

## Poetry Notes

### What is poetry?

Poetry is a literary genre written in **lines** and **stanzas**.

**Line: the basic unit of a poem**

**Stanza: a collection of lines in a poem**

### Forms of Poetry

- there are many different poetic forms. All over the world people of all ages have enjoyed singing, chanting, reciting, writing and listening to poetry.

- the roots of modern poetry go back to prehistoric songs, chants and prayers.

- poets may choose a particular poetic form for the fun and challenge of fitting words, sounds and meaning into the structure, while others will create a new form to fit what they want to say.

#### 1. **Ballad:**

- is a short narrative poem told in songlike form.

- Many ballads have been passed down as folk songs that tell stories or tales about heroes or historical events

There are two types

- a. Traditional: writer often unknown, it tells a single story, is often passed down from generation to generation. Usually rhymes and has a lot of repetition as it can be easily remembered.
- b. Literary: often written in four line stanzas with the second and fourth lines rhyming. The author's name is known and it does not have a tune. Also tells simple stories of things or events

Edgar Allan Poe, Frankie and Johnny.

I.e. Annabel Lee

It was many and many a year ago,  
In a kingdom by the sea  
That a maiden there lived whom you may know  
By the name of Annaabel Lee;  
And this maiden she lived with no other thought  
Than to love and be loved by me .....  
Edgar Allan Poe

#### 2. **Free verse: a form of poetry that does not follow a set rhythm**

- is a common form of modern poetry that does not follow a set pattern. It may include rhyme and it may not.

Elephants

Aren't any more important  
Than insects  
But I'm on the side  
of elephants,  
Unless one of them tries  
To crawl up my leg.

John Newlove

3. **Lyrical:** a poem that expresses intense personal thoughts moods and emotions.

4. **Narrative:** a poem that tells a story

5. **Haiku:**

- a three line form that captures a moment in nature.

- originated in japan.

- it's 17 syllables are arranged in 3 lines in a 5-7-5 syllable pattern.

I.e. Haiku

In the bent birch tree (5)

    Wind ruffles the fur and quills (7)

        Of a porcupine (5)

Bruce Meyer

6. **Concrete:** a poem whose shape or visual appearance contributes t its meaning.

7. **Sonnet:**

- is a 14 line poem that usually follows a set rhyme scheme and metrical pattern.

- some famous sonnet writers are William Shakespeare, John Keats, Elizabeth

Barrett Browning and Edna St. Vincent Millay.

I.e. If I should learn, in some quite casual way,

    That you wee gone, not to return again -

    Read from the back-page of a paper, say,

    Held by a neighbor in a subway train,

    How at the corner of this avenue

    And such a street (so are the papers filled)

    A hurrying man, who happened to be you,

    At noon today had happened to be killed,

    I should not cry aloud - I could not cry

    Aloud, or wring my hands in such a place -

    I should be watch the station lights rush by

    With a more careful interest on my face;

Or raise my eyes and read with greater care

    Where to store furs and how to treat hair.

Edna St. Vincent Millay

Poetry makes use of **figurative language**. There are **four** types:

1. **simile:** a comparison of two unlike things using the words like or as
2. **metaphor:** a direct comparison of two things not usually thought of as alike without using like or as.
3. **personification:** the giving of human characteristics to inanimate objects
4. **hyperbole:** an extreme exaggeration

## Sound Devices used in Poetry

1. **alliteration:** the repetition of the same consonant sound in a line of poetry
2. **onomatopoeia:** when a word sound like its meaning or what it is.
3. **assonance:** the repetition of a vowel sound in consecutive words in a line of poetry or prose
4. **repetition:** the repeating of a word or words in a line of poetry.

**Literal Meaning:** A reader's take on what the poem is saying literally. When answering a question on literal meaning it is important to take what the words say at face value. Don't forget to put part of the question in the answer. Create flow in your answer by creating a link between sentences. A suggestion is to summarize the content line by line or stanza by stanza. Avoid run on sentences.

**Figurative Meaning:** Looking at a poem's symbolic meaning. Symbolically the poem has a message for the audience that is implied rather than stated out and out (explicit).

**Irony:** when something happens that is the opposite to what you expect to happen. **Three** types of irony:

- **Verbal irony:** say something mean the opposite
- **Dramatic irony:** when one character or the audience is aware of something other characters are not aware of.
- **Situational irony:** a contrast between what a character says or what he or she means or a contrast between what a character expects to happen and what actually happens.

**Imagery:** a literary device used to create description with words that appeal to the five senses.

The most common type of imagery is **visual** imagery.

These words create an image in the reader's mind and help our minds see what is going on in a poem or other literature.

### **Other terms**

**Stanza** (is something like a paragraph in prose. It's a group of lines standing together).

- division of a poem

i.e. The way a crow

Shook down on me

The dust of snow

From a hemlock tree

### **Line**

- has length and direction

- lines can suggest movement, order, tension, division and emotion.

### **Couplet**

- a pair of rhyming lines

### **Mood**

- the feeling that a piece of writing produces in the reader.

### **Theme**

- The underlying meaning of the poem.

### **Idiom**

- an expression that has a meaning apart from the meaning of its individual words.

### **Diction**

- choice of selection of words.

### **Imagery**

- language that appeals to the senses of sight, touch, taste, hearing and smell.