POETRY PACKET

Poem. N. An arrangement of words written or spoken, traditionally a rhythmical composition, sometimes rhymed, expressing experiences, ideas, or emotions in a style more concentrated, imaginative, and powerful than that of ordinary speech or prose: some poems are in meter, some in free verse.

A poem begins in delight and ends in wisdom – Robert Frost

PROSE...words in their best order.
POETRY...the best words in the best order – Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Poetry is the art of uniting pleasure with truth – Samuel Johnson

Poetry is the synthesis of hyacinths and biscuits – Carl Sandburg

Poetry just the evidence of life. If your life is burning well, poetry is just the ash
– Leonard Cohen

Poetry is boned with ideas,
Nerved and blooded with emotions,
All held together by the delicate, tough skin of words
– Paul Engle

Poetry involves the mysteries of the irrational perceived through rational words – Vladimir Nabokov

All poetry is putting the infinite within the finite – Robert Browning

Always be a poet, even in prose – Charles Baudelaire

Poetry is what gets lost in translation – Robert Frost

If...it makes my whole body so cold no fire can ever warm me, I know that it is poetry – Emily Dickinson

The poet is a liar who always speaks the truth – Jean Cocteau

Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments
of the best and happiest minds – Percy Bysshe Shelley

Poetry is a marriage of craft and imagination – Christine E. Hemp

Out of the quarrel with others we make rhetoric;
Out of the quarrel with ourselves we make poetry
– W.B. Yeats

Imaginary gardens with real toads in them – Marianne Moore
Poetry is to philosophy what the Sabbath is to the rest of the week –Augustus and Julius Hare

It is the job of poetry to clean up our word-clogged reality by creating silence around things –Stèphane Mallarmè

You will not find poetry anywhere unless you bring some of it with you –Joseph Joubert

WHAT IS POETRY?

Poetry is words arranged in a rhythmic pattern with regular accents (like beats in music), words which are carefully selected for sound, accent, and meaning to express imaginative ideas and emotions. Each poem has rhythm, melody, imagery, and form.

SOME ELEMENTS OF POETRY

WHAT IS RHYTHM?

Rhythm is produced by a recurring pattern of stressed syllables and pauses. Each poem has a metric pattern (except in “free verse” which has no metrical pattern since it is based on the natural cadences of speech). That is, the accents of the syllables in the words fall at regular intervals, like the beat of music. This pattern is described by indicating the kind of number of feet in a regular verse line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Syllables</th>
<th>Technical Name of Kind of Foot</th>
<th>Accented=(/) “DUMM” Unaccented=(~) “de”</th>
<th>Such as</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Iamb, iambic</td>
<td>~ / De DUMM</td>
<td>a WAY, i WILL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>De</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Trochee, trochaic</td>
<td>/ ~ DUMM de</td>
<td>COM ing, DO it</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Anapest, anapestic</td>
<td>~ ~ / de de DUM</td>
<td>Can non ADE, let us IN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dactyl, dactylic</td>
<td>/ ~ ~ DUM de de</td>
<td>VIC to ries, TWO of them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Less Often Used: Spondee, spondaic (DUMM DUMM); pyrrhus, pyrraic (de de)

The beat of poetry feet is called meter. Marking lines as the following are marked to show feet or meter is called the scansion:

```
~ / ~ / ~ / ~ / ~ / 
The stag / at eve / had drunk / his fill
```

This line is iambic tetrameter. If meter should vary within a line, it is called inversion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The number of feet in a line is expressed as follows:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 foot monometer</td>
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</table>
Pauses do not usually figure significantly in scansion, but they do affect the rhythm of a line, just as they affect the rhythm of music. There are three types of pauses:

- **End-stopped** which is a pause at the end of a line.
- **Caesura** which is a pause that occurs within a line.
- **Enjambment** which is a line that “runs over” to the next line without a pause.

**WHAT IS MELODY?**

Like music, each poem has **melody** (i.e. sound devices). A poet chooses words for their sounds, as well as for their meaning. **Rhythm**, of course, is a kind of sound device based upon pattern. **Euphony** (literally “good sound”) and **cacophony** (literally “bad sound”) contribute to producing **melody**, or a musical quality in verse.

