

# A Lesson on Poetry: An Introduction

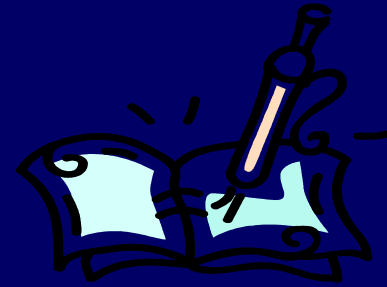
Literature and Composition

By:

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# Poetry is...



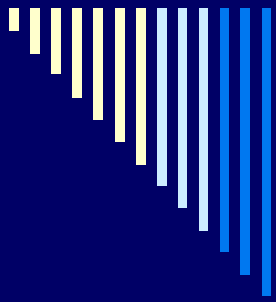
- *A short piece of imaginative writing, of a personal nature and laid out in lines ...*
- Poetry, unlike prose, often has an underlying and over-arching purpose that goes beyond the literal. Poetry is evocative. It typically evokes in the reader an intense emotion: joy, sorrow, anger, love, etc.



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# Poetry is...

- Poetry is the most compressed form of literature.
  - Poetry is composed of carefully chosen words expressing great depth of meaning.
  - Poetry uses specific devices such as connotation, sound, and rhythm to express the appropriate combination of meaning and emotion.
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# Types of Poetry

There are two basic types of poetry:

- traditional - follows standard rules of grammar and syntax with a regular rhythm and rhyme scheme.
- modern - avoids rhyme and standard grammatical organization and seeks new ways of expression.



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# Analyzing Poetry

- You analyze a poem to arrive at an intelligent interpretation and understand what you read.
  - You must consider the following:
    - Speaker
    - Audience
    - Subject
    - Theme
    - Tone
    - Figure of Speech
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# Parts of a Poem

- speaker
- audience
- subject
- tone
- theme
- diction
- imagery
- figures of speech
- sound
- rhythm





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# Speaker

- **Speaker** - the created narrative voice of the poem (i.e. the person the reader is supposed to imagine is talking).
  - The speaker is NOT necessarily the poet. The poet often invents a speaker for the poem in order to give him/herself more freedom to compose the poem
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# Audience / the Readership

- **Audience** - the person or people to whom the speaker is speaking. Identifying the audience within a poem helps you to understand the poem better. There are different people the speaker can address in the poem:
  - The speaker can address another character in the poem.
  - The speaker can address a character who is not present or is dead, which is called apostrophe.
  - The speaker can address you, the reader.







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# Theme and Tone

- **Theme** - The statement the poem/poet makes about its subject.
  - **Tone** - the poet's attitude toward the subject of the poem (this may be different from the speaker's attitude). We can identify the **tone** of the poem by noting the author's use of poetic devices.
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# Imagery

- **Imagery** - words and phrases used specifically to help the reader to imagine each of the senses: smell, touch, sight, hearing, and taste.
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# Examples of Imagery

□ visual imagery -

From "The Widow's Lament  
in Springtime"

"masses of flowers  
load the cherry branches  
and color some bushes  
yellow and some red..."

(William Carlos Williams)

□ auditory imagery -

From "Dover Beach"

"Listen! You hear the  
grating roar  
Of pebbles which the  
waves draw back, and fling,  
At their return, up the high  
strand,  
Begin, and cease, and then  
again begin,  
With tremulous cadence  
slow, and bring  
The eternal note of sadness  
in."

(Matthew Arnold)

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# Simile

- **Simile** - a comparison that uses the words *like* or *as*, or a verb like *seems* or *appears* to draw two objects or images into a relationship.

Example 1: Your eyes are **as** blue as the sky.  
You eat **like** a bird.

Example 2: "Harlem"  
What happens to a dream deferred?  
Does it dry up  
like a raisin in the sun?  
Or fester like a sore-  
And then run?  
Does it stink like rotten meat?  
Or crust and sugar over-  
like a syrupy sweet?  
Maybe it just sags  
like a heavy load.  
Or does it explode?  
(Langston Hughes)



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# Metaphor

- **Metaphor** - functions the same way simile does, except that the comparison is more implied and the words *like* or *as* are omitted.
    - Example 1: Your cheeks are red cherries.
    - Write an example of a metaphor!
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# Personification

□ **Personification** - a type of metaphor that gives living qualities to inanimate objects or abstract ideas; or human qualities (feelings, thoughts) to animals. It gives non-living things and animals the ability to think, feel emotions, or have human relationships.

