South Valley University
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Introduction to Poetry

1st year

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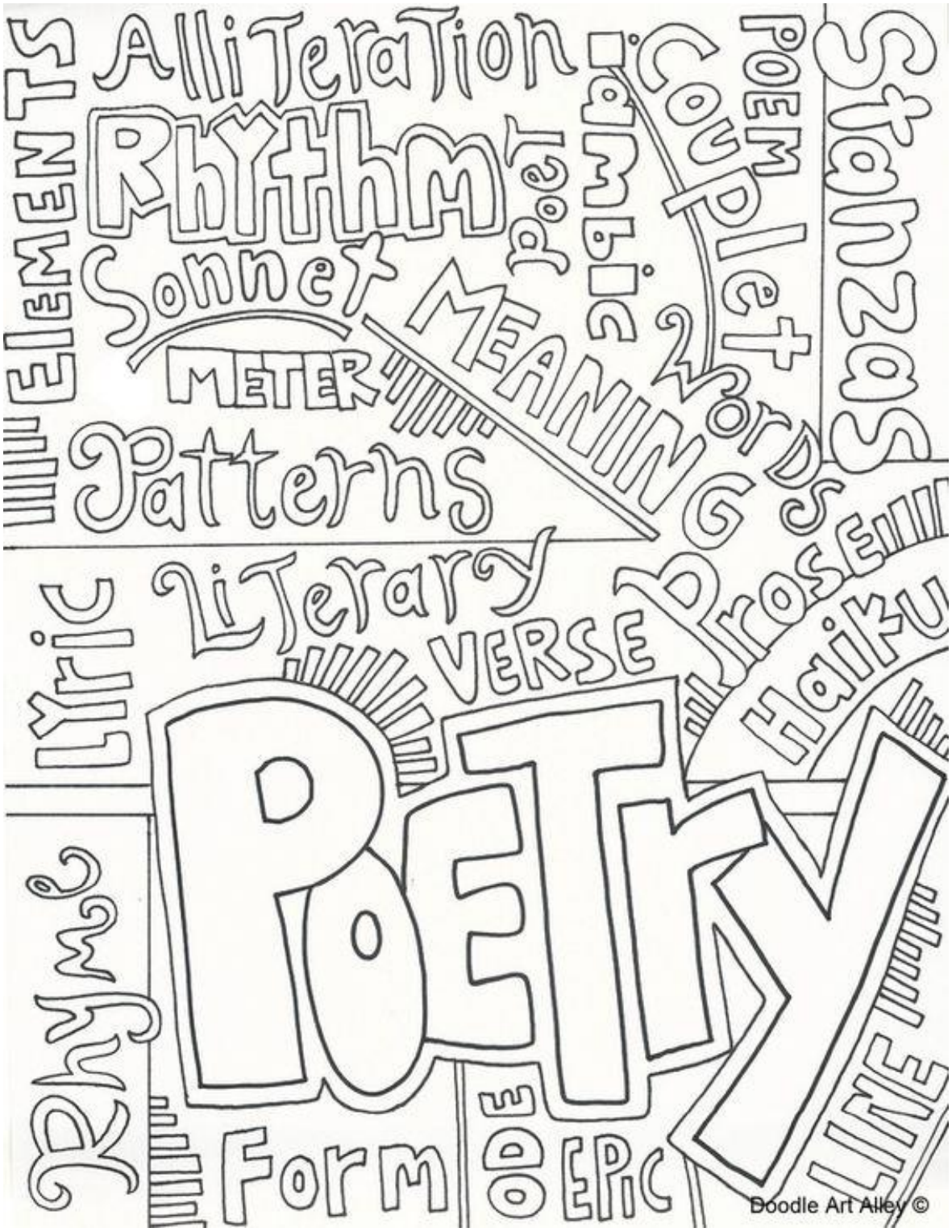
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What is Poetry?

What Is Poetry?

Poetry can be thought of as a verbal, written art form that uses a heightened sense of language to convey experience, feeling, or modes of consciousness. There is no concrete definition for poetry.

Poetry has often reflected the voice of the time. It is believed to have originated as one of the world's oldest ways of maintaining and remembering history. Ancient storytellers used mnemonic devices to orally pass down the major events of their tribes. Mnemonic devices are verbal or mental tricks that help learners remember large amounts of information.

Poetry has helped men achieve artistic and creative expression since its creation. However, poetry hasn't only helped its composers. Poetry has contributed to its readers and fans immensely as well. It serves as a means of therapy for the people it entertains in several ways, through the way the person interprets and relates the work to his or her own experiences in order to feel better or less alone about a situation in their lives. In a contemporary sense, poetry is viewed as something a person participates in through reading while they are alone, as opposed to a primitive view of poetry being theatrical. In any case it achieves its goal of giving rhythmic life to emotional expression, either through private reading, or theatrical performance.

"A poem . . .

begins as a lump in the throat,

a sense of wrong, a homesickness, a lovesickness. . . .

It finds the thought

and the thought finds the words."

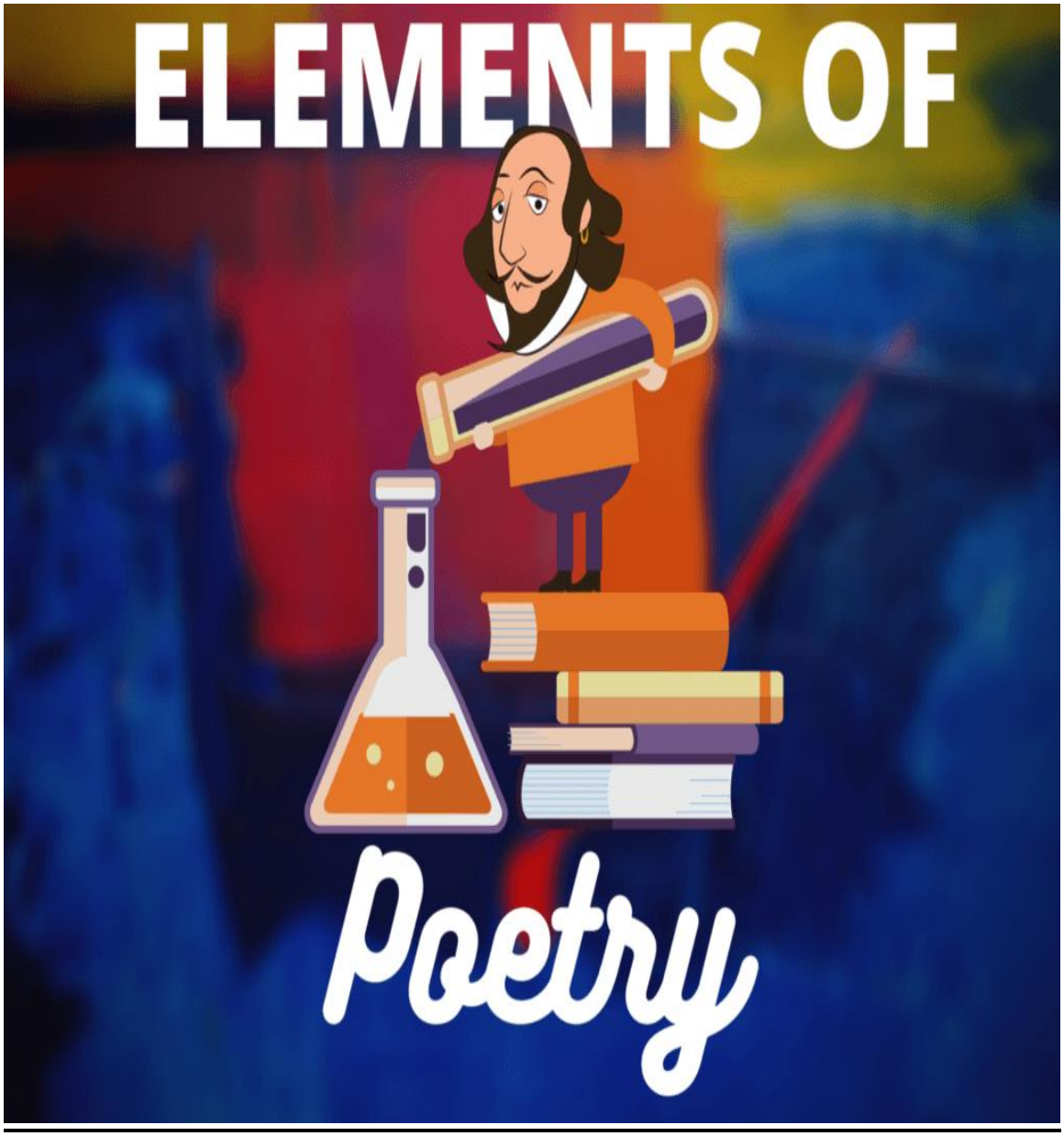
- Robert Frost

Robert Frost (1874-1963) believes that poetry derives from a passion of something. Something you feel so strongly about that the words become free flowing. A wrongdoing, homesickness and lovesickness were all appropriate examples of that. He describes the thought process as the poem beginning in the throat, as nothing more than a lump, and as it travels, the thought and the poem find each other and come together to form something beautifully scripted.

Frost also said, "Poetry is about the grief." The poetry is a result of dying emotions of the poet’s rather hot or creative imaginations. Poetry turns all things to loveliness. It makes the beautiful more beautiful thus all familiar things are shown with a touch of better beauty than they actually hold the most important tool used in the composition of poetry is language. Language is a weapon, it is a shield. What you choose to use it as is the choice of the poet.

Language as a weaponry allows the author to attack its reader with a barrage of words that exaggerate the theme and plot to a necessary level. Using it as a shield is a defense mechanism for poets. They open themselves just enough to construct prose, but the language used guards them from any criticism or feedback on a sensitive issue they may or may not be consciously ready to accept from an outsider. It gives them their outlet, but still shelters themselves from the reader.

Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the best and happiest minds ***(Shelley).*** *Poetry* is a criticism of life under the conditions fixed for such a criticism by laws of poetic truth and beauty ***(Matthew Arnold).*** *Poetry* is the imaginative expression of strong feeling, usually rhythmical ..... the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings recollected in tranquility ***(Wordsworth).***


ELEMENTS OF
Poetry

Elements of Poetry

Poetry expresses concepts and things by indirection. We know that a text usually carries meaning, and so does a poem (poetry). The difference is that a text carries direct meaning, and the meaning is usually termed as the referential meaning or the denotation meaning. Poetry usually has a connotation or symbolic meaning. In practice, a symbol cannot be directly known (except by the expert) and therefor it needs interpretation.

Poetry is an intricate literary form that incorporates rhyme, figurative language, sound devices, and meter in order to evoke a wide array of meanings. The language of poetry is not always straightforward. It guides readers to reach a conclusion but never gives out any details explicitly. Such is the beauty of a poetry text that demands readers' attentive and creative participation. With the knowledge of the important poetry elements, we can understand a poem's message and appreciate the text more effectively.

Speaker

Speaker is one who narrates the poem. In poetry, we tend to think that the poet is the speaker himself. However, it is not always the case. Sometimes, poets assume an imaginative character and

write the poem from their perspective. Generally, the poem is told from the perspective of a first-person speaker or a third-person speaker. Poets also use the second-person point of view in order to communicate directly with readers. Understanding the speaker helps us to know the poem's tone and mood.

Questions to consider are:

- Who "tells" the poem?
- Does the poem give any clues about the speaker's personality, the point of view, age, or gender?
- Who is the speaker addressing?
- Does the speaker seem attached or detached from what is said?

Title

Think about the title and how it relates to the poem. Titles often provide important clues about what is at the heart of a piece. Likewise, a title may work ironically or in opposition to a poem.

Subject / Content

The subject or content of poetry differs across a variety of forms. A subject is what the poem is about. For instance, the

subjects of sonnets include love and admiration for one's beloved, heartache and separation. Whereas divine sonnets include the subjects of devotions to God, enlightenment, and salvation. Elegies are written in memory of someone who is no more. Therefore, the subject of these poems is a dead person.

Theme

The theme is a recurring idea or a pervading thought in a work of literature. Poetry themes include some common ideas such as love, nature, beauty, and as complex as death, spirituality, and immortality. An understanding of the theme helps readers to identify the core message of the poem or the poet's purpose for writing the poem. Many single words carry a rich load of meaning, being denotative and connotative.

Denotation is when you mean what you say, literally. The denotation of a word is the definition you will find in the dictionary.

Connotation of a word is the emotional overtones you may feel when encountering the term. It is created when you mean something else, something that might be initially hidden. The connotative meaning of a word is based on implication, or shared emotional association with a word. Greasy is a completely

innocent word: Some things, like car engines, need to be greasy. But greasy contains negative associations for most people, whether they are talking about food or about people.

Often there are many words that denote approximately the same thing, but their connotations are very different. Innocent and genuine both denote an absence of corruption, but the connotations of the two words are different: innocent is often associated with a lack of experience, whereas genuine is not. Connotations are important in poetry because poets use them to further develop or complicate a poem's meaning.

Another example is the word home, for instance, by denotation means only a place where one lives, but by connotation it suggests security, love, comfort, and family. The words childlike and childish both mean "characteristic of a child," but childlike suggests innocence while childish suggests small-minded attitude.

Context

Context is important in poetry. It’s the information the poet provides for the reader so that they can understand why something is happening. It includes the character’s personal history, the cultural history of a place, and more. The four main types of context are explored below.

