

English Pocket Illustrated Glossary of Poetic Terminology



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N2L84ES



2015

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ACROSTIC: Poem where the first letter of each line spells out a significant word.

Apple
Pie
Please,
Let's
Eat

Afflatus: Poetic inspiration



Aide-Memoire Poem: Poem which helps theme

*Thirty days hath September,
April, June and November*



Allegory: A poem in which the characters or descriptions convey a hidden symbolic or moral message.

Short Allegory poem by *Eva J Tortora*:

Black Orange Cats

Black

Orange

Cat

I

Love

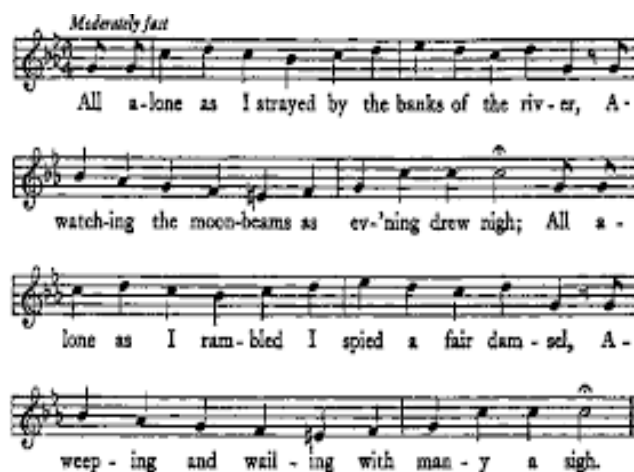
To Dream

About

Them!

Ballad: Term originating from the Portugese word *balada* meaning "dancing-song". However, it normally refers to either a Simple song.

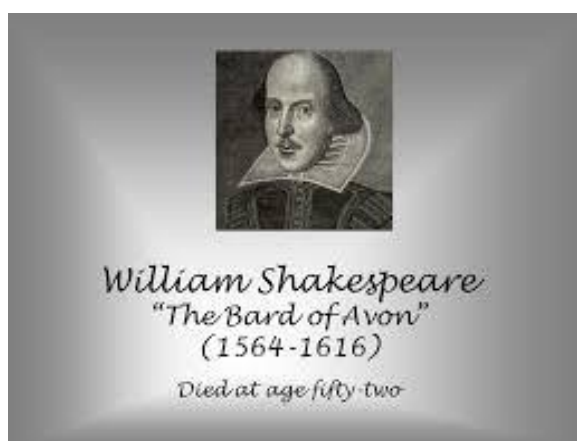
Moderately fast



All a-lone as I strayed by the banks of the riv-er, A -
watch-ing the moon-beams as ev-'ning drew nigh; All a -
lone as I ram-bled I spied a fair dam-sel, A -
weep - ing and wail - ing with man - y a sigh.

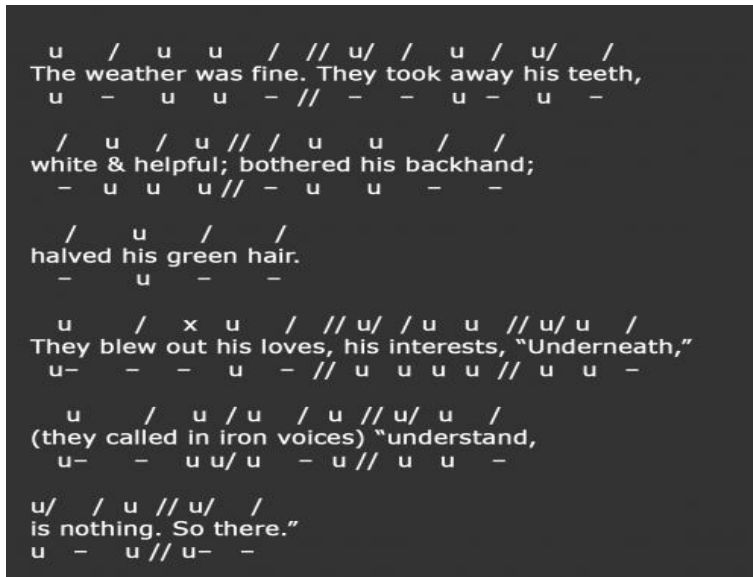
Bard: Originally a term for a Celtic minstrel poet

Cacofnix in *Asterix the Gaul* but is now used for any admired poet. Shakespeare is often referred to as 'the bard of Avon'.



Caesura: A break in the flow of sound in a line of poetry in Hamlet's famous soliloquy: "To be or not to be || that is the question"

A caesura can be classified as either feminine (following an unaccented syllable) or male (following an accented syllable).