■ Example 1:

The moon smiles. Fires rage.

The wind vexes the lake and the waves crash angrily.

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# Symbolism

- **Symbolism** - when an author uses an object or idea to suggest more than its literal meaning. A person, place, or event stands for something other than it is, usually something broader or deeper than it is.
  - The author selects specific objects, places or things to function as symbols in his/her work in order to expand and deepen the meaning of the piece. The author trusts that the reader will be skilled enough to notice the symbolism.
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# Alliteration

- Alliteration - the repetition of the same consonant sounds at the beginnings of words that are near each other in a poem.
    - Write an example of alliteration...
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# What is Alliteration?

- The repetition of consonant sounds in a group of words close together
  - Alliteration comes at the beginning of words
  - An easy way to remember alliteration:  
Alliteration uses all the letters, except the vowels.
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# An Example of Alliteration

This example comes from  
Ted Hughes's poem, *The  
Lake:*

Snuffles at my feet for what I might drop or  
kick up

Sucks and slobbers the stones, snorts  
through its lips

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# What is Consonance?

- It is the repetition of consonant sounds located other than at the beginnings of words.
  - Again, *The Lake* offers a good example:  
Snuffles at my feet for what I might dropp or  
kick upp  
Sucks and slobbers the sttones, snorts  
through its lips
-

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# What is Assonance?

The repetition of vowel  
sounds close together

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# What's the difference?

How are rhyme and assonance different?

- Rhyme is the repetition of accented vowel sounds *AND* the sounds that follow them
- Assonance is simply the repetition of vowel sounds
- Edgar Allan Poe's *The Bells* provides a good example:

From the mololen gololen nootes

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# Onomatopoeia

- **Onomatopoeia** is a word that imitates the sound it represents.  
also imitative harmony
- Sounds literally make the meaning in such words as "buzz," "crash," "whirr," "clang" "hiss," "purr," "squeak," "mumble," "hush," "boom."





# Synecdoche

□ **Synecdoche** - a form of metaphor where one part stands for the whole, or the whole is substituted for one part. In other words, we speak of something by naming only a part of it.

■ Examples:

"Robby got wheels this summer."  
wheels = car

"All hands were on deck."  
hands = sailors

". . . the hand that wrote the letter . . ."  
hand = person

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# Sound devices

- **Sound** - the use of specific vowels, consonants, accents and the combination of these three make up the sound of the poem. Most poetry is composed to be read aloud. Sound devices can influence the reader/listener's perception of the poem both intellectually and emotionally.
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# Examples of Sound devices:

- Alliteration
- rhyme - the effect caused by matching vowel and consonant sounds at the end of words such as *song* and *long*, *hope* and *cope*, *sat* and *cat*, and *love* and *dove*.
- rhyme scheme - a structural device that uses a pattern of *end rhyme* (where the last words in two or more lines rhyme) in a stanza. *Internal rhyme* (rhyming within a line).

***Example of Internal Rhyme:***

*I awoke to black flak.*

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# Examples of Sound devices...

- rhythm - the repetition of stress within a poem. It is the entire movement or flow of the poem as affected by rhyme, stress, diction and organization.
  - meter- the organization of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of poetry.

Example: I came, I saw, I conquered.

The repeated pattern of unstressed to stressed syllables in the above line tends to move the reader forward, pushing him through the line in a rhythmic, methodic way. This adds to the meaning of the line, implying that the speaker came, saw and conquered quickly and methodically without much thought or emotion.

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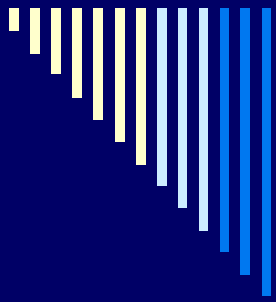
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# What is Rhyme?