- Historical: the time period and contemporary events that affect the context. They can set a very important tone for the story and be crucial for a reader's understanding of why characters do what they do. If a story is set in the Victorian era, events are going to unfold differently than if it is set in the Stone Age.
- Cultural: concerned with how beliefs, food, customs, and other cultural elements affect the context. These elements may be more or less important to understand a story. Writers also consider whether their audience is going to be familiar with these cultural elements and how that's going to affect their reception of the work. Will it be more or less interesting depending on how well they know a place or people?
- Physical: the features of the setting that inform how the events unfold. It is concerned with the environment the characters are in and how that influences the choices they make. For example, if a story is set in Antarctica, characters are going to have to face different challenges than if it is set in the Bahamas.
- Situational: this final type of content is concerned with why something is happening. It is based around the event itself, and the audience has to understand why something is occurring based on other events. For example, why someone

gets upset when another criticizes their music taste or why one person makes the decision they do in a moment.

Tone and Mood

Diction is another significant aspect of poetry. It refers to the language, sound, and form used in a particular piece of poetry. The tone or attitude of a poem's speaker and the mood of the entire text is part of poetic diction. To understand the speaker's attitude or tone to the subject, readers have to look for the poet's choice of words, figurative language, and sound devices. The mood is related to the impression of the text upon readers. Mood is the general atmosphere of a narrative.

The tone of a poem is roughly equivalent to **the mood** it creates in the reader. Think of an actor reading a line such as *"I could kill you."* He can read it in a few different ways: If he thinks the proper tone is murderous anger, he might scream the line and cause the veins to bulge in his neck. He might assume the tone of cool power and murmur the line in a low, even voice. Perhaps he does not mean the words at all and laughs as he says them. Much depends on interpretation, of course, but the play will give the actor clues about the tone just as a poem gives its readers clues about how to feel about it. The tone may be based on a number of

other conventions that the poem uses, such as meter or repetition. If you find a poem exhilarating, maybe it's because the meter mimics galloping. If you find a poem depressing, that may be because it contains shadowy imagery. Tone is not in any way divorced from the other elements of poetry; it is directly dependent on them.

Rhyme and Rhyme Scheme

Rime: old spelling of rhyme, which is the repetition of like sounds at regular intervals, employed in versification, the writing of verse. Rhyme is the repetitive pattern of sounds found in poetry. They are used to reinforce a pattern or rhyme scheme. You'll notice if a poem has a rhyme scheme or is written in free verse (i.e. without a rhyme scheme or regular meter). Map out the rhyming pattern by assigning each line a letter, giving lines that rhyme the same letter. The first sound is represented or designated as **a**, the second sound is **b**, and so on. When the first sound is repeated, it is designated as **a** also. See if there is a distinct pattern and a formal rhyme scheme, like terza rima (three-line stanzas with interconnected scheme of ABA BCB, etc.)

In specific poetry forms such as ballads, sonnets, and couplets, the rhyme scheme is an important element. A "rhyme scheme" is a

way of describing the pattern of end rhymes in a poem. Each new sound at the end of a line is given a letter, starting with "A," then "B," and so on. If an end sound repeats the end sound of an earlier line, it gets the same letter as the earlier line.

➔ *Variations of Rhyme*

- ***End Rhyme:*** is a common type of rhyme in poetry that occurs when the last word of two or more lines rhyme.

I was angry with my friend,

I told my wrath, my wrath did end.

(William Blake, "A Poison Tree")

- ***Internal Rhyme:*** rhyme contained within a line of verse. The rhyming words are found within the line, – often a word in the middle of a line rhyming with the last word or sound of the line.

The splendour falls on castle walls

And snowy summits old in story:

The long light shakes across the lakes

And the wild cataract leaps in glory.

(Alfred, Lord Tennyson, "Blow, Bugle, Blow")

- ***Masculine Rhyme:*** is the rhyming between stressed syllables at the end of verse lines. The final syllables of the rhyming words are stressed. It is the most common kind of end rhyme.

She walks in beauty like the night

Of cloudless climes and starry skies;

And all that's best of dark and bright

Meet in her aspect and her eyes:

Thus mellowed to that tender light

Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

(Lord Byron, "She Walks in Beauty")

- ***Feminine Rhyme:*** is the rhyming between unstressed syllables at the end of verse lines. The rhyming of stressed syllables followed by identical unstressed syllables.

Trembling, hoping, lingering, flying,

O the pain, the bliss of dying!

(Alexander Pope, "Vital Spark of Heavenly Flame")

- ***Perfect Rhyme and Imperfect Rhyme (Half Rhyme /Slant Rhyme)***

Perfect rhymes

◊ the stressed vowel following sounds are identical

◊ slow - grow, fleet - street, or buying –crying

Imperfect rhymes

◊ the final consonant sounds of the words are identical, but the vowels are different, creating similar but not identical sounds

◊ quietness - express

Imperfect rhyme is a type of rhyme that occurs in words that do not have an identical sound.

In the mustard seed sun,

By full tilt river and switchback sea

Where the cormorants scud,

In his house on stilts high among beaks

(Dylan Thomas, "Poem on His Birthday")

Most people, when they think about what constitutes a rhyme, are actually thinking about one type of rhyme in particular, called **perfect rhyme**, which only includes words with identical sounds like "game" and "tame," or "table" and "fable." But in fact, rhyme is a rather broad and loosely-defined literary device that includes many different types of repetition of sounds between words. For instance, the words "crate" and "braid" make a specific type of rhyme called **slant rhyme**, because they both share a vowel sound ("ay") in their final syllable. When it comes to rhyme schemes and how they're written out, poems that use imperfect rhymes are no different from poems that use perfect rhymes.

Therefore, this excerpt from a poem by Yeats would be said to have an ABAB rhyme scheme even though it uses slant rhyme:

When have I last looked on
The round green eyes and the long wavering bodies
Of the dark leopards of the moon?
All the wild witches, those most noble ladies

- ***Identical Rhyme:*** dream/ dream, street/ street
- ***Eye Rhyme:*** wash/cash, cover/over
- ***Homonyms:*** mine/ mind, peace/ piece
- ***Mind Rhyme:*** A specific rhyme generated by the context of a verse Example: "I love your style. Every time I see you I can't help but grin." If you read this and thought "smile" instead of "grin," then a mind rhyme has just occurred.
- ***Forced Rhyme***: an example from William Blake's The Tiger:

  What immortal hand or eye
  Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

➔ Some additional key details about ***rhyme schemes***:

- Rhyme schemes represent stanza breaks using spaces. So a poem made up of two rhyming couplets (two-line stanzas) would be said to have a rhyme scheme of AA BB.

- There are different conventions for writing out rhyme schemes. Some people use lowercase letters (abab), some use uppercase (ABAB), and some even throw in italics or hyphens (*a*-*b*-*a*-*b*). This formatting aspect of rhyme schemes is not very scientific.
- Rhymes are used in all types of poetry, but they don't always occur in regular patters or at the ends of lines—so not all poems that use rhyme necessarily have rhyme schemes. Rhyme schemes are only used to describe poems that use end rhyme (that is, rhymes at the ends of lines).

➔ Refrains and Rhyme Schemes

Some types of poems, such as ballades, have entire lines that repeat at regular intervals throughout the poem. These repeating lines are called refrains. For poems that use refrains, it's common to write the rhyme scheme in lowercase letters and then to use an uppercase letter to indicate the refrain. For example, ballades consist of three eight-line stanzas with a rhyme scheme of ababbcbC, plus a final four-line stanza with a rhyme scheme of bcbC, where the final line of every stanza is the refrain.

➔ Single-Stanza vs. Whole-Poem Rhyme Schemes

The pattern of a rhyme scheme can be specific to a single stanza of a poem, or it can repeat throughout an entire poem. For instance, if a poem is said to have an ABAB rhyme scheme, that might mean that the same two rhymes are used throughout the whole poem (as in, ABAB ABAB ABAB), but this is pretty uncommon in English—so more likely than not it's just a shorthand way of saying that *each stanza* uses a rhyme scheme of ABAB, but the A and B rhymes are not actually the same between stanzas. In this case, a longer poem with an ABAB rhyme scheme, if you were to write it out, would actually be ABAB CDCD EFEF, and so on. If you're not sure whether a rhyme scheme is supposed to apply to a whole poem or just a single stanza, the easiest way to figure this out is to just check the poem to see if rhymes are the same between different stanzas.

There are really only a few circumstances in which it makes sense to write out the entire rhyme scheme of a poem from beginning to end (instead of just using the single-stanza rhyme poems with a predetermined number of lines and a fixed rhyme scheme, such as a sonnet. Sonnets are 14-line poems that typically use a rhyme scheme of ABBA ABBA CDEDCE—so in this case,

writing out the rhyme scheme of the entire poem is actually the most efficient way of describing it.

Other fixed verse forms, such as the villanelle, are easier to describe using simple English, as in, "five tercets with an ABA rhyme scheme, plus a final quatrain with a rhyme scheme of ABAA." That's less tedious and much easier on the eyes than writing "villanelles use a rhyme scheme of ABA ABA ABA ABA ABA ABAA," though both ways of describing a villanelle's rhyme scheme are acceptable.

➔*Types of Rhyme Schemes*

A poem's rhyme scheme can be anything the poet wants it to be, but here's a list of some of the more common rhyme schemes:

- **Alternate rhyme** Alternating rhyme schemes are one of the simplest types. Also called **interlocking rhymes**, this rhyme scheme is found in 4-line stanzas and includes the ABAB pattern. An example is *"Neither Out Far Nor In Deep"* by Robert Frost:

The people along the sand (A)

All turn and look one way. (B)

They turn their back on the land. (A)

They look at the sea all day. (B)

- **Coupled rhyme** is any rhyme scheme in which rhymes occur in pairs, such as AABBCC. The rhymes themselves are called couplets. Coupled rhyme is a 2-line stanza following the simple format AA, BB, CC, etc. Great poets from Shakespeare to Chaucer used rhyming couples.

- **Triplet Rhyme** Not as common as the coupled rhyme is the triplet rhyme. As you can imagine by now, a triplet rhyme is a 3-line rhyming stanza. See how this works through "Upon Julia's Clothes" by Robert Herrick:

Whenas in silks my Julia goes, (A)

Then, then (methinks) how sweetly flows (A)

That liquefaction of her clothes. (A)

- **Monorhyme** is the term used for poems that use just one rhyme throughout the entire poem, as in AAAA. A monorhyme scheme only has one ending rhyme throughout the entire poem. Imagine how tricky it can get to think of new rhyme words. Watch this in action by reading "Night Storm" by Marie Summers:

It came in a winter's night,

a fierce cold with quite a bite.

Frosted wind with all its might

sent ice and snow an invite

to layer earth in pure white

and glisten with morning light

- **Enclosed rhyme** is the term used for "sandwich" rhyme schemes like ABA or ABBA. The couplet of the (BB) is sandwiched between the As. The first stanza of Matthew Arnold's "Shakespeare" pulls this off beautifully.

Others abide our question. Thou art free. (A)

We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art still, (B)

Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill, (B)

Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty, (A)

- **Simple 4-line rhyme** follows a pattern of ABCB.
- **Chain rhyme** describes rhyme schemes in which stanzas are linked together by rhymes that carry over from one stanza to the next, as in ABA BCB CDC.

- **Limerick** limericks have 5 lines that follow an AABBA rhyme scheme. They also have a set number of syllables to each line. Explore the silly limerick example “A Young Lady of Lynn”:

There was a young lady of Lynn, (A)

Who was so uncommonly thin (A)

That when she essayed (B)

To drink lemonade (B)

She slipped through the straw and fell in. (A)

- **Villanelle** Villanelle rhyme schemes like to mix it up. They include not only five 3-line stanzas but a quatrain at the end with an ABA rhyming pattern and repeating lines. Check out Elizabeth Bishop’s “One Art”:

I lost two cities, lovely ones. And, vaster, (A)

some realms I owned, two rivers, a continent. (B)

I miss them, but it wasn't a disaster. (A)

—Even losing you (the joking voice, a gesture (A)

I love) I shan't have lied. It's evident (B)

the art of losing's not too hard to master (A)

though it may look like (Write it!) like disaster. (A)

Keep in mind that this is just a list of some of the more common types of rhyme scheme. It's *not* a list of all the different forms of poetry, since the form of a poem is defined by more than just its rhyme scheme.

Sound and Rhythm

Sound and rhythm are other important elements of poetry. Rhythm is the pattern of stresses within a line of verse. All spoken word has a rhythm formed by stressed and unstressed Syllables. In poetry, rhythm refers to the metrical rhythm that involves the arrangement of syllables into repeating patterns called feet.

How is rhythm created?

Using syllables

Rhythm is often created through the use of syllables. When we speak, we naturally emphasize some syllables over others. Longer syllables are known as "stressed" syllables and shorter ones are "unstressed".

These natural stresses are used by poets to help form this rhythm almost like a beat in music. If you put a word in a sentence and read it out loud, you can see which words are stressed more easily.

Creating meter with a pattern of syllables

The pattern of stressed and unstressed parts of words is known as the meter. Meter is the arrangement of words in regularly measured, patterned or rhythmic lines or verses.

This can even be measured in metrical feet. A metrical foot tends to be formed with one stressed syllable and two unstressed syllables. Poems can have any number of feet in their lines but when writing a poem, you would stick to the pattern. Meters are the pattern of feet within a sentence.