Originally a phrase taken from an ode *by Horace*, but more recently synonymous with the film *Dead Poets Society* starring Robin Williams

Carpe Diem: The Latin phrase *carpe diem* originated in the "Odes," a long series of poems composed by the Roman poet Horace in 65 B.C.E., in which he writes: Scale back your long hopes to a short period. While we speak, time is envious and is running away from us. Seize the day, trusting little in the future.

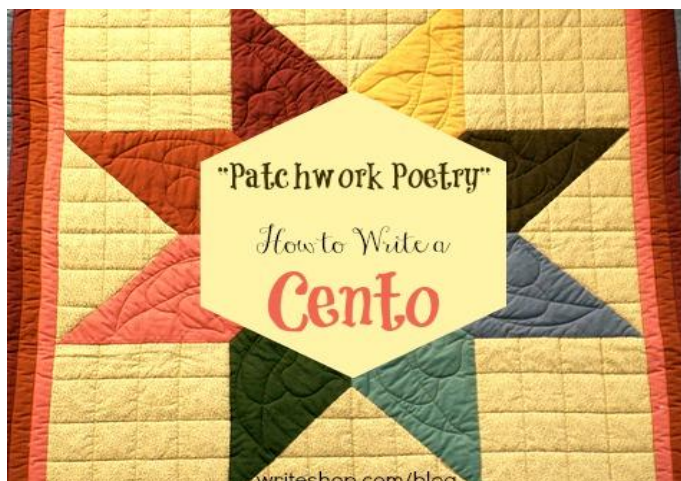


Canto: The subdivision of a long narrative poem. Short Canto poem by
Conor O'Neill:

Maria's Canto'

You bestir me, Aztec Princess
Awakening me from slumbers forsaken
Taking me on the path to your Caribbean haven
To my existence you grant sense.
Your mind is keen, shown by a sharp intelligence
On your countenance, your honey skin a godly sheen
In all you've been, as woman and goddess
Heaven and Earth will you rule as queen, but to me
To me you are the premiere enchantress.

Cento: A patchwork poem composed of quotations from other authors.

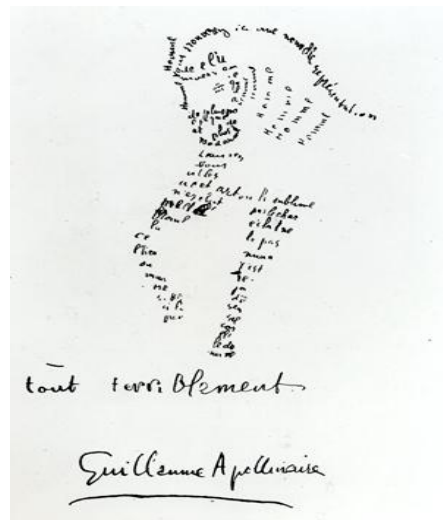


To make a patchwork poem, *each line must be taken from a different poem.* When the lines are put together, *they must make sense.* The poem doesn't have to rhyme, but rhyming adds a nice touch.

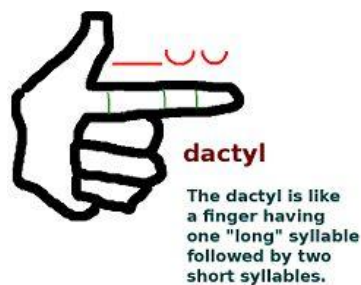
An Example of Cento Poetry / Here's a rhyming cento by one of Kim Kautzer's students, Rachel:

Round paradise is such a wall, (Monro)
And, hearing fairy voices call, (Webb)
And the streams run golden, (Lee)
Where there is no grass at all. (Stephens)

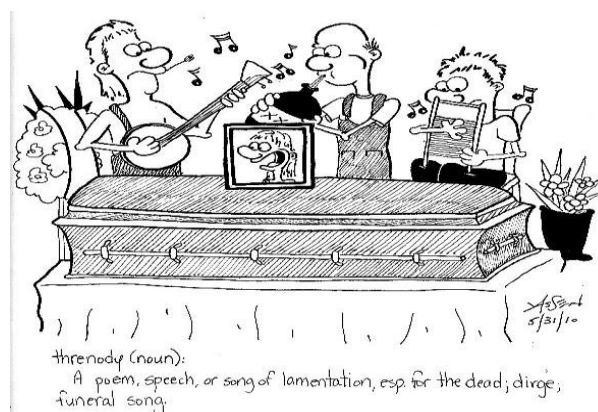
Cubist Poetry: Poetry that seeks to emulate Picasso's 'sum of destructions'.
The work of the French poet Guillaume Apollinaire.