The Repetition of accented  
vowel sounds and all  
succeeding sounds that  
appear close together

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# An Example

Come with the rain, O loud Southwester!  
Bring the singer, bring the nester;  
Give the buried flower a dream;  
Make the settled snowbank steam

-From *To the Thawing Wind*

By Robert Frost

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# Types of Rhyme

1. End Rhyme
  2. Internal Rhyme
  3. Approximate Rhyme  
(also called slant)
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# End Rhyme

- The most common form of rhyme
- Places the rhyming sound at the end of a line of poetry
- The following lines of poetry by Langston Hughes are a good example:

O, God of dust and rainbows, help us see  
That without dust the rainbow would not be

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# Internal Rhyme

- Repeats sounds within lines of poetry
- The following line from Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven* is a good example:

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I  
pondered weak and weary

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# Approximate Rhyme

- Very popular with more modern poets
- The final rhyming sounds are close, but not exactly the same
- Approximate rhyme is illustrated in these lines by Emily Dickinson

All of evening softly lit

As an astral hall

“Father,” I observed to Heaven,

“You are punctual!”

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# Assonance and Consonance

- **Assonance** is the repetition of vowel sounds but not consonant sounds as in consonance.

**Example:**

fleet feet sweep by sleeping geeks.

- **Consonance** is the repetition of consonant sounds, but not vowels, as in assonance.

**Example:**

lady lounges lazily , dark deep dread  
crept in

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# Prose vs. Poetry

- Poetry is one of the three major forms of literature, Poems are often divided into lines, stanzas, and employ rhythmical patterns such as rhyme.
  - Prose is the ordinary form of written language. Prose exists in two forms
    - Non-Fiction and Fiction
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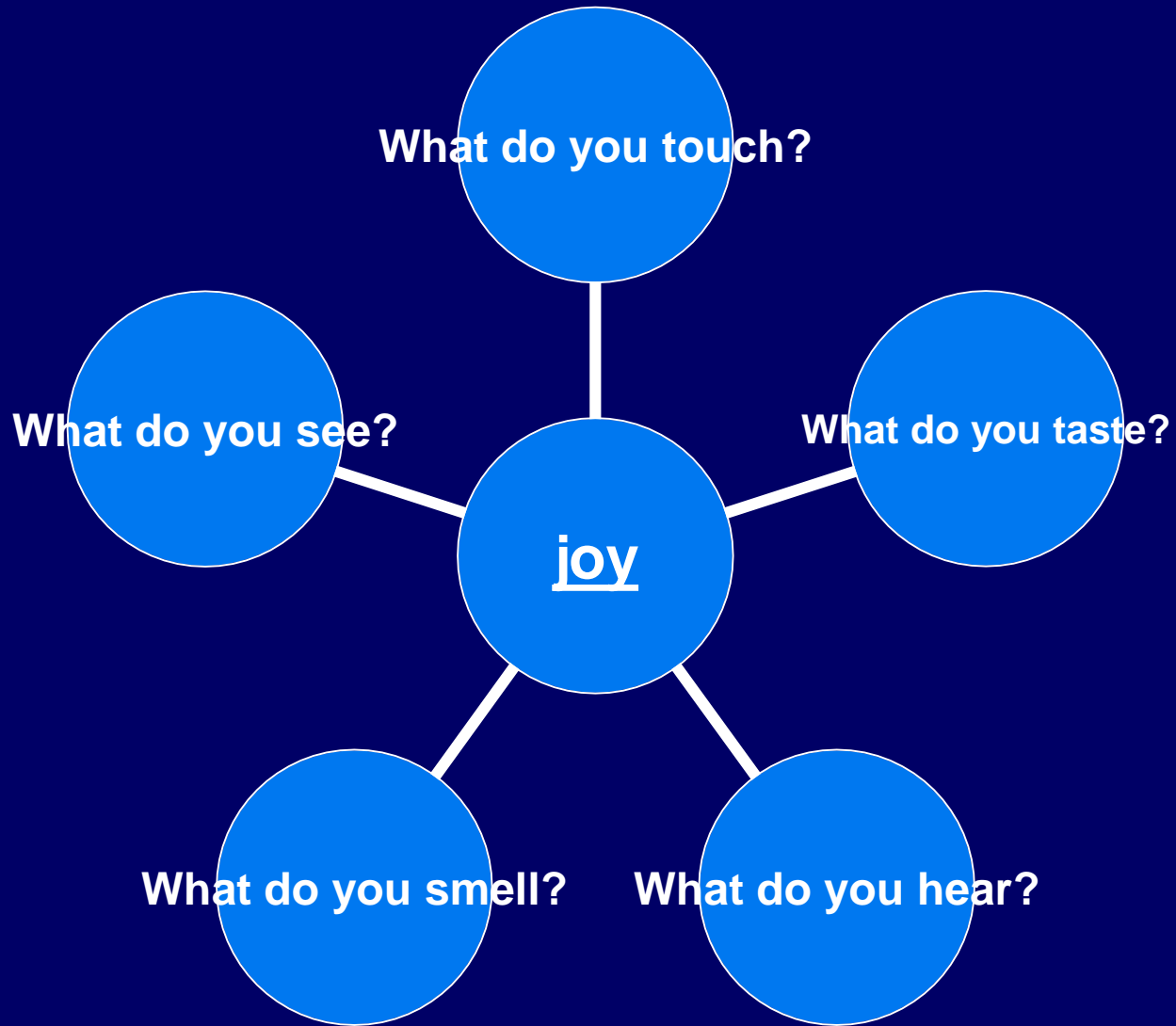
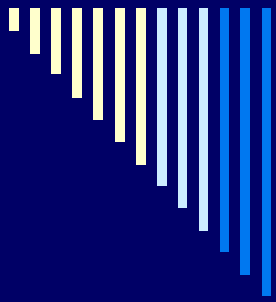
# Types of Poems