Rhyming terms include:

- **Sight (Eye) Rhyme** in which two words look alike but don’t sound alike, such as “LOVE” and “JOVE” or “DAUGHTER” and “LAUGHTER.” NOTE: Sometimes what is now a sight rhyme was once a true rhyme, but pronunciation changes have occurred, such as “AGAIN” and “RAIN.”

- **Slant (Imperfect) Rhyme** in which two words are nearly rhymed, but have a slight variation in vowel or consonant sound, such as “LAKE” and “FATE.”

- **Identical Rhyme (Rime Riche)** in which two words are spelled differently but have the same pronunciation (also called **homonyms**), such as “TWO” and “TOO” or “RITE” and “RIGHT.”

- **End Rhyme** in which the rhyming words occur at the end of lines of poetry.

- **Internal Rhyme** in which the rhyme occurs inside the line, such as “Let’s BEAT the HEAT.”

Besides rhyme, poets also use other sound effects:

- **Alliteration** is the repetition of similar sounds in closely associated words or syllables.

There are three kinds of alliteration:

- **Consonantal Alliteration:** Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
- **Vowel Alliteration:** Apt alliteration’s artful aid is often an occasional ornament in prose
- **Internal Alliteration:** The moan of doves in immemorial elms, and murmuring of innumerable bees
**Assonance** is the repetition of identical vowel sounds in syllables that have different consonant sounds, such as “LAKE” and “FAKE” or “In Xanadu did Kulba Khan” (which repeats only vowel sounds).

**Consonance** is the repetition of identical consonant sounds in syllables that have different vowel sounds, such as “BILL” and “BALL” or “BORN” and “BURN.”

**Onomatopoeia** is the use of words which sound like their meanings, such as “HISS,” “MURMUR,” “BUZZ,” and so on. A really skillful poet may merely use S-sounds in a poem about a snake, rather than the word “HISS.”

(over…)

**WHAT IS IMAGERY?**

Each poem also uses **imagery** which is produced by **figures of speech**. These take many forms, but all are rhetorical methods which affect the literal meaning of words. Let’s start by looking at single words which appear synonymous:

- dumb, stupid, slow, uneducated, ignorant, obtuse, dense
- smart, clever, shrewd, brilliant, intelligent, with-it, cagey
- skinny, slender, thin, emaciated, scrawny, lithe, lean, underweight
- fat, chubby, plump, corpulent, pudgy, Junoesque, zaftig, overweight
- house, home, shack, bungalow, mansion, crib, pad, hearth, quarters

Even though the **denotation** (literal meaning) of the words appears synonymous, the **connotation** (figurative meaning) is different. Figures of speech work the same way.

**Imagery** is the use of figures of speech which are **concrete** - it always refers to a sensory experience. The sun perceived by the senses is **concrete**; the enlightenment associated with it is **abstract** (perceived by the intellect, not the senses). Generally speaking, there are three kinds of figures of speech: **comparisons**, **substitutions**, and **ambiguities**.
## Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Analogy</strong></th>
<th>A comparison of two things, alike in certain aspects – a simile is an expressed analogy; a metaphor is an implied one.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metaphor</strong></td>
<td>Two unlike things compared directly, implying several similar qualities, such as “The river is a snake which coils on itself.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Simile</strong></td>
<td>Two unlike things compared using “like” or “as,” implying only one similar quality, such as “The man paced like a hungry lion.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Personification</strong></td>
<td>Giving human qualities to inanimate objects or non-human creatures, such as “The trees danced in the breeze.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Apostrophe</strong></td>
<td>Addressing some abstract object as if it were animate, such as “O world! Tell me thy pain!” Thus, it is a kind of person.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Allusion</strong></td>
<td>Referring metaphorically to persons, places or things from history or previous literature, with which the reader is expected to have enough familiarity to make extended associations, such as “The new kid is mean as Grendel and twice as ugly” or “He must think he is some kind of Superman.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Allegory</strong></td>
<td>A form of extended or elaborate metaphor in which objects, persons, and actions in a narrative are equated with meanings that lie outside the narrative itself, such as <em>Everyman</em>. Special kinds of allegories include the fable and the parable.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conceit</strong></td>
<td>An extended or elaborate metaphor which forms the framework of an entire poem with all comparisons being interrelated in some way such as “What is Our Life?” by Raleigh.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Symbolism</strong></td>
<td>The use of one object to represent or suggest another object or an idea. Thus, a rose might be used to symbolize the loved one or love in general, depending on the context.</td>
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## Substitutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Metonymy</strong></th>
<th>Substitution of one word for another closely related word, such as “The pot’s boiling” or “The White House announced.”</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Synecdoche</strong></td>
<td>Substitution of a part for a whole, such as “All hands on deck.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Synesthesia</strong></td>
<td>Substitution of one sensory response for another (or the concurrent stimulation of several senses), such as “a blue note” or “cool green” or “The blind man turned his face to feel the sun.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Ambiguities
Hyperbole
Saying more than is true, an over-exaggeration, such as “He wore his fingers to the bone.”