➔ *Syllables*

When we speak in ordinary conversation, we pronounce different parts of words, or syllables, separately. For example:

- Table has two beats, or two syllables: ta-ble
- Chair has only one syllable: chair

Some syllables seem to have a long or short sound when they are pronounced. Take the word, ‘table’. The first part of the word

is emphasized when we say it. Ta-ble. The second part of the word sounds shorter.

We can call this different syllable emphasis stressed or unstressed. In the word ‘banana’, for example, the central syllable is longer, or stressed, when you say it naturally: ba-na-na. Try saying it out loud to hear where the natural emphasis falls.

Poets make use of these natural stresses in language in order to create rhythm in poetry. It can be helpful to think of rhythm in poetry as being like a beat in music.

In poetry, this pattern of the **stressed** and **unstressed** parts of words is called the **meter**, which is the number and type of rhythmic beats in a line of poetry.

In types of poems, such as haikus, the writer counts the number of syllables in each line. In metrical poetry, however, poets don’t count the number of syllables in each line; they count the number of ‘stresses’.

➔ ***Foot*** 

A foot is a unit of meter. A “foot” is the group of stresses and non-stresses that define the meter of a poem. A metrical foot can have two or three syllables. A foot consists generally of one stressed

and one or more unstressed syllables. A line may have one foot, two feet, etc. Poetic lines are classified according to the number of feet in a line.

➔ *Types of Metrical Feet*

- Iambic foot unstressed / stressed
- Trochaic foot stressed / unstressed
- Anapestic foot unstressed / unstressed / stressed
- Dactylic foot stressed / unstressed / unstressed
- Spondaic foot stressed / stressed
- Pyrrhic foot unstressed / unstressed

- **Iamb**: consists of one unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable, as in des-**pair**, ex-**clude**, re-**peat**, etc.

The iambic foot is a two syllable foot with the stress on the second syllable. The iambic foot is the most common foot in English. Examples of words that are in themselves iambic feet are.

u / u / u /

be low de light a muse

u / | u / | u / | u / | u /

A book | of ver | ses un | der neath | the bough,

u / | u / | u / | u / | u /

A jug | of wine, | a loaf | of bread | --and thou.

- **Trochee:** is a metrical foot containing one stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable, as in **sis**-ter, **flow**-er, **splin**-ter, etc.

  The trochaic foot consists of a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable.

/ u / u / u

ne ver, ga ther hap py

/ u | / u | / u | / u

Dou ble | dou ble, | toil and | trou ble,

/ u | / u | / u | / u

Fi re | burn and | caul dron | bub ble

- **Dactyl:** comprised one stressed syllable followed by two unstressed syllables, as in **si**-mi-lar.

The dactylic foot contains three syllables with the stress on the first syllable.

/ u u / u u / u u

Hap pi ness mer ri ly mur mur ing

/ u u | / u u | / u u | / u u

Love a gain, | song a gain, | nest a gain | young a gain

- **Anapest:** consists of three syllables, where the first two are unstressed and the last one is stressed, as in com-pre-**hend**.

The anapestic foot consists of three syllable with the stress on the last syllable.

u u / u u /

Cav a lier in ter twine

u u / | u u / | u u / | u u /

With the sheep | in the fold | and the cows | in their stalls.

- **Spondee:** contains two stressed syllables, like "**drum beat**".

The spondaic foot consists of two stressed syllables. Compound words are examples of spondees. Spondees are used for variation.

/ / / / / /

heartbreak childhood football

- **Pyrrhic:** is the opposite of spondee and contains two unstressed syllables.

The pyrrhic foot consists of two unstressed syllables. This type of foot is rare and is found interspersed with other feet.

➔ *Meter*

Meter refers to the number of "**feet**" of a specific kind in a line of poetry. Meter is the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables established in a line of poetry. The stressed (/) syllable is also called the accented or long syllable. The un stressed (U) syllable is also called the unaccented or the short syllable. In determining the meter, the importance of the word, the position in the metical pattern, and other linguistic factors should be considered. In identifying the meter of a line of verse, the type and the number of feet are considered. Metrical language is called VERSE. Non metrical language is called PROSE.

The basic types of metrical feet determined by the arrangement of stressed an unstressed syllables. Analysis of the meter of poetry is based on the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in each line. Mark each **foot**—the basic measurement of a poetic line consisting of one stressed syllable paired with at least one unstressed syllable. Next, mark the pattern of stresses throughout the line. Identify the meter based on this information. The **line** is the secondary unit of measurement. The line is measured by naming the number of feet in it.

➔ *Kinds of Metrical Lines:*

LINE is measured by naming the number of feet in it. The following names are used:

- Monometer one foot line
- Dimeter two foot line
- Trimeter three foot line
- Tetrameter four foot line
- Pentameter five foot line
- Hexameter six foot line
- Heptameter seven foot line
- Octameter eight foot line

➔Poets utilize these metrical feet to create a pattern, which is called a **metrical pattern** or **metrical scheme**. Some of the important metrical patterns include:

- Iambic pentameter: occurs when the lines of a poem contain five iambs each. Shakespeare's sonnets are written in this meter.

  iambic pentameter (5 iambs, 10 syllables)

  "That time | of year | thou mayst | in me | behold"
- Iambic tetrameter: is another important metrical pattern. It occurs when the lines have four iambs each, as in Robert Frost's poem 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening'.
- Trochaic tetrameter: is the recurring pattern of four trochees per line.

  trochaic tetrameter (4 trochees, 8 syllables)

  "Tell me | not in | mournful | numbers"
- Anapestic trimeter (3 anapests, 9 syllables)

  "And the sound | of a voice | that is still"
- dactylic hexameter (6 dactyls, 17 syllables; a trochee replaces the last dactyl)

  "This is the | forest pri | meval, the | murmuring | pine and the | hemlocks"

- Trochaic octameter: occurs when verse lines contain eight trochees each. Edgar Allan Poe's best-known poem 'The Raven' is written in this meter.

➔ *Other Metric Terms*

- amphibrach: a foot with unstressed-stressed-unstressed syllables: Chi-ca-go
- anacrusis: an extra unaccented syllable at the beginning of a line before the regular meter begins.

"Mine / by the right / of the white / e-lec-tion" (Emily Dickinson)

- amphimacer: a foot with stressed-unstressed-stressed syllables: at-ti-tude
- catalexis: an extra unaccented syllable at the ending of a line after the regular meter ends (opposite of anacrusis).

"I'll tell / you how / the sun / rose" (Emily Dickinson)

- caesura: a pause in the meter or rhythm of a line.

Flood-tide below me! || I see you face to face!

(Walt Whitman: "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry")

- enjambement:

a run-on line, continuing into the next without a grammatical break.

Green rustlings, more-than-regal charities

Drift coolly from that tower of whispered light.

(Hart Crane: “Royal Palm”)

➔ *Rhythm*

Rhythm refers to the pattern of sounds made by varying the stressed and unstressed syllables in a poem. It is a sound pattern (a beat) using one or more kinds of meter. The word “**rhythm**” comes from the **Greek** meaning “**measured motion**.” It is the pattern of stresses in poetic writing. Writers use various types of rhythms and numbers of syllables in order to create these patterns. Some, like iambic pentameter, are extremely common and widely used. This particular pattern is quite regular, often sounding like a heart or drum beat. Other patterns, like trochaic tetrameter, are slightly less common but still widely used. Others poems that use dactyls and spondees throughout every line are very uncommon. These types are metrical feet that usually appear a few times, but are not consistently used when a writer applies them to their verse.

Different rhythms can have different effects on a reader. A poet will use rhythm to generate a mood or tone, which may copy or echo what the poem is about. Rhythm plays a role to create emotions and a sense of balance in the writing. It is what makes it special when it is read out loud. It can strengthen meanings and ideas in a poem. Different rhythms can create moods and tones that might reflect the ideas and thoughts expressed in the poem.

➔ Three Ways to Play with Rhythm:

1. Use Caesurae: a caesura is a visible break or pause in a line of poetry (shown either by punctuation or empty space) that signifies a pause while reading the line. These breaks change the rhythm of the lines. Although they do not change the kinds of feet used, they change the final pattern of the line.

Caesuras were popular in old and middle English writing, when poetry was spoken aloud. For example:

Milton! // Thou shouldst be living at this hour. (Wordsworth, London, 1802)

2. Use Enjambment: enjambment occurs in poetry when a phrase in one line continues into the next. This means that there is no punctuation cutting up the idea of the phrase, and no signal for the reader to pause. The phrase is read as if it were one long line of poetry, but it is written as two (or more) lines.

Although this does not change the meter (number of feet per line), it does change the way a poem sounds when it is read. Thus, it changes the oral rhythm of the poem. Here is an example:

"When the evening is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherized upon a table;"
(From T. S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," lines 2-3)

The run-on-line, where readers should not stop but read through to the next line is opposite to the End-stopped line which is a line of poetry that naturally pauses at the end of the line (when it shows a complete clause or sentence).

End-stopped line:

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun.
Coral is far more red than her lips red.
(Shakespeare, Sonnet 130)

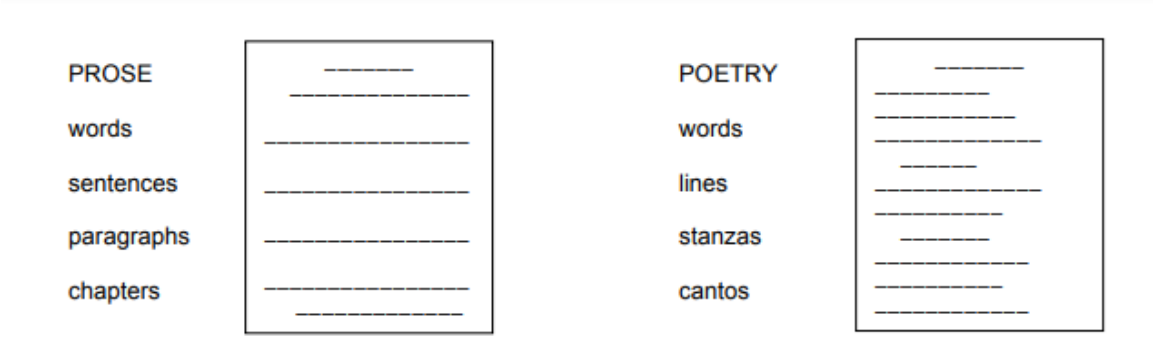
Run-on lines:

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds
Or bends with the remover to remove. . . .
(Shakespeare, Sonnet 116)

3. Use a Change in Rhythm for Emphasis: The reader will notice a significant change in rhythm (such as a shift from iambic

pentameter to trochaic hexameter) in a poem. This means that the lines where the change occurs will stand out, or be emphasized. Many poets (such as Shakespeare) use changes in rhythm to point out something to the reader.

Structure and Form



<u>The structural elements</u> found in poetry are:

- <u>Stanza:</u> Stanzas are the poetic equivalent of a prose paragraph. They are a series of lines grouped together and separated from other groups of lines or stanzas by a skipped line. Stanza is a division of a poem based on thought or form. Stanzas based on form are marked by their rhyme scheme. Stanzas are known by the number of lines they contain. Stanza divides the poem in such a way that does not

harm its balance rather it adds to the beauty to the symmetry of a poem. Moreover, it allows poets to shift their moods and present different subject matters in their poems.

- Verse: are stanzas with no set number of lines that make up units based on sense.
- Canto: is a stanza pattern found in medieval and modern long poetry.

➔ *Kinds of stanzas:*

Stanzas of:

- two lines are called a couplet
- three lines are called a tercet
- four lines are called a quatrain
- five lines are called a quintet
- six lines are called a sestet
- seven lines are called a septet
- eight lines are called an octave

- **<u>Couplet</u>** has two lines ***aa***

It consists of two rhyming lines having the same meter. Examples are:

Alexander Pope wrote his "Essay on Criticism" in rhyming couplets:

"True wit is nature to advantage dress'd;
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd."

A rhyming pair of lines in iambic pentameter is known as heroic couplet. Initiated by Chaucer, heroic couplet is commonly used in epics and narrative poetry.

- **<u>Tercet</u>** has three lines ***aaa aba***

A tercet comprises three lines following a same rhyming scheme a a a or have a rhyming pattern a b a. Sir Thomas Wyatt introduce tercet in 16th century.

1. Read the following tercets from Wyatt's poem "Second Satire" with a rhyming scheme ***a b a :***

"My mother's maids, when they did sew and spin,
They sang sometimes a song of the field mouse,
That for because their livelihood was but so thin."

2. Famous Romantic poet, Alfred Lord Tennyson employed tercets in his poem "The Eagle" with a rhyming scheme ***a a a***:

"He clasps the crag with crooked hands:
Close to the sun it lonely lands,
Ringed with the azure world, it stands."

- **<u>Quatrain</u>** has four lines ***abab, abba, aabb, abac***

It is a form of stanza popularized by a Persian poet, Omar Khayyam, who called it a Rubai. It has common rhyming schemes a a a a. a a b b, a b a b.

1. Read the following example from Edward FitzGerald's "Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam":

"Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter garment of Repentance fling:
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter–and the Bird is on the Wing."

2. Try it with the following stanza from Samuel Taylor Coleridge's Rime of the Ancient Mariner:

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

- **Quintet** has five lines

Quintain also referred to as cinquain is stanza of five lines which may be rhymed or unrhymed and has a typical stress pattern. Its invention is attributed to Crapsey.

Below is an example of cinquain taken from Crapsey's "November Night":

"Listen…
With faint dry sound,
Like steps of passing ghosts,
The leaves, frost-crisp'd, break from the trees
And fall."

