

UNDERSTANDING POETRY

ESLDO – Unit 4

What is poetry?

- In poetry the sound and meaning of words are combined to express feelings, thoughts, and ideas in a beautiful way.
- The poet chooses words carefully.
- Poetry is usually written in short lines and stanzas .



Lines and Stanzas

- Most poems are written in lines.
- A group of lines in a poem is called a stanza.
- Stanzas separate ideas in a poem. They act like paragraphs.
- This poem has two stanzas.

March

A blue day

A blue jay

And a good beginning.

One crow,

Melting snow –

Spring's winning!

By Eleanor Farjeon

Poetry Elements

Writers use many elements to create their poems. These elements include:

- Rhythm
- Sound
- Imagery
- Form





RHYTHM

Rhythm

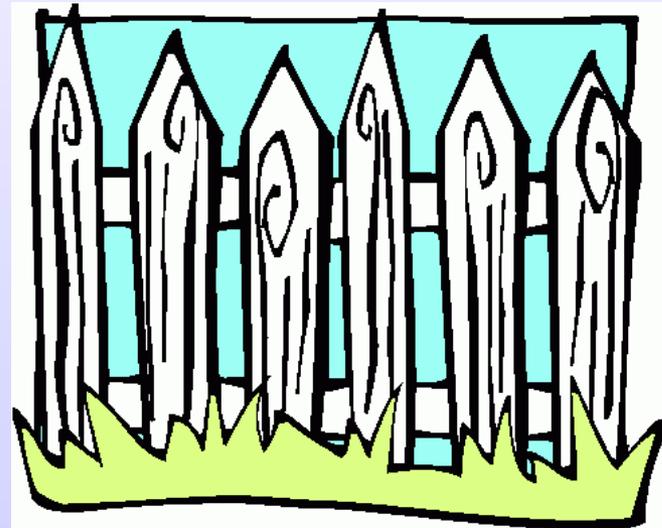
- Rhythm is the flow of the beat in a poem.
- Gives poetry a musical feel.
- Can be fast or slow, depending on mood and subject of poem.
- You can measure rhythm in *meter*, by counting the beats in each line.
- (See next two slides for examples.)



Rhythm Example

The Pickety Fence *by David McCord*

The pickety fence
The pickety fence
Give it a lick it's
The pickety fence
Give it a lick it's
A clickety fence
Give it a lick it's a lickety fence
Give it a lick
Give it a lick
Give it a lick
With a rickety stick
pickety
pickety
pickety
pick.



**The rhythm in this poem is fast –
to match the speed of the stick
striking the fence.**

Rhythm Example

Where Are You Now?

When the night begins to fall
And the sky begins to glow
You look up and see the tall
City of lights begin to grow –
In rows and little golden squares
The lights come out. First here, then there
Behind the windowpanes as though
A million billion bees had built
Their golden hives and honeycombs
Above you in the air.

By Mary Britton Miller



The rhythm in this poem is slow – to match the night gently falling and the lights slowly coming on.



SOUND

Sound

Writers love to use interesting sounds in their poems. After all, poems are meant to be heard. These sound devices include:

- Rhyme
- Repetition
- Alliteration





RHYME

Rhyme

- Rhymes are words that end with the same sound. (*Hat*, *cat* and *bat* rhyme.)
- Rhyming sounds don't have to be spelled the same way. (*Cloud* and *allowed* rhyme.)
- Rhyme is the most common sound device in poetry.



