group. In content, it is similar to an epitaph (written on a tombstone) or a eulogy (written using prose). An elegy focuses on the loss or grief itself.

- *example:*

Too proud to die; broken and blind he died
The darkest way, and did not turn away,
A cold kind man brave in his narrow pride

On that darkest day, Oh, forever may
He lie lightly, at last, on the last, crossed
Hill, under the grass, in love, and there grow
Dylan Thomas

- o An **epic** poem is a long poem narrating the heroic exploits of an individual in a way central to the beliefs and culture of the society. Typical elements include fabulous adventures, superhuman deeds, majestic language, and a mythical setting.

- *examples:*

The Odyssey by Homer
Beowulf

- o A **lyric** poetry does not attempt to tell a story. It is of a more personal nature. Rather than portraying characters and actions, the lyric poet addresses the reader directly, portraying the speaker's feelings, states of mind, and perceptions. Lyric poetry often is written with a specific rhyme scheme and meter.

- *examples:*

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong,
The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam,
The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work,
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deckhand
singing on the steamboat deck,
The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hatter singing as he stands,
The wood-cutter's song, the ploughboy's on his way in the morning, or
at noon intermission or at sundown,
The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at work, or of
the girl sewing or washing,
Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else,
The day what belongs to the day—at night the party of young fellows,
robust, friendly,

Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.
Walt Whitman

- o A **haiku** (pronounced HIGH-koo) is a Japanese form of poetry. It consists of three unrhymed lines of five, seven, and five syllables.
 - *example:*
Springtime in the woods (*five syllables*)
A little white snake went in (*seven syllables*)
The pond very fast. (*five syllables*)
- o **Narrative** poems are poems that tell a story. They have characters and plot just like a story. Sometimes they have dialogue, themes, and conflicts. Narrative poems can sometimes be categorized as another form, such as ballads or epics.
 - *examples:*
The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer
"The Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe
- o An **ode** is a poem that focuses on one subject and finds an original way to express what is good and unique about it. The structure of odes has changed over the last 100 years, but traditional odes follow a rhyme scheme of ABABCDECDE for each stanza.
 - *examples:*
"Ode on a Grecian Urn" by John Keats
"Ode to the Confederate Dead" by Allen Tate
- o **Free verse** is poetry written without regard to form, rhyme, rhythm, meter, or line breaks. A poem written in free verse doesn't have a clear traditional form.
 - *examples:*
Passing stranger! you do not know how longingly I look upon you,
You must be he I was seeking, or she I was seeking, (it comes to me
as of a dream,)
I have somewhere surely lived a life of joy with you,
All is recall'd as we flit by each other, fluid, affectionate,
chaste, matured,
You grew up with me, were a boy with me or a girl with me,
I ate with you and slept with you, your body has become not yours
only nor left my body mine only,
You give me the pleasure of your eyes, face, flesh, as we pass, you
take of my beard, breast, hands, in return,
I am not to speak to you, I am to think of you when I sit alone or
wake at night alone,
I am to wait, I do not doubt I am to meet you again,
I am to see to it that I do not lose you.

Walt Whitman

- o A **sonnet** is a form of poetry written in fourteen lines and ending in a couplet. Sonnets also have a specific rhythm the poet must follow. They are usually written in iambic pentameter.

- *example:*

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest;
 So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
 So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

William Shakespeare

ELEMENTS OF POETRY

- **Theme-** Controlling Idea: The theme of a literary work. The controlling idea of a poem is the idea continuously developed throughout the poem by sets of key words that identify the poet's subject and his attitude or feeling about it. It may also be suggested by the title of a poem or by segment of the poem. It is rarely stated explicitly by the poet, but it can be stated by the reader and it can be stated in different ways. The controlling idea is an idea, not a moral; it is a major idea, not a minor supporting idea or detail; and it controls or dominates the poem as a whole.
- **Persona-** A persona, from the Latin for mask, is a character taken on by a poet to speak in a first-person poem. A Persona is the speaker in the poem and revealed through the voice speaking in the poem. Persona may be the voice of the poet --in a neutral sense-- or a created character. Persona also implies a situation or context for the poem's speaker. Through voice we hear and feel the emotional contour of the poem and its underlying theme.
- **Mood** is the effect of the author's words and tone on the reader. It is the feeling that an author sets or creates for the reader using carefully chosen words and phrases, as well as other devices such as repetition, rhyme, and hyperbole: "the reader's mood."