- **Sestet** has six lines

Sestet is a kind of stanza that consists of six lines. It is the second division of Italian or sonnets of Petrarch following an octave or the first division comprising eight lines.

In a sonnet, a sestet marks a change of emotional state of a poet as they tend to be more subjective in the second part of the sonnet. Read the following lines from Mathew Arnold's "The Better Part":

So answerest thou; but why not rather say:
"Hath man no second life? – Pitch this one high!

Sits there no judge in Heaven, our sin to see? –
More strictly, then, the inward judge obey!
Was Christ a man like us? Ah! Let us try
If we then, too, can be such men as he!"

Now, let's take a look at the sestet, which has six lines. Although sestets appear often in poems with rhyme and meter, they also play an important role in a peculiar poetic form called the sestina. A sestina is a 39-line poem made of six sestets and one tercet. Instead of relying on rhyme and meter for organization, a sestina repeats the last words of the first six lines (or teleutons) in different patterns. Here are the first two stanzas of 'Sestina' by Elizabeth Bishop:

September rain falls on the house.
In the failing light, the old grandmother
sits in the kitchen with the child
beside the Little Marvel Stove,
reading the jokes from the almanac,
laughing and talking to hide her tears.

She thinks that her equinoctial tears
and the rain that beats on the roof of the house
were both foretold by the almanac,
but only known to a grandmother.
The iron kettle sings on the stove.
She cuts some bread and says to the child . . .

As you can see, the teleutons are the words 'house,' 'grandmother,' 'child,' 'stove,' 'almanac,' and 'tears.' The challenge (and the fun) of writing a sestina is finding a way to arrive at these words again and again without becoming repetitive.

- **Septet** has seven lines

Autumn

wind blows ball
through the net of Vols
"we 'gon win, it's in our blood"
champs are we to thrive while kicked real good
on the ground; glasses did break
but our spirit takes
no defeat

- **Octave** has eight lines

Last but not least, let's look at the octave, which has eight lines. One poetic form that uses octaves is ottava rima, which is made of stanzas with an abababcc rhyme scheme. If you examine the rhyme scheme closely, you'll see that it functions like a sestet (ababab) followed by a rhyming couplet (cc). Here is an example of ottava rima from Lord Byron's comic poem Don Juan:

When Bishop Berkeley said 'there was no matter,' (a)
And proved it -- 'twas no matter what he said: (b)

They say his system 'tis in vain to batter, (a)
Too subtle for the airiest human head (b)
And yet who can believe it! I would shatter (a)
Gladly all matters down to stone or lead, (b)
Or adamant, to find the World a spirit, (c)
And wear my head, denying that I wear it. (c)

- Others are identified as nine, ten or eleven-line stanza.

➔ ***Types of Poetry and their characteristics***

Type of Poetry	Definition	Specific Forms
Narrative Poetry	A nondramatic poem which tells a story or presents a narrative, whether simple or complex, long or short.	**ballad** **epic** **metrical romance**
Dramatic Poetry	Poetry which employs dramatic form or dramatic techniques as a means of achieving poetic ends.	**verse drama** **dramatic monologue** **verse dialogue**
Lyric Poetry	A brief subjective poem marked by imagination, melody, and emotion, but strict definition is impossible.	**dirge**, **epithalamion**, **elegy**, **epigram**, **epitaph**, **hymn**, **sonnet**, **song**, **light verse**, **ode**, **pastoral**, **vers de societe**,

Poetry can be divided into several genres, or categories. Not all poems fit neatly into a category, but to understand what poetry is all about, it's helpful to group poems based on some common characteristics. But, regardless of the specific type of poetry in question, most likely, a poem will fit into one of these three overarching types of poetry: *lyric*, *narrative*, and *dramatic*.

Narrative Poetry

Just as in a prose story, a narrative poem will most likely follow the conventions of the plot, including elements such as conflict, rising action, climax, resolution etc. Again, as in prose stories, narrative poems will most likely be peopled with characters to perform the actions of the tale.

Narrative poetry is poetry that tells a story. Just like a literary narrative, there's a plot or some sort of action taking place. One popular type of narrative poetry is **epic** poetry. An epic poem is a long narrative poem that usually follows the life and adventures of a hero. The ancient Greeks loved their epic poetry and produced great works that we are still fascinated by today, such as Homer's "Iliad" and "Odyssey." Narrative poetry is often set to music as **ballads**. Narrative poems are usually of human interest and include epics, or long stories.

Examples of poetry in this category include:

- **allegory** - a narrative poem that uses an extended metaphor to make a point
- **ballad** - narrative poetry set to music
- **burlesque** - a mock-epic poem that tells an ordinary story in a melodramatic way
- **epic** - a lengthy poem that tells a story of heroic adventures

If the story changes over the course of the poem, it's a narrative poem. The rhyme scheme and meter may change between narrative poems, but all narrative poems tell a story from the perspective of a third-person narrator.

Dramatic Poetry

Another genre is dramatic poetry. If you've ever read a play by William Shakespeare, you're reading dramatic poetry. Basically, dramatic poetry is written with the intention of being performed.

Dramatic poetry, also known as dramatic monologue, is meant to be spoken or acted. Similar to narrative poetry, dramatic poetry tells a story. You're most likely to find dramatic poetry in the form of dramatic (or even comedic) monologues or soliloquies written in a rhyming verse.

Many dramatic poems appear as:

- **monologue** - a speech given by one character to another, or by one character to the audience (also known as dramatic verse when not in poetic form)
- **soliloquy** - a speech given by one character to himself or herself; a dramatic representation of inner monologue

While narrative poetry is told by a narrator, dramatic poetry is written from the perspective of a character in the story. Narrative

poetry tends to set the scene and describe what's happening, whereas dramatic poetry tends to lead with a main character entering the scene and speaking.

Lyric Poetry

Lyric poetry concerns itself mainly with the poet's emotional life; that is, it's written in their voice and expresses solid thoughts and emotions. There is only one voice in a lyric poem, and we see the world from that single perspective. Most modern poetry is lyric poetry in that it is personal and introspective.

Lyric poetry doesn't necessarily tell a story, have a plot, or follow a logical progression. It's more about using elements like rhyme and rhythm to create an overall effect or feeling. A good way to remember this is to think of lyrics in music, because at times, lyric poetry is set to music. Lyric poetry uses song-like and emotional words to describe a moment, an object, a feeling, or a person. It uses sensory language to set the scene and inspire emotions in the reader.

There are several types of poetry that one could classify as lyric poetry. They include:

- **elegy** - is a mournful poem, especially a lament for the dead.

- **haiku** - is a form of unrhymed Japanese poetry containing three sections with a total of 17 syllables arranged in a 5-7-5 pattern. It uses natural imagery to express an emotion.

- **ode** - an elevated poem that pays tribute to a person, idea, place, or another concept. It is a formal lyric poem written in celebration or dedication of something with specific intent.
- **sonnet** - is a fourteen-line poem with a set rhyme scheme, often divided into quatrains, octaves, and sestets.

A sonnet is a type of poem that traditionally has 14 lines that are written in iambic pentameter. It is derived from the Italian sonetto ("little song") and perfected by the 14th-century poet Petrarch. The sonnet was brought to England by Sir Thomas Wyatt, when he started translating the works of the Italian poet Petrarch. And later it was developed and shaped into English and popularized by the likes of Henry Howard, the Earl of Surrey, Shakespeare, Marlowe, and others.

1. **Petrarchan (Italian)** there are 14 lines of iambic pentameter divided into the "octet" or the first 8 lines which rhymes as abba–abba–cdc–dcd and the "sestet" (the next six). There is a turn or "volta," between the octet and sestet. Here the poet gives a different perspective or argument and it occurs between

the octet and the sestet. Sometimes the turn is reserved for the final couplet like William Shakespeare's sonnet 130.

2. **Spenserian** Sir Edmund Spenser was the first poet who modified the Petrarch's form, and introduced a new rhyme scheme The rhyme scheme in this sonnet is abab–bcbc–cdcd–ee, which is specific to Spenser, and such types of sonnets are called Spenserian sonnets. It consists of has 14 lines, three quatrains, and a couplet.
3. **Shakespearean** has 14 lines, three quatrains, and a couplet that's considered a conclusion to the poem. The rhyme scheme of the Shakespearian sonnet is abab–cdcd–efef–gg, which is difficult to follow. Hence, only Shakespeare is known to have done it.

Poetic Devices

Traditionally, the word "image" is related to visual sights, things that a reader can imagine seeing, but imagery is much more than that. It is something one can sense with their five senses. Therefore, imagery is not limited to visual representations or mental images, but also includes physical sensations and internal emotions.

Imagery includes the use of **literal or figurative language** to add symbolism and enable the reader to imagine the world of the piece of literature. In other words, it engages the senses to deepen the reader's comprehension of what is happening and how to feel about it.

Imagery often benefits a lot from the use of **figurative language,** and because of this, many people confuse the relationship between the two. Actually, it is not uncommon to find people (and websites) describing imagery as a type of figurative language.

Imagery and **figurative language** are related concepts in English literature, but they are not the same.

- 1. Writers use figurative language to create imagery, which is a strong mental picture or sensation.
- 2. It might help to think of figurative language as the tool and imagery as the product it builds.

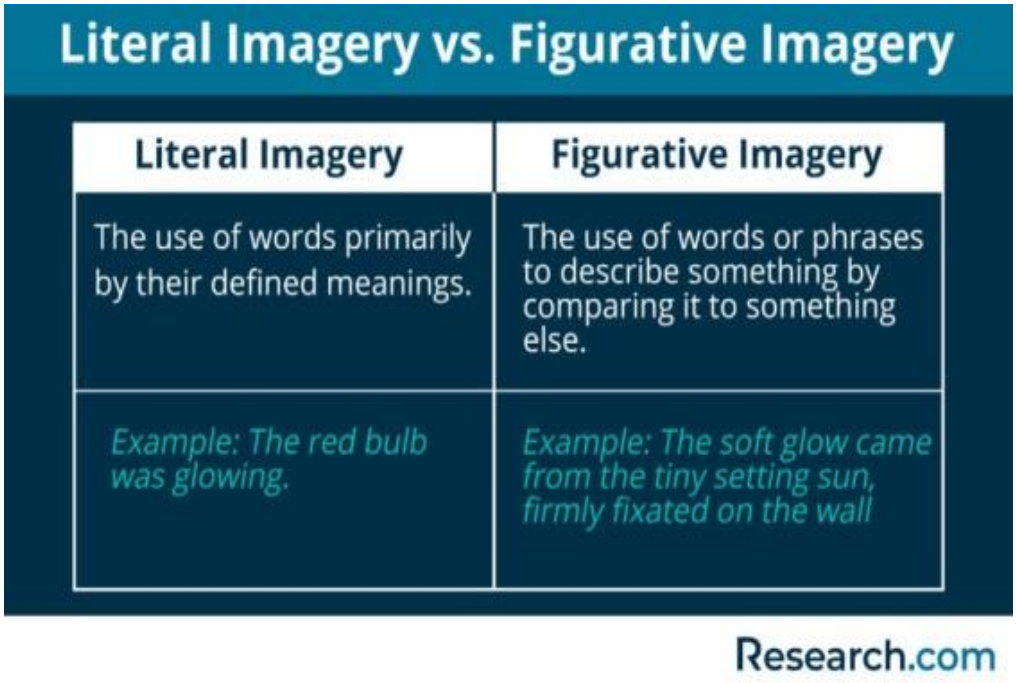
Imagery: when **figurative language** (like **metaphor** or **simile**) evokes as a kind mental image any of the five senses, we call this **imagery**. "*She is the sun*" (a simile) suggests imagery of light and warmth (the senses of sight and touch); thus she is likened—compared—to the sun in a positive ways though the imagery. And

then, of course, the sun also suggests life-giving as well the idea of being a center to things that revolve around it. As mentioned above, figurative language condenses and expands meaning. Thus in the short sentence she is the sun, much is suggested by the comparison: for the speaker of the words, she is or perhaps represents the values or powers of light-giving, life-giving, warmth, and some kind of steady center. The speaker might instead have said, she is everything, but this is hardly poetic: no senses or expansive mental images are evoked.

Imagery is not a type of **figurative language**. Besides, even though it largely entails the use of figurative language, **imagery** can also be totally **non-figurative (literal)**. So that what is the difference between literal and figurative imagery.

Literal language is the use of words solely by their primary or defined meanings. For example, imagine for a second you are fishing and a friend of yours says "*The fish is off the hook*." The phrase "*off the hook*" literally means that the fish is detached from the hook. **Figurative language**, on the other hand, uses **similes**, **hyperbole**, **metaphor**, **symbolism**, and **personification** to describe something often by comparing it to something else. For example, when a suspect is cleared of all charges, they can exclaim "*Thank God, I'm off the hook*!". Here, the phrase "*off the hook*" is

used figuratively to mean that the person is released from a difficult situation.



The use of **figurative language** in poetry is a way for writers to create a link or comparison between concrete objects and abstract ideas by using basic words or phrases in a non-literal way to draw on the emotions of the reader. Often times the writers will play on the senses in order to draw out powerful connections, allowing the reader to imagine how things may taste, smell, feel, look or sound. **Figurative language** and literary devices are meant to make reading poetry an enjoyable experience. For example, alliteration and consonance play on the way that words sound, allowing the words to flow together in a pleasing way. Similes, metaphors, and personification are three of the most frequently used forms of

figurative language in poetry, and they are used to create mental associations between the concrete and the abstract to form one big picture.