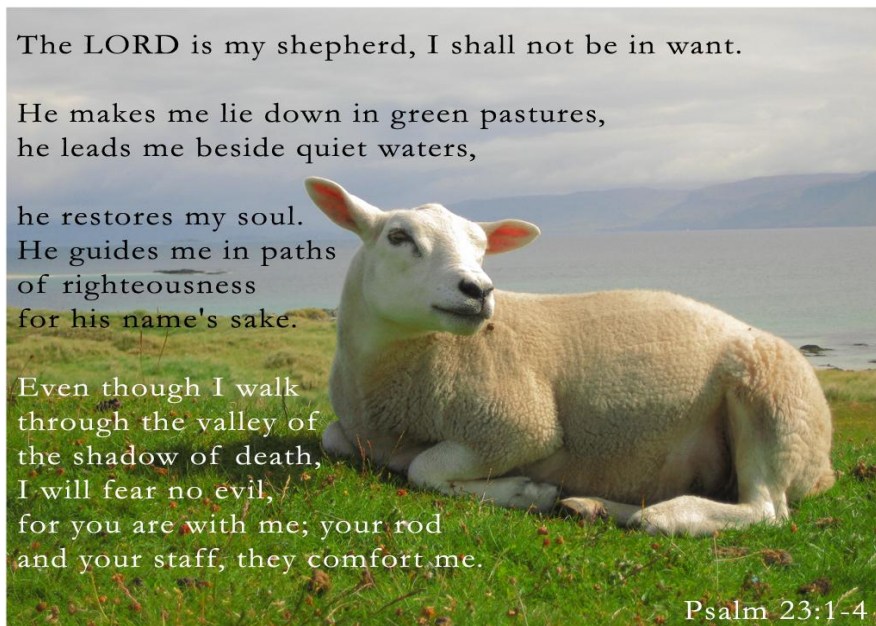
Dactyl: A foot consisting of three syllables where the first is long or stressed and the second two are short or unstressed as in 'MURmuring'.



Dirge: A brief hymn or song of lamentation and grief; it was typically composed to be performed at a funeral. In lyric poetry, a dirge tends to be shorter and less meditative than an elegy. See Christina Rossetti's "A Dirge" and Sir Philip Sidney's "Ring Out Your Bells."



Eclogue: A brief, dramatic pastoral poem, set in an idyllic rural place but discussing urban, legal, political, or social issues. Bucolics and idylls, like eclogues, are pastoral poems, but in non dramatic form. See Edmund Spenser's "Shepherd's Calendar: April," Andrew Marvell's "Nymph Complaining for the Death of Her Fawn," and John Crowe Ransom's "Eclogue."

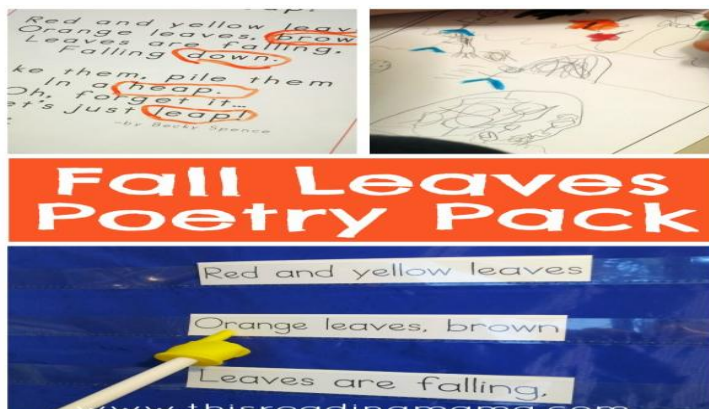


Ellipsis: In poetry, the omission of words whose absence does not impede the reader's ability to understand the expression. For example, Shakespeare makes frequent use of the phrase "I will away" in his plays, with the missing verb understood to be "go."

T.S. Eliot employs ellipsis in the following passage from "Preludes":

You curled the papers from your hair,
Or clasped the yellow soles of feet
In the palms of both soiled hands.

The possessive "your" is left out in the second and third lines, but it can be assumed that the woman addressed by the speaker is clasping the soles of her own feet with her own hands.



