

## Elements of Poetry

**Poetry**- A type of literature that uses sounds, rhythms, and meanings of words to describe the world in striking and imaginative ways.

**Structure** – The way the words and lines are arranged.

**Speaker** – The person or character who communicates the words of the poem.

**Poetic Language is specific, imaginative, and rich with emotion. Every form of poetry has its own structure.**

**Lines**- Poetry is divided into lines or groups of words.

**Stanzas** – Lines that are organized units of meaning.

**Couplet** – Two-lined stanza

**Tercet** – Three-lined stanza

**Quatrain** – Four-lined stanza

**Stanza break** – A blank line, signals that one stanza has ended and a new stanza is beginning.

**Refrain** – Lines or group of lines that are repeated at regular intervals in a poem or song. In a refrain, the poet reminds readers and listeners of a key idea, event or image. Often, a refrain is repeated at the end of each stanza.

**Variations** – When a poet changes one or more words in each repetition.

**Rhythm** – A beat created by the stressed and unstressed syllables in words.

**Meter** – A pattern of rhythm.

**Foot/Feet** – Meter is measured in feet or units of stressed and unstressed syllables.

**Rhyme** – Repetition of vowel and consonant sounds at the ends of words.

**Rhyme Scheme** – A particular pattern or rhyme, example: abab

**Alliteration** - The repetition of consonant sounds in words, as in *slippery slope*.

**Repetition** – The use of any element of language-a sound, word, or phrase-more than once.

**Assonance** – The repetition of vowel sounds in stressed syllables that do not rhyme. Example- Calling and squawking like crows, they fought.

**Consonance** – The repetition of consonant sounds in stressed syllables with different vowel sounds. Example-Gulls gracefully pass across the sky.

**Onomatopoeia** – The use of words that imitate sounds – *splat, hiss, gurgle*.

**Denotation** – The literal, dictionary definition of a word.

**Connotation** - Ideas and feelings that a word brings to mind.

**Tone** – The **attitude** the writer projects in a poem. Tone can be determined by word choice and poetic elements that the author uses.

**Imagery** - Descriptions that appeal to the **five senses**. Imagery helps poets convey what they hear, see, smell, taste, or touch.

**Literal Meanings** – The meanings found in a dictionary.

**Figurative Language**- Language that is not meant to be taken literally.

- **Simile**: Uses the word **like** or **as** to compare two seemingly unlike things.  
**Ex.** His hands were as cold as steel.
- **Metaphor**: Describes one thing as if it were something else.  
**Ex.** My chores were a mountain waiting to be climbed.
- **Extended Metaphor**: Carries a metaphor throughout part or all of a poem.
- **Personification** – The writer gives human qualities to a nonhuman subject.  
**Ex.** The fingertips of the rain tapped at a steady beat on the windowpane.
- **Analogy** – Explains, clarifies, or illustrates by drawing conclusions.
- **Allusions** – Direct or implied references to people, places, events, literary works, or artworks.

### Types of Poetry:

1. **Narrative** - Poetry that tells a story, contains elements similar to a short story, such as plot and characters
2. **Haiku** – A three (3)-lined Japanese verse poem. The first and third lines each have five-syllables and the second line has seven. Describes something in nature.
3. **Free Verse** – Poetry that does not have a strict structure. It has no regular meter, rhyme, fixed in length, or specific stanza pattern.

4. **Formal Verse** – A poem that follows a fixed, traditional pattern that may include a specific rhyme scheme, meter, line length, or stanza structure.
5. **Lyric** – Poetry that expresses the thoughts and feelings of a single speaker, often in a musical verse. (song)
6. **Ballad** – Song that tells a story, often deals with adventure or romance.
7. **Epic** – A lengthy narrative poem involving a time beyond living memory in which extraordinary men and woman are involved in complicated events.
8. **Dramatic Poetry** – Presents a drama in verse. The action is told through the words the characters speak.
9. **Concrete** – Poems that are shaped to look like their subjects. The poet creates a picture on the page.
10. **Limericks** – Humorous, rhyming. Five-line poems with a specific rhythm pattern and scheme.
11. **Rhyming couplet** - Pairs of rhyming lines, usually of the same meter and length.
12. **Sonnet** – A poem that contains fourteen (14) lines.
13. **Ode** – A lyric poem that praises an important person, place, or thing.
14. **Elegy** – A lyric poem that expresses sadness over a death or the passing of time.
15. **Hymn** – A religious song or poem of praise