- A lyric poem is a musical verse that expresses the observations and feelings of a single speaker. Lyric poems have a musical quality.
  - A narrative poem tells a story.
  - A ballad is a poem set to music, a story told in a song.
  - A sonnet is a 14 line lyric poem usually in iambic pentameter (10 syllable lines), 3 quatrains (4 line stanzas), and a couplet (2 lines)
    - Format: abab cdcd efef gg
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# Types of Poems continued...



- A haiku is a 3 line poem, 5-7-5 (line pattern scheme)
- Fixed form - the general term covering the various kinds of poem in which the meter and rhyme scheme are governed by a prescribed pattern.

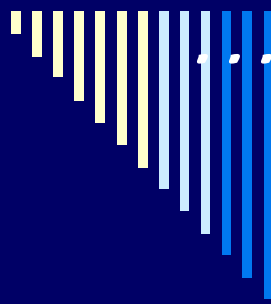




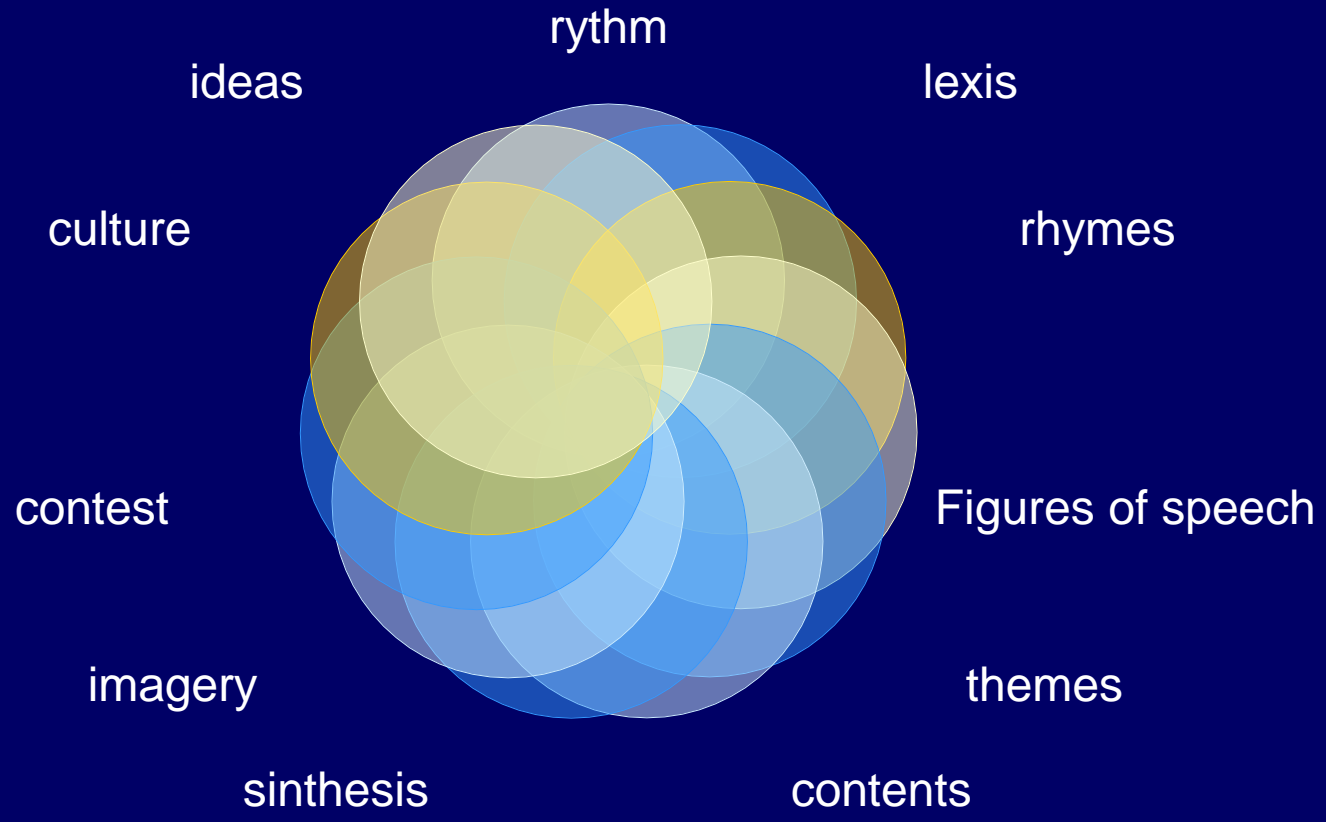
# JOY IS...OR HATE IS....