➔ The most commonly used forms of **figurative language** and **literary devices** in poetry:

❖ ***Simile*** and ***Metaphor***: These two literary devices are almost the same. A **simile** shows one thing as "similar" to something else. A **simile** usually involves the word "like" or "as." A **metaphor** presents one thing as though it actually is something else.

Metaphor	Simile
Juan is a stubborn mule.	Juan is as stubborn as a mule.
Love is a grueling battle field.	Love is as grueling as a battlefield
Ah, your faith, an anchor in my storm!	Ah, your faith. How like an anchor!
Jason is such a girl when he screams.	Jason screams like a girl.

- ***Simile***: Simile is a figure of speech in which two things, essentially different but thought to be alike in one or more respects, are compared. A simile is a statement of similarity introduced by **like**, **as** or **as if.** Examples of two similes appear in this quatrain from Robert Burns:

O, my luve is like a red, red rose

That"s newly sprung in June;

O, my luve is like the melodie

That"s sweetly played in tune

- ***Metaphor***: Metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to a person, idea, or object to which it is not literally applicable. A metaphor is an implied analogy which imaginatively identifies one thing with another. A metaphor is one of the tropes, a device by which an author turns, or twists, the meaning of a word. For example; "he is the star of the university" and "that guy is a rat". In the latter the similarity of guy and rat is not of physical details but of the feeling that a person and the rat arouses.

  A metaphor that is commonly used may lose in our mind the element of similarity that originally prompted it. It then is called a dead metaphor. Dead metaphors are numerous in everyday speech. We speak of the following, for instance, usually without any thought of similarity of two things: a dry book, a brilliant student, shallow thinking.

- ***Personification***: Personification is a metaphor in which a lifeless object, an animal, or an abstract idea is made to act like a person. It gives human life and attributes and motives to

lifeless objects, animals, and abstract ideas and thereby gives animation, vividness, and nearness. It is used a great deal in our everyday language in expressions like: the sun smiled upon the fields, the wind howled, an overpowering fear seized him by the throat.

- ***Symbol***: Symbol is something used for, or regarded as, representing something else. A symbol is a person, place, thing, quality, or relationship that is used to stand for something other than itself. Thus, a flag is a piece of cloth which stands for a nation; the cross is a symbol of Christianity; the Swastika was a symbol of Nazi Germany. Here are some common examples of symbolism in everyday life:
  - rainbow–symbolizes hope and promise
  - red rose–symbolizes love and romance
  - image of shopping cart–symbolizes online purchases

- ***An Allusion:*** Allusion is a reference, typically brief, to a person, place, thing, event, or other literary work with which the reader is presumably familiar. As a literary device, allusion allows a writer to compress a great deal of meaning and significance into a word or phrase. However, allusions are only effective to the extent that they are recognized and understood by the reader, and that they are properly inferred and interpreted by the reader. If an allusion is obscure or misunderstood, it can lose

effectiveness by confusing the reader. Example; "Is there an Einstein in your physics class? (Albert Einstein)"

Here are some examples of allusion to classical mythology:

- Achilles' heel (alluding to the one weakness of Achilles)
- arrow of love (allusion to Cupid)
- carrying the weight of the world on your shoulders (allusion to Atlas)
- looking like Venus (alluding to the goddess of beauty)
- Herculean effort (alluding to the strength of Hercules)
- opening Pandora's box (alluding to Pandora's myth of letting trouble into the world)

- ***Irony***: A figure of speech in which the literal meaning of a word or statement is the opposite of that intended. In literature, irony is a technique of indicating an intention or attitude opposed to what is actually stated. There are 3 types of irony:

Verbal Irony: words used to convey the opposite of their apparent meaning, as in when one says "Way to go!" to someone who has made a mistake

Dramatic Irony: when the reader is aware of something that a character in the story is not aware of.

Situational Irony: An assassin gets assassinated by his intended victim.

Among devices by which irony is achieved are **hyperbole**, **litotes**, **sarcasm**, **satire**, and **understatement**.

❖ **Hyperbole** is a synonym of **overstatement**.

Overstatement **is a synonym of** hyperbole**.**

As nouns the difference between overstatement and hyperbole

is that **overstatement** is an exaggeration; a statement in excess of what is reasonable while **hyperbole** is extreme exaggeration or overstatement; especially as a literary or rhetorical device.

- ***Hyperbole***: Speech that is extremely exaggerated and not meant to be taken literally. For example, “I waited in line for centuries.” and "I'm so embarrassed I could die" are both hyperboles.
- ***Overstatement:*** a statement, which, if taken literally, exceeds the limits of fact or truth, which represents something as greater or more important than it actually is, or which states something more strongly than the facts warrant. Its purpose is to emphasize or intensify a statement or situation by means of exaggeration. Example; "I haven't seen you in a million years!"
- ***Understatement*** is the exact opposite of a hyperbole. The writer deliberately chooses to downplay the significance or seriousness

of a situation or an event. A form of humor or irony in which something is intentionally represented less strongly or strikingly than facts would warrant.

- ***Paradox***: A figure of speech where a statement contradicts itself. For example, "the beginning of the end" and "if I know one thing, it's that I know nothing" are both paradoxical statements. Wordsword's comment "The child is father of the man" is a paradox. Shakespeare employed a paradox when he wrote, "Cowards die many times before their death"
- ***Juxtaposition:*** the combination of different or opposite qualities. "The chilling lullaby."
- ***Repetition:*** shows a sense of urgency or importance, and also gives the option of adding music to the writing. Also, repetition of a particular word, phrase, pattern, sound, or syllable is used to get the attention of readers. Particular forms of repetition are **anaphora**, **refrain**, **syntactical**, and **sonic**.
- ***Onomatopoeia***: A word that is formed based on vocal imitation and used to describe the sound something makes. Onomatopoeia indicates a word that sounds like what it refers to or describes. Words such as "tick tock," "ding-dong," "Meow" and "buzz" are all onomatopoeias. "The buzzing bee flew away."

- ***Alliteration***: Alliteration is the repetition of identical initial consonant sounds. "Lilly looks lovely looking at lightning" is an example of alliteration.
- ***Assonance***: words that sound alike in their midsections. It focuses on vowels and vowel sounds. "Light my fire" would be an example of assonance, as all three words have the long "i" sound.
- ***Consonance***: The repetition of similar consonant sounds within a literary work. One example would be the common tongue twister, "she sells seashells by the seashore." The "s" and "sh" sounds are used repeatedly.

SCANSION.

To measure the rhyme and meter of a poem as you read it. To scan any specimen of verse, we do three things:

(1) identify the prevailing foot.

(2) name the number of feet in a line.

(3) describe the stanza pattern.

Example:

Tell me not, sweet I am un-kind,
That from the nun-ner-y
Of thy chaste breast and qui-et mind
To war and arms I fly

➔The poem comes in: iambic tetrameter four line stanza.

➔The meters with two-syllable feet are

 IAMBIC (x /) : That time of year thou mayst in me behold

 TROCHAIC (/ x): Tell me not in mournful numbers

 SPONDAIC (/ /): Break, break, break/ On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!

➔Meters with three-syllable feet are

 ANAPESTIC (x x /): And the sound of a voice that is still

 DACTYLIC (/ x x): This is the forest primeval, the murmuring pines and the hemlock (a trochee replaces the final dactyl)

➔Each line of a poem contains a certain number of feet of iambs, trochees, spondees, dactyls or anapests. A line of one foot is a monometer, 2 feet is a dimeter, and so on--trimeter (3), tetrameter (4), pentameter (5), hexameter (6), heptameter (7), and o ctameter (8). The number of syllables in a line varies therefore according to the meter. A good example of trochaic monometer, for example, is this poem entitled "Fleas":

Adam

Had'em.


LET'S
READ
A
POEM
Chimes Radio
Originals

Sonnet 18

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

"Sonnet 18" is a sonnet written by English poet and playwright William Shakespeare. Like many of Shakespeare's sonnets, the poem is about the nature of beauty and with the capacity of poetry to represent that beauty. The poet is praising an anonymous person (usually believed to be a young man) through the poem.

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 owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

SONNET 18	PARAPHRASE
Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?	Shall I compare you to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:	You are more lovely and more constant:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,	Rough winds shake the beloved buds of May
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:	And summer is far too short:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,	At times the sun is too hot,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;	Or often goes behind the clouds;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,	And everything beautiful sometime will lose its beauty,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimm'd;	By misfortune or by nature's planned out course.
But thy eternal summer shall not fade	But your youth shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;	Nor will you lose the beauty that you possess;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,	Nor will death claim you for his own,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st;	Because in my eternal verse you will live forever.
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,	So long as there are people on this earth,
So long lives this and this gives life to thee.	So long will this poem live on, making you immortal.

Summary

The speaker opens the poem with a question addressed to the beloved: “Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?” The next eleven lines are devoted to such a comparison. In line 2, the speaker prescribes what mainly differentiates the young man from the summer’s day: he is “more lovely and more temperate.” Summer’s days tend toward extremes: they are shaken by “rough winds”; in them, the sun (“the eye of heaven”) often shines “too hot,” or too dim. And summer is fleeting: its date is too short, and it leads to the withering of autumn, as “every fair from fair sometime declines.” The final quatrain of the sonnet tells how the beloved differs from the summer in that respect: his beauty will last forever (“Thy eternal summer shall not fade...”) and never die. In the couplet, the speaker explains how the beloved’s beauty will accomplish this feat, and not die because it is preserved in the poem, which will last forever; it will live “as long as men can breathe or eyes can see.”

Commentary

This sonnet is certainly the most famous in the sequence of Shakespeare’s sonnets; it may be the most famous lyric poem in English. On the surface, the poem is simply a

statement of praise about the beauty of the beloved; summer tends to unpleasant extremes of windiness and heat, but the beloved is always mild and temperate. Summer is incidentally personified as the “eye of heaven” with its “gold complexion”; the imagery throughout is simple and unaffected, with the “darling buds of May” giving way to the “eternal summer”, which the speaker promises the beloved.

Sonnet 18 is the first “rhyme”—the speaker’s first attempt to preserve the young man’s beauty for all time. An important theme of the sonnet is the power of the speaker’s poem to defy time and last forever, carrying the beauty of the beloved down to future generations. The beloved’s “eternal summer” shall not fade precisely because it is embodied in the sonnet: “So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,” the speaker writes in the couplet, “So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.”

Analysis

The speaker initially tries to find an appropriate **metaphor** to describe his beloved (traditionally believed to be a young man)—suggesting that he might be compared to a summer’s day, the sun, or “the darling buds of May.” Yet as the speaker searches for a metaphor that will

adequately reflect his beloved's beauty, he realizes that none will work because all imply inevitable decline and death. Where the first eight lines of the poem document the failure of poetry's traditional resources to capture the young man's beauty, the final six lines argue that the young man's eternal beauty is best compared to the poem *itself*.

The poem begins with the speaker suggesting a series of **similes** to describe the young man. In each case, he quickly lists reasons why the simile is inappropriate. For instance, if he compares the young man to a "summer's day," he has to admit that the metaphor fails to capture the young man's full beauty: he's more "lovely" and more "temperate." As the poem proceeds, though, the speaker's objections begin to shift. Instead of arguing that the young man's beauty exceeds whatever he's compared to, the speaker notes a dark underside to his own similes: they suggest impermanence and decay. To compare the young man to the summer implies that fall is coming. To compare him to the sun implies that night will arrive—and soon.

However, as the speaker notes in line 9, "thy eternal summer shall not fade." The young man's beauty is not subject to decay or change. Clichéd, natural metaphors fail to capture the permanence of the young man's beauty. To

praise him, the poet needs to compare him to something that is *itself* eternal. For the speaker, that something is art. Like the young man's "eternal summer," the speaker's lines (i.e., the lines of his poem) are similarly "eternal." Unlike the summer or the sun, they will not change as time progresses. The speaker's lines are thus similar to the young man in a key respect: the poem itself manages to capture the everlasting quality of his beauty, something that the poem's previous similes had failed to express. The poem itself will give eternal life to the young man: "So long lives this, and this gives life to thee."

The speaker thus thinks that poems are eternal objects—that they do not change or alter as they encounter new readers or new historical contexts. He also thinks that poetry possesses a set of special, almost magical powers. It not only describes, it preserves. The poem is thus not simply a way of cataloguing the young man's beauty, it propagates it for future generations. The poem, then, ultimately asks its audience to reflect on the powers of poetry itself: the ways that it does and does not protect the young man against death, and the ways in which it preserves and creates beauty unmatched by the rest of the mortal world.

The Sun

In Renaissance love poetry, the sun is often used as a symbol for physical or personal beauty. Because the sun is the source of all light—and life—comparing someone or something to the sun suggests that they are unusually, even exceptionally beautiful.

In "Sonnet 18," the speaker considers comparing the young man to the sun, but rejects the comparison, noting that the sun's beauty is often dimmed by clouds. To reject this metaphor is to say that the young man is more beautiful than the sun because his beauty is more eternal.

Form

"Sonnet 18" is a Shakespearean sonnet, meaning it has 14 lines written in iambic pentameter and that follow a regular rhyme scheme. This rhyme scheme can be divided into three quatrains followed by a couplet. The sonnet has the regular rhyme scheme ABAB CDCD EFEF GG. All of the end-of-line rhymes are full with the exception of temperate/date.