Rhyming Patterns

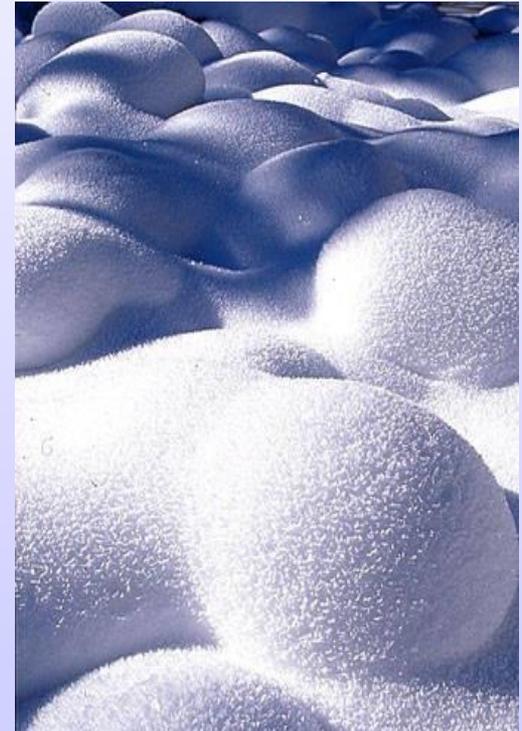
- Poets can choose from a variety of different rhyming patterns.
- (See next four slides for examples.)
- **AABB** – lines **1 & 2** rhyme and lines **3 & 4** rhyme
- **ABAB** – lines **1 & 3** rhyme and lines **2 & 4** rhyme
- **ABBA** – lines **1 & 4** rhyme and lines **2 & 3** rhyme
- **ABCB** – lines **2 & 4** rhyme and lines **1 & 3** do not rhyme

AABB Rhyming Pattern

First Snow

Snow makes whiteness where it **falls**.
The bushes look like popcorn **balls**.
And places where I always **play**,
Look like somewhere else **today**.

By Marie Louise Allen



ABAB Rhyming Pattern

Oodles of Noodles

I love noodles. Give me **oodles**.

Make a mound up to the **sun**.

Noodles are my favorite **foodles**.

I eat noodles by the **ton**.

By Lucia and James L. Hymes, Jr.

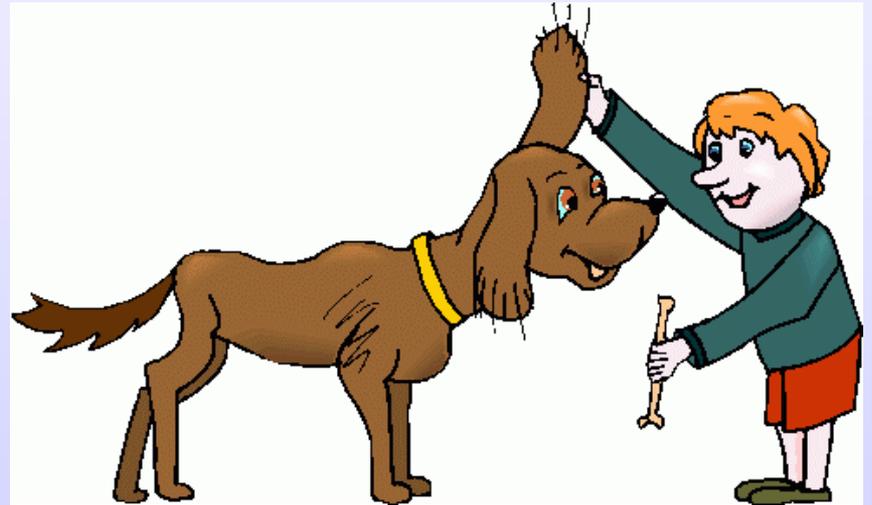


ABBA Rhyming Pattern

From “Bliss”

Let me fetch **sticks**,
Let me fetch **stones**,
Throw me your **bones**,
Teach me your **tricks**.