Feminist theory: An extension of feminism's critique of male power and ideology, feminist theory combines elements of other theoretical models such as psychoanalysis, Marxism, poststructuralism, and deconstruction to interrogate the role of gender in the writing, interpretation, and dissemination of literary texts. Originally concerned with the politics of women's authorship and representations of women in literature, feminist theory has recently begun to examine ideas of gender and sexuality across a wide range of disciplines including film studies, geography, and even economics. Feminist theory emerged from the struggle for women's rights, beginning in the 18th century with Mary Wollstonecraft's publication of *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Important feminist theorists of the 20th century include Betty Friedan, Julia Kristeva, Judith Butler, Elaine Showalter, Carol Gilligan, and Adrienne Rich.



Formalism (Russian): A brief but influential 20th-century critical method that originated in St. Petersburg through the group OPOYAZ, and in Moscow via the Moscow Linguistic Circle. Important Formalists included Roman Jakobson and Viktor Shklovsky. Formalism viewed literature as a distinct and separate entity, unconnected to historical or social causes or effects. It analyzed literature according to devices unique to literary works and focused on the "literariness" of a text: words were not simply stand-ins for objects but objects themselves. Formalists advanced the concept of *ostranenie*, or defamiliarization, arguing that literature, by calling attention to itself as such, estranged the reader from ordinary experience and made the familiar seem new. Formalism's tendency to collapse form and content is somewhat similar to New Criticism's approach, though its main influence was on structuralism.



Gender studies: An interdisciplinary approach to the study of gender, sexual categories, and identity. As a discipline, gender studies borrows from other theoretical models like psychoanalysis—particularly that of Jacques Lacan—deconstruction, and feminist theory in an attempt to examine the social and cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity as they relate to class, race, ethnicity, and sexuality. Like gender studies, queer theory also questions normative definitions of gender and sexuality. As approaches to literary texts, gender studies and queer theory tend to emphasize the power of representation and linguistic indeterminacy.



Ghazal: (Pronunciation: "guzzle") Originally an Arabic verse form dealing with loss and romantic love, medieval Persian poets embraced the ghazal, eventually making it their own. Consisting of syntactically and grammatically complete couplets, the form also has an intricate rhyme scheme. Each couplet ends on the same word or phrase (the *radif*), and is preceded by the couplet's rhyming word (the *qafia*, which appears twice in the first couplet). The last couplet includes a proper name, often of the poet's. In the Persian tradition, each couplet was of the same meter and length, and the subject matter included both erotic longing and religious belief or mysticism. English-language poets who have composed in the form include Adrienne Rich, John Hollander, and Agha Shahid Ali; see Ali's "Tonight" and Patricia Smith's "Hip-Hop Ghazal." Agha Shahid Ali "Even the Rain"

What will suffice for a true-love knot? Even the rain?

But he has bought grief's lottery, bought even the rain.

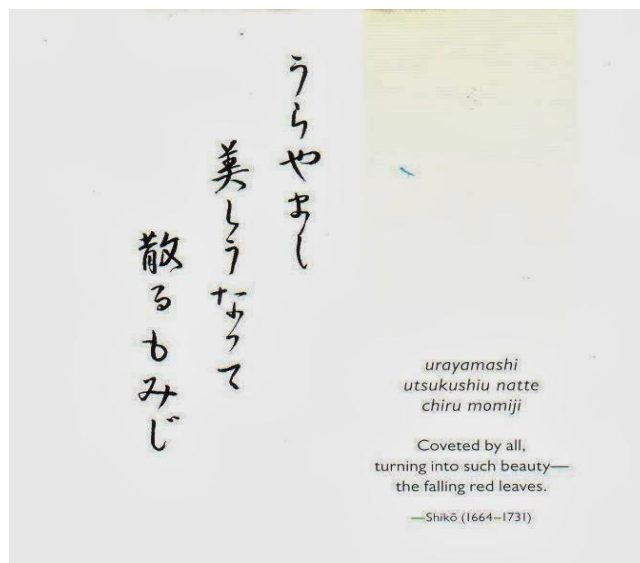
"our glosses / wanting in this world" "Can you remember?"

Anyone! "when we thought / the poets taught" even the rain?

Haiku (or hokku): A Japanese verse form of three unrhyming lines in five, seven, and five syllables. It creates a single, memorable image, as in these lines by Kobayashi Issa, translated by Jane Hirshfield:

"On a branch floating downriver a cricket, singing."

(In TRANSLATING from Japanese to English, Hirshfield compresses the number of syllables.)