William Shakespeare was an English poet, playwright and actor of the Renaissance era. Shakespeare is widely

recognized as the greatest English poet the world has ever known. Not only were his plays mainly written in verse, but he also penned 154 sonnets, two long narrative poems and a few other minor poems. Today he has become a symbol of poetry and writing internationally.

Shakespeare succeeded as a poet as much as in the theatre. His plays are wonderfully and poetically written, often in blank verse. Shakespeare's sonnets were composed between 1593 and 1601, though not published until 1609. That edition, *The Sonnets of Shakespeare*, consists of 154 sonnets, all written in the form of Shakespearean sonnet. The sonnets fall into two groups: sonnets 1-126, addressed to a "fair youth", a handsome and noble young man, and sonnets 127-152, to a malignant but fascinating "Dark Lady," who the poet loves in spite of himself.

Amoretti, Sonnet 34

Like as a ship

Like as a ship, that through the ocean wide,
By conduct of some star, doth make her way,
Whenas a storm hath dimmed her trusty guide,
Out of her course doth wander far astray:
So I, whose star, that won't with her bright ray
Me to direct, with clouds is overcast,
Do wander now, in darkness and dismay,
Through hidden perils round about me placed;
Yet hope I well that, when this storm is past,
My Helice, the loadstar of my life,
Will shine again, and look on me at last,
With lovely light to clear my cloudy grief.
Till then I wander careful, comfortless,
In secret sorrow, and sad pensiveness.

Edmund Spenser's Amoretti (Italian for "Cupids") chronicles his courtship with his wife Elizabeth Boyle. It was originally published in (1595). *Amoretti* is a collection of poems, it includes a big number of sonnets, some expresses feelings of depression and anguish because of the loss of his

beloved and others describing her beauty and his endless love between them. Those that he is talking about sad feelings in them, one of them is(sonnet 34)"*like as a ship*".

Sonnet 34 appears to describe a break in Spenser's relationship with Elizabeth; it seems like they had a fight and Spenser is waiting his time until she forgives him. Spenser uses the analogy of a ship losing its way during a storm to convey the separation between him and Elizabeth.

Summary

The poet says my position is like a ship that sails through the wide ocean with the help and guidance of some star; but when that star is dimmed by a storm, the ship wanders astray from her course and thus loses the true direction. My condition is similar; the bright star that used to direct my way is now overcast with clouds, and I wander in darkness and dismay with hidden dangers surrounding me all around. Yet I am hopeful that when this storm is over, my Helice, the pole star of my life will shine again and look on me with lovely light and the clouds of grief will disappear. Till then I wander, full of worries, comfortless in secret sorrow and pensiveness.

Analysis

Spenser draws heavily on Petrarch as regards the metaphors of sea voyages, sea storms and ships. As the ship goes astray when the pole stars disappears behind the clouds, so is the condition of the lover whose guiding star has disappeared leaving him in the stormy seas. Clouds of doubts, indecision and indifference have dimmed her sight. Perhaps she has lost all interest in him. The ship of his life is now in turbulence caused by desire and greed. He is surrounded by darkness and frustration.

Through the images of the sea and the storm Spenser tries to present sensual temptations that separate the lover from his beloved and destroy the bodily ship. Spenser uses the traditional allegory of the tempted ship of the body. Hidden perils recall Homer's Odyssey where Scylla and Charbydis endanger the passage of Odysseus's ship. The beloved is the bright star, God-figure or Christ who guides the lover, ennobles him so that he can attain divinity and be united with his beloved—with his God.

There are many temptations which do not enable the lover-ship to see the guiding star. Like storm-ridden ship, the lover is surrounded by doubts, despair and dismay and thus

has drifted away from her and finds himself in a precarious situation. Here the poet combines or mixes the Platonic concept of an ideal woman (as the courtly lovers believed and presented their beloveds as angels, goddesses etc.) and the Christian concept of the union of the Christ and the Church. In order to attain divinity, the lover must check his passions and desires and become pure and virtuous. The hidden perils that now checkmate him will disappear as the guiding star reappears with the same glory and splendor. He hopes that the storm will soon blow over and his Helice will shine again as brightly as it did.

Thus there is note of optimism with which the poet consoles himself. However till the storm lasts, he has to bear with the tragic and miserable situation, full of cares and worries. The sonnet has religious connotations too. The sea stands for sensual pleasures. As long as the lover is engrossed in Worldly pleasures and is guided by stormy passions, he cannot be unified with his God—the beloved. He must, like a true Christian, bear with suffering, and should not complain or grieve. Patience is the need. His guiding star will reappear and shine on him once again. But before that the lover has to undergo the ritual of purification—of all base and low sensual desires and

appetites. Once his heart and mind are purified, his soul will be purified—and this ritual will pave the way, clear the storm, and bring his Helice once again original brilliance.

Form and Structure

This poem is a Spenserian sonnet which is composed of three quatrains and a final couplet. The rhyme pattern is abab bcbc cdcd ee written in iambic pentameter.

Edmund Spenser ranks as the fore most English poet of the 16th century. Spenser was an English poet best known for *The Faerie Queene*, an epic poem and fantastical allegory celebrating the Tudor dynasty and Elizabeth I. His long allegorical poem *The Faerie Queene* is one of the greatest in the English language. It was written in what came to be called the Spenserian stanza. He is often considered one of the greatest poets in the English language.

The Faerie Queene (1590) can be read on various levels: as an allegory of the eternal struggle between good and evil in every form; as a poetic statement of an ethical system; and as a historical allegory portraying the struggle between the pure Protestant traditions of England and the manifold threats of England's Roman Catholic neighbors. Allusions to

contemporary political and religious controversies are numerous.

The Shepheardes Calender (1579) can be called the first work of the English literary Renaissance. Following the example of Virgil and of many later poets, Spenser was beginning his career with a series of eclogues (literally “selections,” usually short poems in the form of pastoral dialogues), in which various characters, in the guise of innocent and simple shepherds, converse about life and love in a variety of managed verse forms, formulating weighty—often satirical—opinions on questions of the day. *The Calender* consists of 12 eclogues, one named after each month of the year. This work uses the pastoral conventions as vehicles of allegorical and satirical allusions to contemporary political and religious problems, as well as to the poet's own life and loves.

Spenser’s reinvention of classical pastoral, *The Shepheardes Calendar,* was admired by Sir Philip Sidney as a major contribution to the development of English literature and national culture. His epic poem, *The Faerie Queene,* was written in honor of Queen Elizabeth I and in celebration of the Tudor dynasty. Along with Sidney,

Spenser set out to create a body of work that could parallel the great works of European poets such as Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio and extend the line of English literary culture began by Chaucer. Among Spenser's many contributions to English literature, he is the originator and namesake of the Spenserian stanza and the Spenserian sonnet.

Astrophil and Stella, Sonnet 39
Come Sleep

Come Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th' indifferent judge between the high and low.
With shield of proof shield me from out the prease
Of those fierce darts despair at me doth throw:
O make in me those civil wars to cease;
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf to noise and blind to light,
A rosy garland and a weary head:
And if these things, as being thine by right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

“Come Sleep, O Sleep” is one of the 108 sonnets published by Sir Philip Sidney in his collection “Astrophil and Stella” published around 1582. The songs and sonnets in this collection tell the story of Astrophil (star-lover), and his hopeless passion for Stella (star). The 39th sonnet, “Come

Sleep, O Sleep” tells us about sleep and its effects on men. It concludes with how Astrophil sees Stella clearly in a dream while sleeping.

Summary

The speaker is unable to sleep, so he invites sleep as if inviting a person, using all kinds of flattery. He praises sleep for all is quality, and for being an unbiased leveler who goes without minding whether rich or poor. Sydney explains sleep to a land of peace and tries to find peace and solace. Further, he describes sleep as a place of escape from the noise, light, and everything that make men weary. Finally, he concludes stating that sleep is livelier than reality, for he (Astrophel) can see Stella clearly.

Analysis

Lines 1 to 4

The sonnet Come Sleep! O Sleep begins with the speaker inviting the sleep to come. It looks like the sleep is not coming so he persuades it to come using a lot of flattery. He uses expensive descriptions like “certain knot of peace”, “baiting-place of wit”, “balm of woe”, “poor man’s wealth”, “prisoner’s release”, and “indifferent judge” to flatter Sleep.

Sleep seems to be the place that is directly connected to peace. And also it is a place that lulls knowledge and wisdom. In the lines following, the poet paradoxically uses sleep as “poor man’s wealth” and “prisoner’s release”, for it gives them relief from reality. Sleep is being a leveler, as death is a leveler in James Shirley’s poem “Death the Leveler”. Sleep comes equally to both rich and poor, to make everything even. Though Rich people can buy a lot of comforting things for sleep, the sleep they get is common.

Lines 5 to 8

In the second quatrain of the poem “Come Sleep, O Sleep” the poet or speaker seems to be desperate for sleep. He calls upon sleep to protect him with its ‘shield of proof’ from the “fierce darts” being thrown at him. Since the speaker of the poem is Astrophel the darts could be the ones from cupid, for he is love, that doesn’t allow him to get sleep. His love for the Stella is causing civil wars within him, so he expects the sleep to come and put an end to it. The fine line shows how desperate he is for sleep because he is even willing to bribe the sleep to come.

Lines 9 to 14

In the sestet of “Come Sleep, O Sleep” the speaker offers smooth pillows, sweetest bed, and a chamber, immune to sound and light to induce sleep. He readily offers “a rosy garland” and “weary head” too. To an ordinary person, this may be a tempting offer but to sleep, they are not. Logically, they are already the properties of sleep. At this time, the speaker realizes that they may not be sufficient to convince sleep. Ultimately, he gets an idea in the final couplet, and speaks confidently to “sleep”, if it agrees to come, he will grant an ultimate reward of seeing ‘Stella’.

Literary/ Poetic Devices

Apostrophe

An apostrophe is used in the title itself to make this poem sound more like a conversation between the speaker and “Sleep”. In the first line of the poem, the speaker directly addresses sleep, as if it is standing in front of him and willing not to come. He tries to convince as if one convinces a friend.

Personification

In the poem, “Sleep” is personified like a man who makes his choices. At the beginning of the poem, sleep has made up its mind not to come. Poet is desperate without sleep, so he had to uses whatever way sounds possible for him to lull sleep.

Metaphor

The poet has used several “Metaphors” to describe the quality and nature of sleep. The following metaphors like “certain knot of peace”, “baiting-place of wit”, “balm of woe”, “poor man’s wealth”, “prisoner’s release”, and “indifferent judge” are found in the first quatrain of the poem. The poet compares sleep to a judge who makes no distinction while making a judgment. Sleep is equally available to all despite their socio-economic situation.

Imagery

The poet uses the poetic technique “Imagery” while describing the inviting bed Chamber. It has “smooth pillows” and “sweetest bed”. It is also free from the “noise” and “light”. Ironically, he has everything that is needed for a

comfortable sleep, yet he has no sleep. This gives a picture of a man lying in the tossing around without sleep.

Paradox

In the third line of the poem “Come Sleep, O Sleep”, the poet paradoxically uses the terms “poor man”, “wealth”, “prisoner”, and “release”. The word ‘poor’ lexically means a person who has a little, and Prisoner, someone who is bound by the four walls of a prison. But here the poet remarks Sleep to be a wealth of a poor, and freedom from the world of prison to a prisoner.

Form and Structure

“Come Sleep! O Sleep” is a sonnet of 14 lines. Following the best known Petrarchan or Italian sonnet form there is a shift after octave in rhyme and in the subject matter. In the octave, the poet discusses what all things sleep offers to people. But, in the sestet, he discusses the possible things he can offer sleep it comes. In the concluding couple, he comes to an agreement with sleep to share the image of Stella, livelier in his sleep than in reality. The sonnet is written in Iambic pentameter. Though it follows the structure of a Petrarchan sonnet, the rhyme scheme is of

the Shakespearean sonnet form with ABABABAB, CDCDEFEFGG.

Sir Philip Sidney was one of the most celebrated figures of the Elizabethan age. He was a member of a distinguished and talented family; his sister, Mary, the Countess of Pembroke, was a patron of writers and supported her brother as he wrote his great work, *Arcadia*.

During his lifetime Sidney's works circulated only in manuscript. His Arcadia was the first to be printed, in 1590. Combining elements drawn from the pastoral tradition, the heroic epic, and the romances of chivalry, this long mixture of prose and verse summed up the heroic ideals that inspired Sidney's life. The *Arcadia* is noted for its complex plot, for its topics as justice, virtue, honor, and friendship, and for its involved and elaborate style. The published version of 1590 was a revision, much amplified and elaborated by comparison with the first draft.

In *Astrophel and Stella*, first printed in 1591, Sidney expressed varying moods and intensities of passionate love, in imitation of Italian and French sonneteers of the Petrarchan tradition. Sidney's simple yet delicate verse is markedly superior to that of his contemporaries. His *Apology*

for Poetry (first published in 1595) was the first major critical essay in Renaissance England. Sidney insisted on the ethical value of art. This critical essay, perhaps more than any other work, has assured Sidney's position in the history of literature. All three of his major works, however, hold an important place in one of the most brilliant eras of English literary creativity.

Crossing the Bar

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have cross'd the bar.

Crossing the Bar, is a short poem by Alfred Tennyson, written in 1889, three years before he died. He was 80 years old and recovering from a serious illness. Tennyson's

illness and old age may have contributed to this very personal and memorable meditation on death. The poem contains four stanzas of four lines each, with a traditional ABAB rhyme scheme.