By Eleanor Farjeon

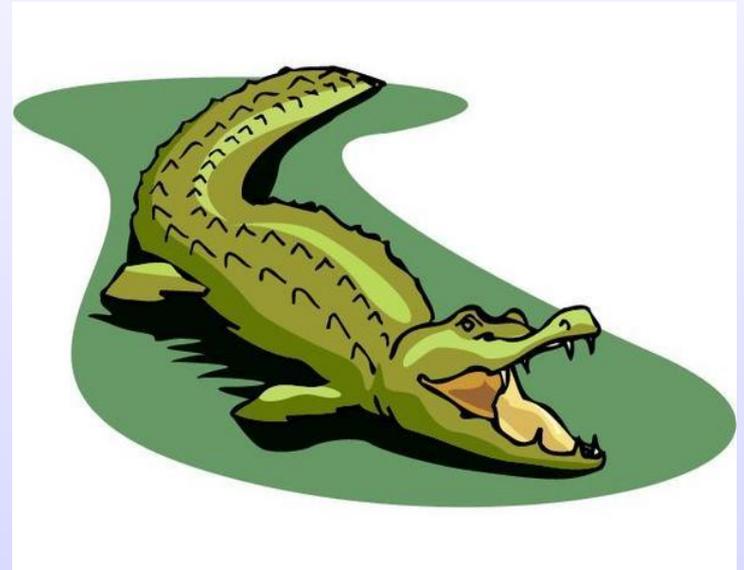


ABCB Rhyming Pattern

The Alligator

The alligator chased his **tail**
Which hit him in the **snout**;
He nibbled, gobbled, swallowed **it**,
And turned right **inside-out**.

by Mary Macdonald





REPETITION

Repetition

- Repetition occurs when poets repeat words, phrases, or lines in a poem.
- Creates a pattern.
- Increases rhythm.
- Strengthens feelings, ideas and mood in a poem.
- (See next slide for example.)

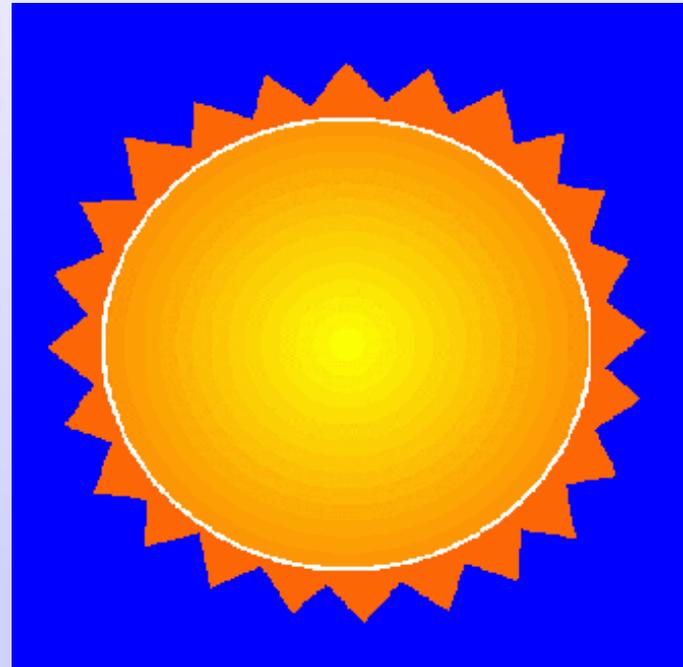


Repetition Example

The Sun

Some one tossed a pancake,
A buttery, buttery, pancake.
Someone tossed a pancake
And flipped it up so high,
That now I see the pancake,
The buttery, buttery pancake,
Now I see that pancake
Stuck against the sky.

by Sandra Liatsos





ALITERATION

Alliteration

- Alliteration is the repetition of the first consonant sound in words, as in the nursery rhyme “**P**eter **P**iper **p**icked a **p**eck of **p**ickled **p**eppers.”
- (See next slide for example.)



The snake slithered silently
along the sunny sidewalk.

Alliteration Example

This Tooth

I jiggled it
jaggled it
jerked it.

I pushed
and pulled
and poked it.

But –
As soon as I stopped,
And left it alone
This tooth came out
On its very own!

by Lee Bennett Hopkins





SUBGENRES OF POETRY

Subgenres of Poetry

There are many subgenres of poetry including:

- Couplet
- Tercet
- Acrostic
- Cinquain
- Haiku
- Senryu
- Concrete Poem
- Free Verse
- Limerick



Tercet

- A tercet is a poem, or stanza, written in three lines.
- Usually rhymes.
- Lines 1 and 2 can rhyme; lines 1 and 3 can rhyme; sometimes all 3 lines rhyme.



Winter Moon

How thin and sharp is the moon tonight!

How thin and sharp and ghostly white

Is the slim curved crook of the moon tonight!

