

POETIC TERMS

STANZA LENGTHS

1. Tercet – 3 lines
2. Quatrain – 4 lines
3. Quintain – 5 lines
4. Sestet – 6 lines
5. Septet – 7 lines
6. Octave – 8 lines

RHYME

1. Rhyme – repetition of syllables, typically at the end of a verse line. Rhymed words conventionally share all sounds following the word's last stressed syllable. Thus "tenacity" and "mendacity" rhyme, but not "jaundice" and "John does," or "tomboy" and "calm bay."
2. Rhyme Scheme – the pattern of end rhymes in a stanza, with each rhyme encoded by a letter of the alphabet, from *a* onward (ABBA BCCB, for example). Rhymes are classified by the degree of similarity between sounds within words, and by their placement within the lines or stanzas.

METER

1. Caesura – strong pause within a line of verse.
*He thought he'd 'list, perhaps,
Off-hand-like--just as I--
Was out of work-had sold his traps--
No other reason why.*
2. Elision – omission of an unstressed vowel or syllable to preserve the meter of a line of poetry.
Flies o'er th' unbending corn....
3. Iambic pentameter – traditional meter consisting of lines containing five iambic feet (thus, ten syllables), heavily used by Shakespeare
4. Meter – measurement of rhythm in a poem
5. Stress – greater amount of force used to pronounce one syllable over another

DEVICES

1. Alliteration – repetition of consonant sounds, especially at the beginning of words.
(*Fetches fresh, as I suppose, off some sweet wood.*)
2. Apostrophe – a poem or words that are spoken to a person who is absent or imaginary, or to an object or abstract idea.
O World, I cannot hold thee close enough!
3. Conceit – extended or complicated metaphor
4. Connotation – the underlying meaning of a word or phrase; may include implicit suggestions or associations as well as tone
5. Denotation – a word’s dictionary definition rather than any implied meaning
6. Diction – an author’s word choice
7. End-stopped line – the completion of a clause or sentence coincides with the end of each line (as opposed to enjambment)
8. Enjambment – the completion of a clause or sentence spans to the following line so the line ending is not emphasized (as opposed to an end-stopped line)
9. Hyperbole – a deliberate exaggeration used for emphasis and effect
10. Metaphor – a comparison of two things that may seem at first dissimilar (Does not use *like* or *as*)
11. Onomatopoeia – word whose sound resembles what it describes
snap, crackle, pop
12. Oxymoron – contradictory phrase that combines two seemingly incompatible elements
“darkness visible”
13. Personification – attributing human qualities to things that are not human or alive
14. Simile – a comparison of two things that may seem dissimilar at first, using *like* or *as*
15. Stanza – A group of lines in a poem usually sharing some common characteristic; set off from other groups by a blank line
16. Understatement – the speaker says less than what he or she means; the opposite of exaggeration