The poem is written as an elegy, utilizing an extended metaphor; a metaphorical meditation on death. The speaker compares dying to gently crossing the sandbar between a coastal area and the wider sea/ocean. Tennyson uses the metaphor of a sand bar to describe the barrier between life and death. The poem relates death to a sea voyage. He so much believed in his being able to see the face of God when his great journey of life and death was over. The point of view of the poem is first person with the poet as the speaker, which is how the poet conveys his own thoughts on life and death.

The voyage is a metaphor for the final journey of man. "Crossing the Bar" is Tennyson's most famous metaphorical meditation on Death. Where "Bar" or sandbar is metaphor used for the demarcation between the harbor and the open ocean, as the barrier between life and death. Thus Crossing the Bar is the act of passing beyond life, or it can be said that it signifies meeting death. The poem begins with the

description of a ship that is about to sail on a long voyage at "sunset" when the "evening star" is visible in the sky. Here the setting of the Sun and appearance of evening star are symbolic of old age of the speaker and his impending death. Allegorically the poet says that as the Sun is setting and the day ends his time in this world or we can say his life in this world is also ending. He can hear the clear call of death which is the signal for the speaker that his death is nearing.

The 1st stanza The poem begins with the phrase *sunset and evening star*. It depicts the transitional time between day and night. It marks the end of the day and the beginning of the night. In a deeper sense, it also refers to the stage of life and death or end of life and beginning of the afterlife. There are two metaphors for death in the first stanza: “Sunset and evening star.” Both bring the darkness. The sun setting in the west has always symbolized the end of a person’s life. When the poet adds the clear call, he states that death is calling to him. The poem equates a sea voyage with the passing on of a person. The bar is a place at the mouth of a river or harbor where tides deposit sand. The waves and wind blow over the bar and sounds of moaning come from it. These sounds denote that there is not enough water to

sail over the bar. Symbolically, the reference to the bar shows the life and death of the ship or boat that would try to go over it when the tide is low or hopefully high. The passing over from life to death is the crossing of the bar.

The 2nd Stanza The second stanza can be an explanation of the first one. The poet says the tide which was full of might is moving now in such a way that it seems to be quiet and weak. Its might is gone it can neither produce sound nor foam. It came from deep inside the sea and now going back to its origin. Going deeper into the words we find that the tide here refers to the life. It seems to come from unknown place which takes the boat toward home. The tide that is needed will help the ship pass over and seems to come from a deep cavern far away. The boat will be taken out to sea toward home or heaven for the one who has passed away.

The 3rd Stanza The third stanza is quite similar to the first one. The poet uses different images to depict the same ideas described in the first stanza. He says that it is evening now and the evening bell has rung. The poet begins with two more references to the evening time and the symbolic night: twilight of a person's life and the sounding of the death knell. After this, it would be dark. In a deeper sense, his end

is near. Now he will die. Again he asks his friends not to be sad after he has gone. He wants no one to be sad or melancholy about his passing. The word embark gives the impression that he is starting a journey. To Tennyson who was a Christian, this is a journey that he may look forward to making.

The 4th Stanza The poet says that after his death he will be free from the bonds of time and place. The word flood here refers to the afterlife journey. The poet says that the journey will take him away from the limitations of the world and then only he will be able to see his Pilot or the One who has brought him in the world and is taking him back to his original home. All this will happen once he crosses the bar i.e. the wall between life and death. The poet thus presumes to see his Pilot. This is Tennyson's hope when he crosses the bar on his long trek to heaven. By capitalizing "Pilot" , Tennyson has equated the Pilot with God, but God in the guise of a specially qualified and skilled mariner.

ALFRED TENNYSON was undoubtedly one of the greatest poets of the Victorian age. He is a representative poet of the Victorian age of the 19th century and was

honored with the high office of the Poet Laureate. During the long span of his career as a poet he wrote every kind of poetry- the song, the dramatic monologue, the dialect poem, the descriptive, the ballad, the war ode, the epic, narrative and the drama. He wrote on classical romantic and modern subjects: on English history and legend, and on the deepest problems of philosophy and religion.

My Last Duchess

FERRARA

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will 't please you sit and look at her? I said
"Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps
Frà Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps
Over my Lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat"; such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough

For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart . . . how shall I say? . . . too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one! My favour at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace--all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men,--good; but thanked
Somehow . . . I know not how . . . as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech--(which I have not)--to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark"--and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
--E'en then would be some stooping; and I chuse
Never to stoop. Oh, sir, she smiled, no doubt,

Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive. Will 't please you rise? We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your Master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretence
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, Sir! Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me.

My Last Duchess, is poem of 56 lines in rhyming couplets by Robert Browning, published in 1842 in *Dramatic Lyrics*, a volume in his *Bells and Pomegranates* series. It is one of Browning's most successful dramatic monologues.

Robert Browning's inspiration for *My Last Duchess* came from the Duke and Duchess Ferarra. The Duchess died under very suspicious circumstances. She was married at fourteen and dead by seventeen. Browning uses these suspicious circumstances as inspiration for a poem which

dives deep into the mind of a powerful Duke who wishes to control his wife in every aspect of her life, including her feelings.

Throughout the poem, the duke reveals his belief that women are objects to be controlled, possessed, and discarded. In many ways, this reflects the thinking of Browning's own era, when Victorian social norms denied women the right to be fully independent human beings. Through this portrayal of the duke, Browning critiques such a viewpoint. Browning wrote real life poetry that reflected upon some of the darkest aspects of Victorian life. One of those aspects, of course, being the treatment of wives by their husbands. Browning reveals that this mentality was widespread during this time. The life of a Victorian wife was a dangerous and risky one.

Lines 1-15

My Last Duchess opens up with the speaker asking a listener if he would please sit down and look at a portrait of his last Duchess. This makes the readers wonder why this Duchess is no longer his present Duchess. He asks his listener to sit and look at the life sized painting of her. He reveals that this painting is behind a curtain, and that no one

but he is allowed to draw the curtain to view the painting or to show it to anyone. This is very suspicious behavior. The reader can immediately sense that the Duke is controlling. The question that still remains unanswered is, why is this his last Duchess?

The Duke personifies the painting throughout this passage, both by saying “there she stands,” as though the duchess herself and not her image in the painting is standing against the wall, and “will’t please you sit and look at her,” instead of asking the messenger to look at “it” or “the painting.” This again suggests that he views the woman and the work of art as one and the same.

The Duke also makes it clear that he cares for the status the painting can give him and not for the nostalgia or memories about his former wife. He remarks on the artistry of the painting in seeming so lifelike (“looking as if she were alive”), rather than on missing her, since the woman herself as we will soon find out, has died. Likewise, he describes the artwork as “a piece” and “a wonder,” and brags about how “busily” the famous Fra Pandolf worked to paint it, in a move calculated to impress the emissary with the quality of his art collection and therefore his wealth

The Duke describes the look on the Duchess' face, and that she had a joyous look and earnest glance. He notes that "twas not her husband's presence only called that spot of joy into the Duchess' cheek". This is a curious thing to say. Why would he expect that his presence alone, and nothing else, would bring joy to her face? He does not answer that question, but the fact that he notes this gives a little bit of insight into why he was the only one who was allowed to open the curtain. All along, he wanted to be the only one who would bring a look of joy to his Duchess' face. Now that she was put away somewhere, and her life-size painting was on the wall, he could be the only one to ever see that look of joy on her face, because he would allow no one else to look at the painting without his permission. Suddenly, our speaker seems somewhat psychotic; unbalanced.

Lines 16-24

In this section of My Last Duchess, the Duke seems to be remembering his former Duchess and all that bothered him about her. It would seem that she was too easily pleased by everyone around her. The Duke was not happy with this. He didn't like that if someone like "Fra Pandolf" (we don't know much more about this character) were to tell her that her shawl covered her wrists too much, she would

blush. The Duke did not like that she would blush at the flirtations of another man. He did not like that the things which he called common courtesy would “call up that spot of joy” which she seemed to always have on her face.

The Duke accuses her of having a heart that was “too soon made glad” and “too easily impressed”. He was annoyed that she liked everything that she looked at. This man seems more and more psychotic and controlling as My Last Duchess goes on. It would seem that he put away his Duchess because he could not control her feelings. He wanted to be the only one to bring her joy and make her blush.

Lines 25 -35

In these lines of My Last Duchess, the Duke continues to explain all of the flaws in the Duchess’ character. He says that she values her white mule, a branch of cherries, and a sunset as much as she values a piece of jewelry that he had given her. He is irritated that she does not seem to see the value in what he gives to her, or that she seems to value the simple pleasures of life as much as she values his expensive gifts to her. He also seems irritated that she does not seem to understand the importance of his place in life. By marrying her, he had given her a “nine-hundred-years-old name”. This

reveals that his family had been around for a very long time and thus he gave her a well-known and prestigious name in marrying her. She did not seem to be any more thankful for this than she was thankful to watch the sun set. This irritated the Duke so much that was not even willing to “stoop” to her level to discuss it with her. He thinks it would be “trifling” to do so.

Lines 35-47

The Duke continues to explain that he chooses never to stoop to discuss with his Duchess what made him so disgusted with her. Yet, he seems quite comfortable discussing it with this listener. Perhaps he thought himself to high and mighty to stoop to talk to a woman, even if that woman was his wife.

He admitted that she smiled at him pleasantly when he passed by, but it bothered him that everyone received that same smile from her. He explained that he “gave commands” and “then all smiles stopped together”. This causes the reader to feel sorry for the Duchess, and rightly so. She was a lovely, happy, smiling person. It seems that the Duke commanded her in such a way as to make her stop smiling altogether. He robbed her of her joy with his controlling attitude toward her.

After explaining what happened when he commanded her, the Duke turns his attention back to the painting on the wall and says, “there she stands as if alive”. This suggests that the real Duchess is no longer alive. The Duke seems happier with a painting of her because he can control who gets to look at the joy in her face. The Duke then invites his listener to return downstairs with him.

Lines 47-56

This section of My Last Duchess reveals the identity of the Duke’s listener. He is the servant of a Count in the land, and they are trying to arrange a marriage between the Duke and the Count’s daughter. The Duke says that his “fair daughter” is his “object”.

He brings the man back downstairs with him, and as they walk, he points out bronze statue that was made especially for him. The statue is of Neptune taming a sea-horse. Neptune is the Roman god of the sea, and the statue represents dominance.This symbolizes the Duke, and the sea-horse symbolizes any Duchess he would acquire. The Duke views himself as a god, and he wishes to tame his wife to do whatever he wishes her to do, and even to feel whatever he wishes her to feel. As such, the statue perfectly

reflects the duke’s opinion of himself: he sees himself as an all-powerful god who tames and subdues everything around him, whether wives or prospective in-laws. What's more, the statue is "a rarity," further implying how special and powerful the duke must be in order to be in possession of it. This man is clearly controlling.

SPEAKER/VOICE

- The Duke (Duke Alfonso of Ferrara) is the speaker in the poem.
- We know that he’s been married at least once before, and that his wife died — by the end it is suggested that he killed her. He is already remarrying.
- His words are cold, practical and superior.
- His cool manner when speaking about his last wife suggests that he is comfortable with death and murder, and as he is speaking to the envoy of his new wife it presents a threat to her that she will also be killed if she doesn’t behave as he wishes.
- The other voices in the poem are silent — the envoy listens and sometimes asks short questions, be we don’t know exactly what he asks — we assume he speaks and responds, but the Duke clearly dominates the

conversation — he uses his power and status to gain control.

ROBERT BROWNING was another important poet of the Victorian era. The most characteristics of Browning's poetry is his profound interest in character. He is a great master of the art of presenting the inner side of human beings, their mental and moral qualities. It is in his **dramatic monologues** that Browning is seen at his best. He uses the dramatic monologues for the study of character, of particular mental states, and moral crisis in the soul of the characters concerned. Browning is an optimist to the core. Browning's optimism is best seen in his treatment of love. Browning is one of the greatest of love poets in the English language.

The Solitary Reaper

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings? –
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,

And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending; –
I listen'd, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

The poem was inspired by the poet's trip to Scotland in 1803 with his sister Dorothy Wordsworth. In the poem, the speaker tries—and fails—to describe the song he heard a young woman singing as she cuts grain in a Scottish field. The speaker does not understand the song, and he cannot tell what it was about. Nor can he find the language to describe its beauty. The poet appreciates its tone, its

expressive beauty, and the mood it creates within him, rather than its explicit content, at which he can only guess.

Paraphrase

In the First stanza of “The Solitary Reaper,” Wordsworth describes how the Reaper was singing all alone. The poet, while travelling in the Highland valleys, comes across a lonely Highlander reaper girl who is harvesting the crops and singing. She had no one to help her out in the field. So she was singing to herself. She was singing without knowing that someone was listening to her song. He tries to draw the attention of the passers-by to the girl by calling them to ‘behold her’. The poet urges them to stop there and listen to her song, or to pass by gently without disturbing her in her singing. She was immersed in her work of cutting and binding while singing a melancholy song. For the poet, he is so struck by the sad beauty of her song that the whole valley seems to overflow with its sound.