Hexameter: A metrical line of six feet, most often dactylic, and found in Classical Latin or Greek poetry, including Homer's *Iliad*. In English, an iambic hexameter line is also known as an alexandrine. Only a few poets have written in dactylic hexameter, including Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in the long poem *Evangeline*:

*Now had the season returned, when the nights grow colder and longer,
And the retreating sun the sign of the Scorpion enters.
Birds of passage sailed through the leaden air, from the ice-bound,
Desolate northern bays to the shores of tropical islands*

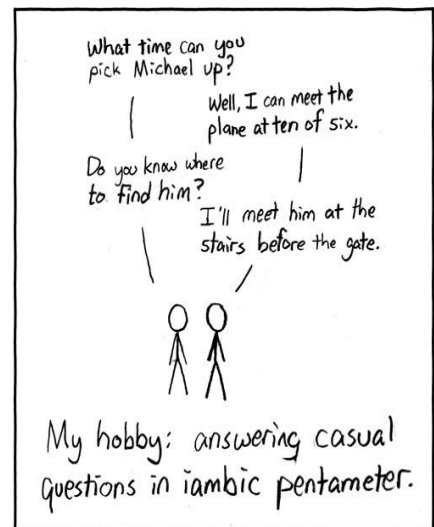
Mantiklos m' anethêke wekabolôdi argurotoxôdi
 Μάντικλός μ' ἀνέθηκε ψεκαβόλωι ἀργυροτόξωι
 tas dekatas. tu de, Phoibe, didoi chariëttan amoiban.
 τὰς δεκάτας. τὸ δὲ, φοῖβε, δίδοι χαρίετταν ἀμοιβάν.

Iamb: A metrical foot consisting of an unaccented syllable followed by an accented syllable.

The words "unite" and "provide" are both iambic. It is the most common meter of poetry in

English (including all the plays and poems of William Shakespeare), as it is closest to the rhythms of English speech. In Robert Frost's "After Apple Picking" the iamb is the vehicle for the "natural," colloquial speech pattern:

*My long two-pointed ladder's sticking through a tree
Toward heaven still,
And there's a barrel that I didn't FILL
Beside it, and there may be two or three
APPLES I didn't pick upon some bough.
But I am done with apple-picking now.
Essence of winter sleep is on the night,
The scent of apples: I am drowsing off.*



Irony: As a literary device, irony implies a distance between what is said and what is meant. Based on the context, the reader is able to see the implied meaning in spite of the contradiction. When William Shakespeare relates in detail how his lover suffers in comparison with the beauty of nature in "My Mistress' Eyes Are Nothing like the Sun," it is understood that he is elevating her beyond these comparisons; considering her essence as a whole, and what she means to the speaker, she is *more* beautiful than nature.



Jazz Poetry: Type of chanted poetry pioneered by the American poet (Nicholas) Vachel Lindsay. The form was further developed by Langston Hughes who became one of the first poets to recite his poetry to music. It also informed the work of US Beat Poets such as Kenneth Rexroth and UK poets such as Christopher Logue, Roy Fisher and Michael Horovitz.



Jintishi: Chinese poetic term which literally means 'modern-form poetry'. It refers to a regulated style of poetry which developed from the 5th century onwards and employed four tones: the level tone and three deflected tones (rising, falling and entering). Tu Fu was the most ACCOMPLISHED exponent of jintishu. Compare to gushi.



Kinetic Poetry: Poetry which gains momentum from the careful layout of the letters/words/lines on the page.



Kyrielle: Medieval French form written in rhyming couplets (though often arranged in quatrains) and featuring repeated lines or refrains. An example of a kyrielle is *A Lenten Hymn* by Thomas Campion.



Limerick: Form of light verse or nonsense poem consisting of five lines and usually rhymed: a-a-b-b-a. Limericks often start with the line, "There once was a..." or "There was a..." The first, second and fifth lines contain three feet or stresses, while the third and fourth lines contain two feet or stresses. Limericks are traditionally bawdy or just irreverent. **Example:** *There was once a young lady named Claris / Whom nothing could ever embarrass / Till the bath salts one day / In the tub where she lay / Turned out to be plaster of Paris!*

TIM WORE RUBBERBANDS ON HIS WRIST
FOR EACH ITEM ON HIS TO-DO LIST
BUT THE MORE HE FORGOT, THE BIGGER IT GOT
SO NOW IT'S A BIG RUBBER FIST.



Line: A basic structural component of a poem. Lines can be written in free form, in syllabic form (e.g. haiku) or in metrical form. In the official classification, metrical lines can vary in length from the monometer (one foot) to the octameter (eight feet).

Love Poetry: Poetry which deals with the agony and ecstasy of love, e.g. Shakespeare's Sonnets.

SONNET XVIII

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this and this gives life to thee.

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"Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?"