Understatement
Saying less than is true, an under-exaggeration, such as Mark Twain’s response to rumors that he had died: “The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated.”

Irony
Saying the opposite to what is true, such as “War is kind.”

Antithesis
Using contrasts for an accumulative effect, such as “Man proposes; God disposes.” Also, Neil Armstrong’s famous line: “That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.”

Oxymoron
An antithesis that brings together two sharply contradictory terms, such as “wise fool,” “little big man,” “eloquent silence,” and “loving hate.”

Litotes
A form of understatement in which a thing is affirmed by stating the negative of its opposite, such as “He was not unmindful” which actually means he was mindful.

Paradox
A statement which while seemingly contradictory or absurd may actually be well-founded and true; a “logical twist,” such as “Everything I say is a lie.”

Pun
A play on words based on the similarity of sound between two words with different meanings, such as “He checked his cash, cashed in his checks.”

Portmanteau Word
A word concocted for deliberate effect, such as “jorts” from “jeans” and “shorts” or “spork” from “spoon” and “fork.” Some words actually become a part of the language, such as “smog,” “brunch,” or “motel.” Sometimes call a coined word or a neologism.

Bonus Figures of Speech

Anaphora
In writing or speech, the deliberate repetition of the first part of the sentence in order to achieve an artistic effect, such as Martin Luther King’s speech, “I Have a Dream.”

Chiasmus
A rhetorical device in which two or more clauses are balanced against each other by the reversal of their structures in order to produce an artistic effect, such as, “Never let a Fool Kiss You or a Kiss Fool You.”

WHAT IS FORM?
Finally, every poem has form. A poet can arrange her/his poem so that you will read it as she/he wants you to read it to get its sound, rhythm, and emphasis. The length of lines and the location of pauses affect the speed at which you read her/his poem. In modern free verse, the very typographical arrangement of words in lines produces emphasis, just as a regular rhythm and rhyme produces emphasis in regular verse.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROSE</th>
<th>POETRY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Words</td>
<td>words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentences</td>
<td>lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraphs</td>
<td>stanzas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapters</td>
<td>cantos</td>
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</tbody>
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One thing to consider when analyzing poetry is the **external structure**.

- Look at the **form** of the poem (structure)
  - This is the INTENTIONAL creation of the poem by the author
  - How is the poem arranged?
  - How many lines? Verses? Sentences?
    - Are the lines end-stopped or enjambed?
    - Are there short sentences or longer sentences?
- What type of **punctuation** did the author use?
  - Rhetorical questions?
  - Colons?
  - Parentheticals?
  - Dashes?

The appearance of the poem is often a clue to its form, since form is usually determined by the number of lines, the length of the lines, the rhythmic pattern, and/or the rhyming scheme. The **rhyme scheme** (rhyme pattern) can be determined only by looking at the form of the whole poem. Rhyme schemes are indicated by the use of letters to designate rhyming combinations:

- sound = A
- ten = B
- men = B
- round = A
- fight = C

- sound = A
- ten = B
- men = B
- round = A
- fight = C

ABBAC