A poem's mood refers to the emotions evoked by the poem's language. When poets use words to specifically inspire feelings of sadness, anger, joy or other emotions, those words contribute to the poem's mood.

"Mood" is a term used synonymously with 'atmosphere' to indicate in a literary work the prevailing feeling or frame of mind, especially at the start of a play, poem, or novel, creating a sense of expectation about what is to follow."

Some adjectives to describe MOOD: playful, sentimental, suspenseful, somber, melancholy, joyous, depressed, mysterious, solemn, vulnerable, haunting, hopeful, lonely, relaxed, cranky, restless

- **Tone** is an expression of an poet's attitude toward a subject and contributes to the mood: "the author's tone." Tone can be described as: adoring, compassionate, reassuring, humorous, friendly, preachy, proud, euphoric, impartial, neutral, serious, arrogant, hostile, sarcastic, disrespectful, confused, melancholy
- **Rhyme Scheme** - Rhyme scheme is the pattern of rhyme in a poem. To find a poem's rhyme scheme, look at the last word of each line. If there is a rhyme scheme, some of the last words will rhyme with each other. Remember that not all poems have a rhyme scheme.

A.) Labeling (for end rhyme)

i.) Label the first line of the poem with the letter "a".

ii.) Label the second line of the poem either:

"a" if it rhymes with line one or

"b" if it does not rhyme.

iii.) Label the third line of the poem:

"a" or "b" if it rhymes with either lines one or two

"c" if it does not rhyme.

iv.) Continue in the same fashion throughout the remainder of the poem.

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- You can assign a letter to the sound of each line's last word. Look at the examples below.

- **AABB** - Every two lines rhyme.

Unreal

by C. Vesely

I thought I had found THE ONE (A)

He eclipsed the stars, moon, and sun (A)

Yet, with each passing day (B)

The blue skies turned a little more gray. (B)

- In this poem, the letter A represents the "un" sound. The letter B represents the "ay" sound. That's why you call this rhyme scheme AABB.

- **ABCB** - The second and fourth line of each stanza rhyme.

A Sunday Morning

by C. Vesely
I sat and ate blueberries from a plastic carton (A)
My nephew Tristan joined me (B)
We ate blueberries and read the paper together (C)
We laughed because we were happy. (B)

Dust of Snow

by Robert Frost

The way a **crow**
Shook down on **me**
The dust of **snow**
From a hemlock **tree**
Has given my **heart**
A change of **mood**
And save some **part**
Of a day I had **rued**.

- Meter - the regular pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables that make up a line of poetry. Meter gives rhythm and regularity to poetry.
- **Sound devices in Poetry** - A poem is a type of writing designed to convey experiences, ideas, or emotions in a vivid and imaginative way. Poems are characterized by literary techniques such as rhyme and sounds.
 - **Internal rhyme** is a rhyme that occurs within a line of verse.
 - *example:*
In the grey grains of sand
The dark veins of dropping rain
 - **Consonance** is the repetition of consonants or of a consonant pattern, especially at the ends of words.
 - *examples:*
blank, blink
strong, string
 - **Assonance** is also called vowel rhyme. It is a rhyme in which the same vowel sounds are used with different consonants in the stressed syllables of the rhyming words.
 - *example:*
penitent, reticence
 - **End rhyme** is a rhyme that occurs in the last syllables of verses.
 - *example:*
On the train
She left again
And I remain
In the rain!
 - **Alliteration** is the repetition of the same sounds or of the same kinds of sounds at the beginning of words or in stressed syllables.
 - *example:*

Kara cried her karaoke tears.
She could not mask her fake fears.

- o **Onomatopoeia** is the use of words such as "buzz" or "moo" that imitate the sounds associated with the objects to which they refer.
 - *example:*

The buzz of the bees filled the air.

Repetition: to use the same sound, word, or line. Repetition is the **repeating** of a sound, word, or phrase for **emphasis**.

Parallel Structure: to repeat the same words at the beginning of lines

Refrain: to repeat a line