Metaphor: An imaginative comparison between two actions, objects, etc. which is not literally applicable. It can be made directly (for example, John Keats's "*Beauty is truth, truth beauty*" from "*Ode on a Grecian Urn*") or less directly (for example, Shakespeare's "*marriage of two minds*"). Unlike a simile, it does not point out a similarity by using words such as "*like*," "*as*," or "*than*."

Meter: The regular pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables that make up a line of poetry. Meter gives rhythm and regularity to poetry. However, the English language does not always fit exactly into metrical patterns so many poems employing meter will exhibit irregularities.

Narrative Verse: Verse which tells a story, e.g. "The Wife of Bath's Tale" by Geoffrey Chaucer.

Neologism: The coining or use of new words or of new meanings for established words. **Example** (in "Jabberwocky" by Lewis Carroll): *Twas brillig and the slithy toves / Did gyre and gimble in the wabe / All mimsy were the borogoves / And the mome raths outgrabe.*

Nursery Rhymes: Jingles (short verse marked by catchy repetition) written for children. **Example:** *Hickory dickory dock. The mouse went up the clock. The clock struck one. The mouse went down. Hickory dickory dock. Tick tock, tick tock, tick tock, tick tock.*



Onomatopoeia: The use of words which have been formed to sound like the noise of the thing the poet is trying to describe or represent. **Examples:** *buzz, choo-choo, drip, fizz, hiss, jingle, whir.*



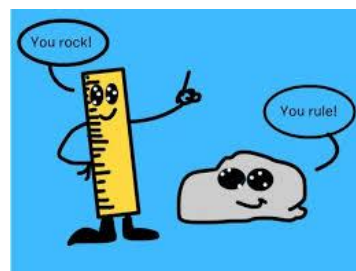
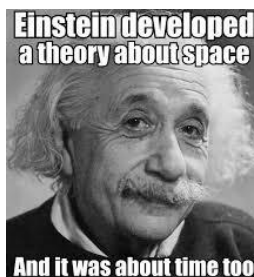
Oxymoron: A figure of speech that brings together opposite or seemingly contradictory words or ideas for effect, such as "deafening silence" and "sweet sorrow."

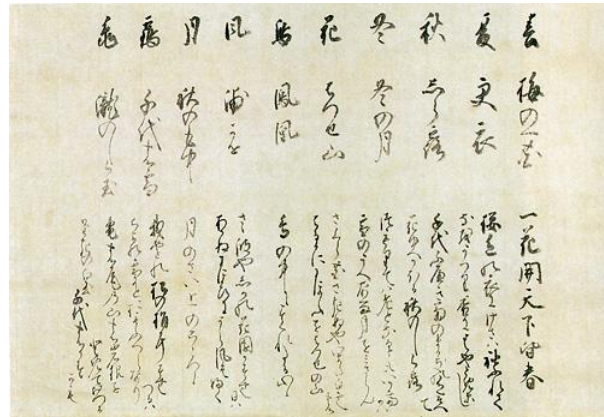


Paradox: Situation or phrase which appears to be contradictory, but which contains a truth worth considering. Example: "In order to preserve peace, we must prepare for war."


Personification: A figure of speech in which a thing, quality, or idea is imbued with animate or living qualities like those of a person. Examples: "Time has been good to me"; "My rose looked lovingly upon me."

Pun: Word play involving the humorous use of similar-sounding words with different meanings or single words with multiple meanings. Examples: "No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery"; "Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana"; "A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion."





Repetition (rhetorical device): Repetition is the simple repeating of a word, within a sentence or a poetical line, with no particular placement of the words, in order to emphasize. This is such a common literary device that it is almost never even noted as a figure of speech.



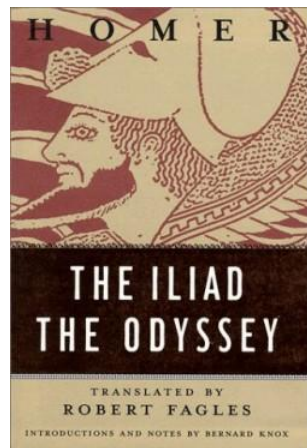
Children should be taught not the little virtues but the great ones. Not thrift but generosity and an indifference to money; not caution but courage and a contempt for danger; not a desire for success but a desire to be and to know.