In the second stanza of “The Solitary Reaper,” the poet compares the young woman’s song with ‘Nightingale’ and ‘Cuckoo’ – the most celebrated birds by the writers and poets for the sweetness of voice. But, here he complains that neither ‘Nightingale’ nor the ‘Cuckoo’ sang a song that is as sweet as hers. He says that no nightingale has sung the song so soothing like that for the weary travelers. For, the song of the girl has stopped him from going about his business. He is utterly enchanted that he says that her voice is so thrilling and penetrable like that of the Cuckoo Bird, which sings to break the silence in the ‘Hebrides’ Islands. He symbolically puts forth that her voice is so melodious and more than that of the two birds, known for their voice.

In the third stanza of “The Solitary Reaper,” the poet depicts his plight over not understanding the theme or language of the poem. The poet couldn’t understand the local Scottish dialect in which the reaper was singing. So he

tries to imagine what the song might be about. Given that it is a '*plaintive number'* and a '*melancholy strain'* he speculates that her song might be about some past sorrow, pain or loss *'of old, unhappy things*' or battles fought long ago. Or perhaps, he says, it is a humbler, simpler song about some present sorrow, pain, or loss, a *'matter of to-day*.' He further wonders if that is about something that has happened in the past or something that has reoccurred now.

In the fourth stanza, the poet decides not to probe further into the theme. He comes to the conclusion that whatever may be the theme of her poem, it is not going to end. Not only her song but also her suffering sounds like a never-ending one. He stays there motionless and listened to her song quite some times. Even when he left and mounted up the hill, the song could no longer be heard from there, but he bore the music, the melody of the solitary reaper's song in

his heart. Such was the impression of the song upon his mind.

Commentary

Wordsworth was one of the leading figures of English Romanticism. intense emotion. “The Solitary Reaper” is a clear example of Romantic poetry, since its speaker reflects on a powerful experience of nature. By placing this praise and this beauty in a rustic, natural setting, and by and by establishing as its source a simple rustic girl, Wordsworth acts on the values of Lyrical Ballads.

The poem’s structure is simple—the first stanza sets the scene, the second offers two bird comparisons for the music, the third wonders about the content of the songs, and the fourth describes the effect of the songs on the speaker—and its language is natural and unforced. Additionally, the final two lines of the poem (“Its music in my heart I bore / Long after it was heard no more”) return its focus to the familiar

theme of memory, and the soothing effect of beautiful memories on human thoughts and feelings.

William Wordsworth was born in the Lake District of northern England. Much of his poetry was inspired by the dramatic landscapes of the Lake District. Both Wordsworth's parents died before he was 15, and he and his four siblings were left in the care of different relatives. To deal with the great deal of grief and depression Wordsworth experienced, he indulged in writing poetry. He moved on in 1787 to St. John’s College, Cambridge.

The most important thing he did in his college years was to devote his summer vacation in 1790 to a long walking tour through revolutionary France. He became an enthusiast for the ideals of the French Revolution. Upon taking his Cambridge degree—an undistinguished “pass”—he returned in 1791 to France. In December 1792, Wordsworth

had to return to England and was cut off there by the outbreak of war between England and France.

The years that followed his return to England were the darkest of Wordsworth’s life. Unprepared for any profession, rootless, virtually penniless, bitterly hostile to his own country’s opposition to the French, he lived in London and learned to feel a profound sympathy for the abandoned mothers, beggars, children, and victims of England’s wars. This experience brought about Wordsworth's interest and sympathy for the life, troubles, and speech of the "common man." These issues proved to be of the utmost importance to Wordsworth's work.

This dark period ended in 1795 when Wordsworth received a legacy from a close relative and he and his sister Dorothy went to live together without separation. Two years later they moved again, to live near the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who was an admirer of Wordsworth's work. They collaborated on 'Lyrical Ballads', published in 1798. This

collection of poems, mostly by Wordsworth but with Coleridge contributing 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner', is generally taken to mark the beginning of the Romantic movement in English poetry.

William Wordsworth was an innovative writer who marked the start of the Romantic Period in literature. He was a pioneer of Romanticism and the Poet laureate of England from 1843 till his death in 1850.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

Argument

How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.

PART I

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
'By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din.'

He holds him with his skinny hand,
'There was a ship,' quoth he.
'Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!'
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child:
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

'The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

The Sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon—'
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

And now the STORM-BLAST came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:

He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound!

At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.

The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through!

And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariner's hollo!

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white Moon-shine.'

'God save thee, ancient Mariner!
From the fiends, that plague thee thus!—
Why look'st thou so?'—With my cross-bow
I shot the ALBATROSS.

PART II

The Sun now rose upon the right:
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariner's hollo!

And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averred, I had killed the bird

That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist:
Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water, every where,

And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, every where,
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue and white.

And some in dreams assurèd were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

Ah! well a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART III

There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.

A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye,

When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it neared and neared:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tacked and veered.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, A sail! a sail!

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call:
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in.
As they were drinking all.

See! see! (I cried) she tacks no more!
Hither to work us weal;
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel!

The western wave was all a-flame.
The day was well nigh done!
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those *her* sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres?

Are those her *ribs* through which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that Woman all her crew?
Is that a DEATH? and are there two?
Is DEATH that woman's mate?

Her lips were red, *her* looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Night-mare LIFE-IN-DEATH was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice;

'The game is done! I've won! I've won!'
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out;
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

We listened and looked sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white;
From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The hornèd Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

The souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it passed me by,
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!

PART IV

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown.'—
Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky
Lay dead like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is the curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And no where did abide:
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmèd water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,

And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware:
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

The self-same moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

PART V

Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
And when I awoke, it rained.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light—almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

And soon I heard a roaring wind:
It did not come anear;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life!
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro they were hurried about!
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge,
And the rain poured down from one black cloud;
The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The Moon was at its side:
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on!
Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;
Yet never a breeze up-blew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee:
The body and I pulled at one rope,
But he said nought to me.

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!'
Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

For when it dawned—they dropped their arms,
And clustered round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,

And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,

The spirit slid: and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean:
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swound.

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard and in my soul discerned
Two voices in the air.

'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this the man?
By him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.

The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.'

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.'

PART VI

First Voice
'But tell me, tell me! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing—
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the ocean doing?'

Second Voice
Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him.'

First Voice
'But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?'

Second Voice
'The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

And now this spell was snapt: once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring—
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed
The light-house top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,

That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light,
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were:
I turned my eyes upon the deck—
Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.
This seraph-band, each waved his hand:
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart—
No voice; but oh! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

PART VII

This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with marineres
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
He hath a cushion plump:
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,
'Why, this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now?'

'Strange, by my faith!' the Hermit said—
'And they answered not our cheer!

The planks looked warped! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—
(The Pilot made reply)
I am a-feared'—'Push on, push on!'
Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha! ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.'

And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

'O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!'
The Hermit crossed his brow.
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou?'

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns:
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer!

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemèd there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,

While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends
And youths and maidens gay!

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner is the longest major poem by the English poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, written in 1797–98 and published in 1798 in the first edition of *Lyrical Ballads*. Along with other poems in Lyrical Ballads,

it is often considered a signal shift to modern poetry and the beginning of British Romantic literature.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner recounts the experiences of a sailor who has returned from a long sea voyage. The mariner stops a man who is on his way to a wedding ceremony and begins to narrate a story. The wedding-guest's reaction turns from impatience to fear to fascination as the mariner's story progresses, as can be seen in the language style: Coleridge uses narrative techniques such as personification and repetition to create a sense of danger, the supernatural, or serenity, depending on the mood in different parts of the poem.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner is unique among Coleridge’s important works— unique in its intentionally archaic language, its length, its bizarre moral narrative, its strange scholarly notes printed in small type in the margins, its thematic ambiguity, and the long Latin epigraph that

begins it, concerning the multitude of unclassifiable “invisible creatures” that inhabit the world. Its peculiarities make it quite atypical of its era; it has little in common with other Romantic works. Rather, the scholarly notes, the epigraph, and the archaic language combine to produce the impression (intended by Coleridge, no doubt) that the “Rime” is a ballad of ancient times. Upon its release, the poem was criticized for being obscure and difficult to read. The use of archaic spelling of words was seen as not in keeping with Wordsworth's claims of using common language.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner has several hallmarks that would later become associated with Romanticism: elements of the supernatural, a deep sense of history, lots of dramatic images of nature, formal experimentation, and an interest in conversational language, among others. After this poem, Coleridge went on to write more famous poems and publish some important works of literary criticism.

While "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" departed from Romantic stylistic tendencies, it exemplified many of the genre's themes. The most central of these is the subjectivity of experience and the importance of the individual. The poem is told largely from the Ancient Mariner's perspective, despite the minor involvement of a separate narrator, who describes the Ancient Mariner and Wedding Guest's actions.

"The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" also exemplified the Romantic fascination with the holy in nature. Coleridge places the Ancient Mariner out in the open ocean for much of the poem, making him very small and vulnerable in comparison to the forces of nature. The Romantics also went against the earlier trend of championing religious institution and instead locating the spiritual and sublime in nature. Despite the Ancient Mariner's expression of love for communal prayer, his message reveals his belief that the true path to God is through communing with and respecting nature.

"The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" is said to have been inspired by Captain James Cook's voyages, the legend of the Wandering Jew, and especially Captain George Shelvocke's 1726 *A Voyage 'Round the World*, in which he describes how one of his shipmates shot an albatross that he believed had made the wind disappear.

"The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" has become an important landmark in the literary canon since its publication, and has also contributed certain phrases to common speech. The most notable of these is the secondary definition of the word "albatross," often used to denote "a constant, worrisome burden" or "an obstacle to success." Also in common usage are the poem's most famous lines: "Water, water, every where, / Nor any drop to drink." The phrase has come to mean any situation in which one is surrounded by the object of one's desire but is unable to partake.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner is about three guys who are on their way to a wedding celebration when an old sailor (the Mariner) stops one of them at the door-steps (Who will be called the Wedding Guest). He uses his mesmerizing eyes to hold all the attention of Wedding Guest and starts telling him a story about the unfortunate and destructive journey that he took. The Guest wants to go to the celebration, but he doesn't seem to pry himself away from this old mariner. The Mariner begins his story.

They leave the port and ship sails down near Antarctica to keep themselves safe from the severe storm. But suddenly they get themselves caught in a deadly foggy course. An albatross shows up to steer them into the fog and provides them good winds, but the mariner decides to shoot it. Soon the sailor loses their wind, and it gets really hot. They run out of the water. Now at this point, everybody blames the Mariner. The ship seems hunted by a cruel spirit,

and weird stuff starts appearing, they see the slimy creatures walking on the sea.

Mariner's crew decides to hand the albatross body around his neck to remind him of his grave mistake that he made. Due to his mistake, everyone is dying due to thirst. Mariner happened to see another ship is sailing at some distance from his ship. He desires and tries to yell out loudly, but his mouth is too dry to yell. To moisten his lips, he sucked his own blood. He thinks that they are safe now. But sadly the ship is a ghost ship and piloted by two spirits. Then starts the game of death.

Who wants to save himself? Who has to be the last member you want to meet on a journey? Everyone dies on the mariner's ship. The guest realizes, "Oh! You are a ghost"! But the Mariner replies him patiently, saying "well I am the only one who didn't die that day." After that, he continues his ballad and says he's on the boat with all the

dead bodies full of slimy spirits surrounded by an ocean. Severe, these slimy things are nasty water snakes.

The Mariner falls into sleep, and when he wakes up, it's raining. A storm strikes up in some distance, and he sees all his crew members floating on the water like zombies. Sailors don't come back to life. It seems the supernatural spirits and angels fill their bodies and push the boat.

The Mariner hears some voices, saying that how cruelly he killed the albatross and still he has more sufferings. These mysterious voices explain all the situation that how the ship is moving. The Mariner says that he still has the same painful need to tell all the story. That is why he stopped that guest on this very occasion. In the end, Mariner says that he needs to learn how to express his love, how to say prayers, how to live people and many other things. Then he goes back home and wakes up the next day, just like the famous lines go "a sadder and wiser man."

Samuel Taylor Coleridge is an English lyrical poet, critic, and philosopher and one of the most influential and controversial figures of the Romantic period. His *Lyrical Ballads,* written with William Wordsworth, heralded the English Romantic movement, and his *Biographia Literaria* (1817) is the most significant work of general literary criticism produced in the English Romantic period. His career as a poet and writer was established after he befriended Wordsworth and together they produced Lyrical Ballads in 1798.

As a child, Samuel Taylor Coleridge was described as a dreamer. He was already an extraordinary reader, and he immersed himself to the point of morbid fascination in romances and Eastern tales such as *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments.* At both school and university he continued to read voraciously, particularly in works of imagination and visionary philosophy.

Early in 1798 Coleridge was preoccupied with political issues. The French Revolutionary government had suppressed the states of the Swiss Confederation, and Coleridge expressed his bitterness at this betrayal of the principles of the Revolution in a poem entitled “France: An Ode.”

For most of his adult life he suffered through addiction to opium. His most famous works – 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner', 'Kubla Khan' and 'Christabel' – all featured supernatural themes and exotic images, perhaps affected by his use of the drugs. Throughout his life Coleridge suffered from poor health and probably from poor mental health as well. By the early 1800’s he had become addicted to opium. His addiction became so severe that he moved in with a doctor in London who helped him keep his drug use under control.

In his later years, Coleridge delivered a highly successful series of lectures on Shakespeare, wrote respected works of literary theory and criticism, and developed a reputation as an intellectual. His joint publication of “Lyrical Ballads” with William Wordsworth marked the beginning of the Romantic Period in literature.


reference

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