**![C:\Users\Jenna\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\PDZSZW0W\MC900085410[1].wmf]()Poetic Terms Glossary**

**Rhythm:** In poetry, rhythm implies that certain words are produced more forcefully than others, and may be held for longer duration. The repetition of a pattern of such emphasis is what produces a "rhythmic effect." The most obvious kind of rhythm is the regular repetition of stressed and unstressed syllables found in some poetry. Writers also create rhythm by repeating words and phrases or even by repeating whole lines and sentences.

Example:

**O Captain! My Captain!** By Walt Whitman

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *O CAPTAIN! my Captain! our fearful trip is done;* |   |
| *The ship has weather’d every rack, the prize we sought is won;* |   |
| *The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,* |   |
| *While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring:* |   |
| *But O heart! heart! heart!* | *5* |
| *O the bleeding drops of* [*red*](http://www.bartleby.com/142/1019.html#193.6)*,* |   |
| *Where on the deck my Captain lies,* |   |
| *Fallen cold and dead.* |  |

**Meter:** Meter plays an important part in establishing rhythm, and is created through the use of syllables. Meter is a recurring pattern of stressed (accented, or long) and unstressed (unaccented, or short) syllables in lines of poetry. For example, suppose a line contains ten syllables in which the first syllable is unstressed, the second is stressed, the third is unstressed, the fourth is stressed, and so on until the line reaches the tenth syllable. The line would look like the following one (the opening line of Shakespeare’s “Sonnet 18") containing a pattern of unstressed and stressed syllables.

Example: From Shakespeare’s **Sonnet 18**

Shall **I** com **PARE** thee **TO** a **SUM** mer’s **DAY**?

Thou **ART** more **LOVE** ly **AND** more **TEMP** er **ATE:**

This is an example of IAMBIC PENTAMETER

**Stanza:** In [poetry](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poetry), a stanza is a unit within a larger poem. A stanza consists of a grouping of [lines](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Line_%28poetry%29), set off by a space that usually has a set pattern of [meter](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meter_%28poetry%29) and rhyme. In traditional poetry, stanzas can be identified and grouped together because they share a [rhyme scheme](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhyme_scheme) or a fixed number of lines. Here is a list of stanza names according to the number of lines, and an example of stanzas in tercet form.

* 2 lines = [Couplet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Couplet)
* 3 lines = [Tercet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tercet)
* 4 lines = [Quatrain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quatrain)
* 5 lines = [Cinquain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cinquain)
* 6 lines = [Sestet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sestet)
* 7 lines = Septet
* 8 lines = Octave

**Do not go Gentle into that Good Night** by Dylan Thomas

*Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.*

**Caesura:** A caesura is a literary term in poetry referring to a pause that occurs naturally within the poem. A caesura is either noted through this symbol ||, is cued by punctuation, or occurs when a stanza’s rhyme scheme is interrupted. It is used purposefully, and can be soft (barely noticeable) or hard (as in a full stop, such as a period). Without these little pauses, the words would all run together and become meaningless. When used skilfully, they can not only add to the flow of a piece, but can actually create implied meaning.

Example marked with ★: William Shakespeare’s **Hamlet III, 1**

*To be, or not to be,****★*** *that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? ★To die, to sleep,
No more;★ and by a sleep to say we end...*

**Blank Verse:** What sets it apart from all the other forms is the fact that blank verse does not rhyme. The meter is usually iambic (a pattern of unstressed syllables followed by stressed), and pentameter (a line consisting of five feet). Shakespeare’s famous sonnets are most frequently written in blank verse.

Example of a blank verse poem:  **Paradise Lost** by John Milton

*Of Mans First Disobedience, and the Fruit*

*Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal tast*

*Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,*

*With loss of Eden, till one greater Man*

*Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat,*

*Sing Heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top*

**Enjambment**: A run-on line of poetry in which logical and grammatical sense carries over from one line into the next. An enjambed line differs from an end-stopped line in which the grammatical and logical sense is completed within the line.

Example: **Tree’s** by Joyce Kilmer

*THINK that I shall never see*

*A poem lovely as a tree.*

*A tree whose hungry mouth is prest*

*Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;*

*A tree that looks at God all day,*

*And lifts her leafy arms to pray;*

**Tone**: The poet's attitude in style or expression toward the subject, e.g., loving, ironic, bitter, pitying, fanciful, solemn, etc. Tone can also refer to the overall mood of the poem itself. Tone may shift through a poem, where its first stanza begins hopeful, and then later stanzas seem saddened and depressed. A shift in tone can make a poem more enjoyable.

**Closed Form**: A form or structure of poetry characterized by regularity and consistency in such elements as rhyme, line length, and [metrical pattern](http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072405228/student_view0/poetic_glossary.html#meter).

Example: **Woods on a Snowy Evening** by Robert Frost

*Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though.
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.*

**Free Verse:** Poetry without a regular pattern of [meter](http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072405228/student_view0/poetic_glossary.html#meter) or rhyme. The verse is "free" in not being bound by earlier poetic conventions requiring poems to adhere to an explicit and identifiable meter and rhyme scheme in a form such as the sonnet or ballad.

**This Is Just to Say** by William Carlos Williams

*I have eaten
the plums
that were in
the icebox

and which
you were probably
saving
for breakfast

Forgive me
they were delicious
so sweet
and so cold*

**Rhyme**: A rhyme is a repetition of similar sounds in two or more words and is most often used in [poetry](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poetry) and [songs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Song). Rhyme is created when the final vowel or consonant sounds in two or more words sound alike. A rhyme scheme is labelled using letters of the alphabet where rhyming lines are labelled with the same letter.

Example: **Richard Cory** by Edwin Arlington Robinson

*Whenever Richard Cory went down town, (A)
We people on the pavement looked at him;(B)
He was a gentleman from sole to crown (A)
Clean favored and imperially slim. (B)*

**Where the Sidewalk Ends by Shel Silverstein**

There is a place where the sidewalk ends
And before the street begins,
And there the grass grows soft and white,
And there the sun burns crimson bright,
And there the moon-bird rests from his flight
To cool in the peppermint wind.

Let us leave this place where the smoke blows black
And the dark street winds and bends.
Past the pits where the asphalt flowers grow
We shall walk with a walk that is measured and slow,
And watch where the chalk-white arrows go
To the place where the sidewalk ends.

Yes we'll walk with a walk that is measured and slow,
And we'll go where the chalk-white arrows go,
For the children, they mark, and the children, they know
The place where the sidewalk ends.

**Read the poem above several times and take note of its structure. Then answer the following questions on a lined piece of paper.**

**1) Is this poem written in stanzas? If so, what type are they?**

**2) Does this poem have rhythm? Is the rhythm achieved through repetition, rhyme, meter, or several of these features? Explain, and include examples.**

**3) Are lines in this poem enjambed? If so, list 2 examples.**

**4) Find and label 3 caesuras.**

**5) Describe the tone of this poem.**

**6) Does this poem fall into the free verse category or closed form? Explain your answer.**

**7) What is the rhyme scheme of this poem? Use letters to label each rhyming couplet and to determine the overall rhyme scheme.**

**8) Find 2 examples of stressed (\*accented or long) syllables.**

**9) What poetry genre would you classify this poem as? Defend your opinion with proof.**

**10) What is the author of this poem trying to say to his audience? Is there an underlying message in this poem?**