(Natalia Ginzburg)

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(Natalia Ginzburg, The Little Virtues, 1962)

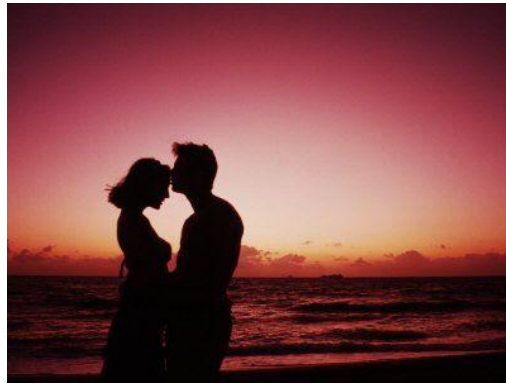
Rhapsode: A rhapsode (Greek: ῥαψῳδός, rhapsōdos) or, in modern usage, rhapsodist, refers to a classical Greek professional performer of epic poetry in the fifth and fourth centuries BC. Rhapsodes notably performed the epics of Homer (Iliad and Odyssey) but also the wisdom and catalogue poetry of Hesiod and the satires of Archilochus and others. Often, rhapsodes are depicted in Greek art, wearing their signature cloak and carrying a staff.



Rhyme: A rhyme is a repetition of similar sounds in two or more words and is most often used in poetry and songs. The word "rhyme" may also refer to a short poem, such as a rhyming couplet or other brief rhyming poem such as nursery rhymes.



Romantic Poetry: Romantic poetry signifies the passion that the writer possesses for the beauty of the world around them. Poets express their strong feelings to lovers, kings, queens, art, land, nature, animals, God, history, education, philosophy and so much more.

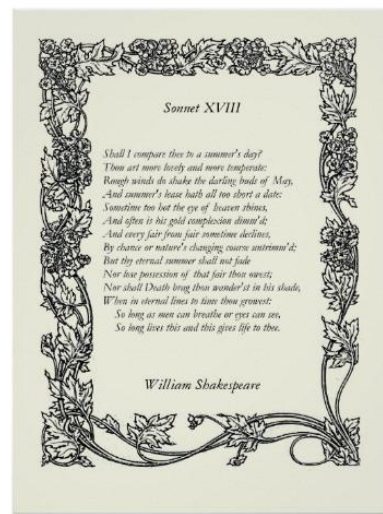
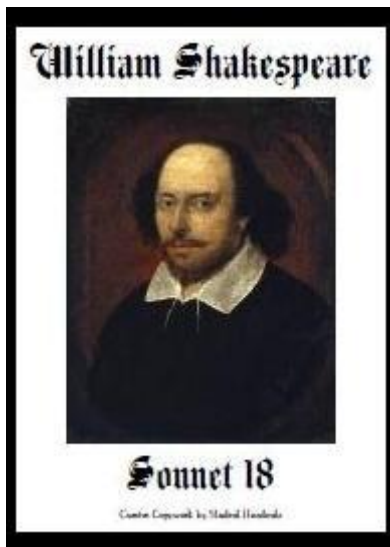


Sestet: A sestet is the name given to the second division of an Italian sonnet (as opposed to an English or Spenserian Sonnet), which must consist of an octave, of eight lines, succeeded by a sestet, of six lines. The first documented user of this poetical form was the Italian poet, Petrarch. In the usual course the rhymes are arranged abc abc, but this is not necessary.

A sestet is also six lines of poetry forming a stanza or complete poem.



Sonnet: The sonnet is one of several forms of poetry originating in Europe. The term "sonnet" derives from the Occitan word sonet and the Italian word sonetto, both meaning "little song" or "little sound". By the thirteenth century, it had come to signify a poem of fourteen lines that follows a strict rhyme scheme and specific structure. One of the best-known sonnet writers is William Shakespeare. A Shakespearean, or English, sonnet consists of 14 lines, each line containing ten syllables and written in iambic pentameter, in which a pattern of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable is repeated five times.



Sprung rhythm: Sprung rhythm is a poetic rhythm designed to imitate the rhythm of natural speech. It is constructed from feet in which the first syllable is stressed and may be followed by a variable number of unstressed syllables. The British poet Gerard Manley Hopkins claimed to have discovered this previously-unnamed poetic rhythm in the natural patterns of English in folk songs, spoken poetry, Shakespeare, Milton, et al.



Strambotto - Ottava rima: Ottava rima is a rhyming stanza form of Italian origin. Originally used for long poems on heroic themes, it later came to be popular in the writing of mock-heroic works. Its earliest known use is in the writings of Giovanni Boccaccio.