By Langston Hughes

Traditional Cinquain

- A cinquain is a poem written in five lines that do not rhyme.
- Traditional cinquain has five lines containing 22 syllables in the following pattern:

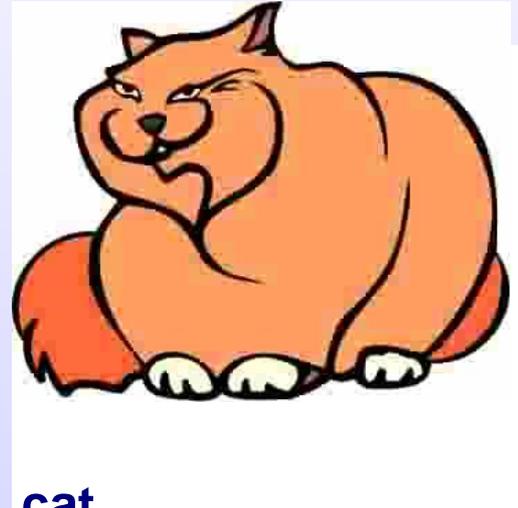
Line 1 – 2 syllables

Line 2 – 4 syllables

Line 3 – 6 syllables

Line 4 – 8 syllables

Line 5 – 2 syllables



Oh, cat

are you grinning

curled in the window seat

as sun warms you this December

morning?

By Paul B. Janezco

Diamante



- A diamante is a seven-line poem written in the shape of a diamond.
- Does not rhyme.
- Follows pattern.
- Can use synonyms or antonyms.
- (See next two slides for examples.)

Diamante Pattern

Line 1 – Your topic (noun)

Line 2 – Two adjectives about

Line 3 – Three “ing” words about

Line 4 – Four nouns or short phrase linking topic (or topics)

Line 5 – Three “ing” words about

Line 6 – Two adjectives about

Line 7 – Your ending topic (noun)

Synonym Diamante

Monsters

Creepy, sinister,

Hiding, lurking, stalking,

Vampires, mummies, werewolves and more –

Chasing, pouncing eating,

Hungry, scary,

Creatures



Haiku

- A haiku is a Japanese poem with 3 lines of 5, 7, and 5 syllables. (Total of 17 syllables.)
- Does not rhyme.
- Is about an aspect of nature or the seasons.
- Captures a moment in time.



**Little frog among
rain-shaken leaves, are you, too,
splashed with fresh, green paint?**

by Gaki

Free Verse

- A free verse poem does not use rhyme or patterns.
- Can vary freely in length of lines, stanzas, and subject.

Revenge

When I find out
who took
the last cookie

out of the jar
and left
me a bunch of

stale old messy
crumbs, I'm
going to take

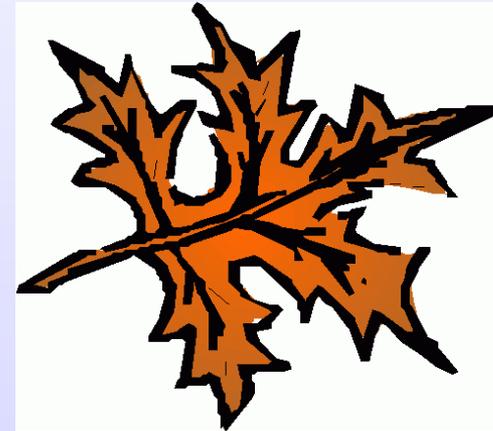
me a handful
and crumb
up *someone's* bed.



By Myra Cohn Livingston

Acrostic

- In an acrostic poem the first letter of each line, read down the page, spells the subject of the poem.
- Type of free verse poem.
- Does not usually rhyme.



Loose brown parachute

Escaping

And

Floating on puffs of air.

by Paul Paolilli

Author's Purpose



The poet has an “author’s purpose” when he writes a poem.

The purpose can be to:

- **Share feelings** (joy, sadness, anger, fear, loneliness)
- **Tell a story**
- **Send a message** (theme - something to think about)
- **Be humorous**
- **Provide description*** (e.g., person, object, concept)

**Although description is important in all poems, the focus of some poems is the description itself rather than feelings, story-telling, message, or humor.*

What is poetry?

Poetry

What is poetry? Who knows?
Not a rose, but the scent of a rose;
Not the sky, but the light in the sky;
Not the fly, but the gleam of the fly;
Not the sea, but the sound of the sea;
Not myself, but what makes me
See, hear, and feel something that prose
Cannot: and what it is, who knows?

By Eleanor Farjeon