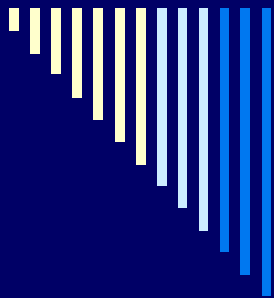
- Joy is *A SILK TISSUE*....OR....?
- COMPLETE with your imagination.....you can close your eyes and see some images ....so you will create a *metaphor*
- You can also imagine how a word sounds or smells and define it with an unusual adjective
- What colour a voice is? Blue, or grey? How does a dress sound? Sharp or soft?  
~~...You are creating a *synesthesia*~~

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*...getting to the hearth of a poem....*





## *Example*

*'Twas such a little – little boat  
That toddled down the bay!*

*'Twas such a gallant – gallant sea  
That beckoned it away!*

*'Twas such a greedy, greedy wave  
That licked it from the Coast –  
Not ever guessed the stately sails  
My little craft was lost!*

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*(Emily Dickinson, 107)*





## Let us observe some formal features

*'Twas such a little – little boat  
That toddled down the bay!*

*'Twas such a gallant – gallant sea  
That beckoned it away!*

*'Twas such a greedy, greedy wave  
That licked it from the Coast –  
Not ever guessed the stately sails  
My little craft was lost!*

- Is the length of the lines the same?
- Why those repetitions?
- Are there regular rhymes or not?
- Are there enjambements?
- Does the poetess use a simple or an elaborate language?



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# The sound in the poetry

## Flux

*SAND OF THE SEA RUNS RED*

*WHERE THE SUNSET REACHES AND QUIVERS*

*SAND FOR THE SEA RUNS YELLOW*

*WHERE THE MOON SLANTS AND WAVERS*

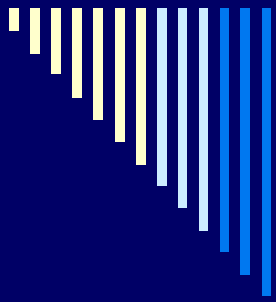
- Consider the sound devices of the poem:  
is there a bond between the title and the sound?
  - What function do repetitions have?
  - Flux is only referred to the tide or also to something else?
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# What is Refrain?

- One or more words, phrases, or lines that are repeated regularly in a poem, usually at the end of a stanza.
  - In a song, we often call it the chorus.
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# How many can you find?

Assignment :

Read any Poem and try to find  
out features we have discussed  
here !!

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