I want a hero: an uncommon want, (a)
When every year and month sends forth a new one, (b)
Till, after cloying the gazettes with cant, (a)
The age discovers he is not the true one; (b)
Of such as these I should not care to vaunt, (a)
I'll therefore take our ancient friend Don Juan— (b)
We all have seen him, in the pantomime, (c)
Sent to the devil somewhat ere his time. (c)

- Don Juan, *Canto the First, Stanza I*



Stanza: In poetry, a stanza is a unit within a larger poem. In modern poetry, the term is often equivalent with strophe; in popular vocal music, a stanza is typically referred to as a "verse" (distinct from the refrain, or "chorus").

A stanza consists of a grouping of lines, set off by a space that usually has a set pattern of meter and rhyme.



Tercet: A tercet is composed of three lines of poetry, forming a stanza or a complete poem. English-language haiku is an example of an unrhymed tercet poem. A poetic triplet is a tercet in which all three lines follow the same rhyme, a a a; triplets are rather rare; they are more customarily used sparingly in verse of heroic couplets or other couplet verse, to add extraordinary emphasis.



The tercet was introduced into English poetry by Sir Thomas Wyatt in the 16th century.

Threnody: A threnody is a song, hymn or poem of mourning composed or performed as a memorial to a dead person. The term originates from the Greek word threnoidia, from threnos ("wailing") + oide ("ode"); ultimately, from the Proto-Indo-European root wed- ("to speak") that is also the precursor of such words as "ode", "tragedy", "comedy", "parody", "melody" and "rhapsody".



Triolet: A triolet is a one stanza poem of eight lines. Its rhyme scheme is ABaAabAB and often all lines are in iambic tetrameter: the first, fourth and seventh lines are identical, as are the second and final lines, thereby making the initial and final couplets identical as well.



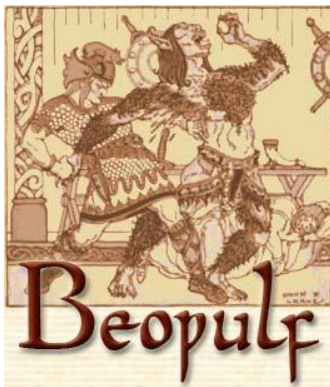
Trochee: A trochee or choree, choreus, is a metrical foot used in formal poetry consisting of a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed one. Trochee comes from the Greek τροχός, trokhós, wheel, and choree from χορός, khorós, dance; both convey the "rolling" rhythm of this metrical foot.



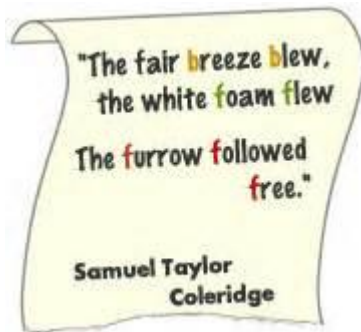
Troubadour: A troubadour was a composer and performer of Occitan lyric poetry during the High Middle Ages (1100-1350). Since the word "troubadour" is etymologically masculine, a female troubadour is usually called a trobairitz.



Ubi sunt: Latin term meaning 'where are they?' Typically a lament for the passing of all things, and common in Old English poems such as *Beowulf* and *The Wanderer*.



Unaccented Rhyme: Occurs where lines end with feminine (front-stressed) words and the unaccented final syllables would rhyme (if accented) but the initial syllables don't e.g. 'lover' and 'matter' or 'slowly' and 'clearly'.



How	vein	ly	men	them	selves	a	maze
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

— = to indicate unstressed syllables
 / = to indicate stressed syllables

Verse : As a mass noun, poetry in general; as a regular noun, a line of poetry. Typically used to refer to poetry that possesses more formal qualities.



Villanelle: A French verse form consisting of five three-line stanzas and a final quatrain, with the first and third lines of the first stanza repeating alternately in the following stanzas. These two refrain lines form the final couplet in the quatrain.



Volta: Italian word for "turn." In a sonnet, the volta is the turn of thought or argument: in Petrarchan or Italian sonnets it occurs between the octave and the sestet, and in Shakespearean or English before the final couplet



War Poetry: Term (normally) applied to poetry produced during the First World War. However, there was also some notable war poetry produced during the Second World War.



Weak Ending: Where a word or syllable at the end of a line of verse is stressed metrically but is unstressed in ordinary speech.



Welsh Forms: Wales has always had a rich bardic tradition and can boast 24 separate poetic forms: 12 awdlforms, 4 cywydd forms and 8 englyn forms.



Xinshi: Chinese poetic term which literally means 'new poetry'.



Zeugma: A figure of speech in which one verb or preposition joins two objects within the same phrase, often with different meanings. For example, "I left my heart—and my suitcase—in San Francisco."



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