

Poetry Terms

Poem- is piece of literature written in meter or verse expressing emotions which are expressed by the use of a variety of different techniques. Poems are usually written in lines

Line- a basic structural component of a poem. Lines can be written in free form, in syllabic form (e.g. haiku) or in metrical form.

Stanza- the poetic version of a paragraph, made by arranging the lines into units separated by a space

Prose- a poem usually written in sentences

Foil - A character whose qualities contrast with those of another character.

Types of Poetry

Lyrical- short, song-like have a rhyme scheme

Dramatic- demonstrates a conflict, often in 3rd person

Narrative- tells a story in plot form, pauses for moments of humor or descriptions. Events are in sequential order.

Epic- long, narrative poetry ex. *The Odyssey*

Free Verse- a form of poetry that does not contain repeated rhythms or regular rhyme, but does use other sound devices like assonance, alliteration, imagery

Blank Verse- unrhymed iambic pentameter, common in Shakespeare's plays and many longer poems

Limerick- Form of poetry consisting of five lines with a rhyme scheme of a-a-b-b-a. The first, second and fifth lines rhyme with each other while the third and fourth rhyme

Haiku- is a Japanese poem composed of three unrhymed lines of 5-7-5 syllables. Haiku poetry uses imagery and reflects nature

Tanka- is a Japanese poem composed of five unrhymed lines of 5-7-5-7-7 syllables. Tankas use imagery but can be about anything

Acrostic- poem where the first letter of each line spells out a significant word or phrase

Ballad- refers to either a simple song or to a narrative poem. Traditional ballads were stories of love or adventure

Sonnet- A fourteen line poem usually in iambic verse (Shakespeare)

Imagery/Figurative Language

Simile- comparison of two objects using either 'as' or 'like' ex. My love is like a red, red rose

Metaphor- an implied comparison between two unrelated things that indicates a likeness
ex: Her lips were roses

Personification- giving human qualities to objects, ideas or animals ex. The wind whistled. Or
Her heart cried out

Hyperbole- extreme exaggeration which is use for emphasis and not to be taken literally
ex. sweat to death, a river of tears, starving to death

Pun - A form of word play

Sound Patterns

Alliteration- the repetition of initial sounds usually consonants; usually the first letter of the word;
tongue twisters ex. Sally sells seashells by the seashore

Assonance- the repetition of a vowel sound in two or more words ex. Glazed with rain water

Consonance- the repetition of a consonant sound in two or more words ex. Toms' fat cat sat totally still

Couplet- A stanza comprising of two lines that rhyme

Iambic Pentameter- the most common metrical forms in English, consisting of an unrhymed line with five feet or accents, each foot containing an unaccented syllable and an accented syllable. It breaks into five feet, like this:- weak STRONG / weak STRONG / weak STRONG / weak STRONG / weak STRONG

Meter- Is the regular pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables that make up a line of poetry. Meter gives rhythm and regularity to poetry

Refrain- line or phrase that recurs throughout a poem

Rhyme- occurs when the last vowel and consonant sounds of two words are identical

Rhyme Scheme- The pattern established by the arrangement of rhymes in a stanza or poem, generally described by using letters of the alphabet to denote the recurrence of rhyming lines ex. A-B-A

Sibilance- the repetition of the S sound or hissing sounds

Onomatopoeia- The use of words that imitate the sound that the poet is trying to describe
ex: sizzle, gurgle, buzz