

University of Tikrit

College Education for Women

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WHAT IS POETRY?

It is words arranged in a rhythmic pattern with regular accents (like beats in music), words which are carefully selected for sound, accent and meaning to express imaginatively ideas and emotions. Each poem has rhythm, melody, imagery, and form.

SOME ELEMENTS OF POETRY

WHAT IS RHYTHM?

Rhythm is produced by a recurring pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables and pauses. Each poem has a metric pattern (except in “free verse” which has no metrical pattern since it is based on the natural cadences of speech). That is, the accents of the syllables in the words fall at regular intervals, like the beat of music. This pattern is described by indicating the kind and number of feet in a regular verse line.

THE FOUR MOST-USED KIND OF FEET

No. of Syllables	Technical Name of Kind of Foot	Accented = (/) “DUMM” Unaccented = (~) “de”	Such as
2	iamb, iambic	~ / de DUMM	~ / ~ / a WAY, i WILL
2	trochee, trochaic	/ ~ DUMM de	/ ~ / ~ COM ing, DO it
3	anapest, anapestic	~ ~ / de de DUMM	~ ~ / ~ ~ / can non ADE, let us IN
3	dactyl, dactylic	/ ~ ~ DUMM de de /	/ ~ ~ / ~ ~ VIC to ries, TWO of them

Less Often Used: spondee, spondaic (DUMM DUMM) pyrrhus, pyraic (de de)

The beat of poetry feet is called meter. Marking lines as the following are marked to show feet or meters is called scansion:

~ / ~ / ~ / ~ /

The stag | at eve | had drunk | his fill

This line is iambic tetrameter. If meter should vary within a line, it is called inversion.

The number of feet in a line is expressed as follows:

- 1- foot monometer
- 2- feet dimeter
- 3- feet trimeter
- 4- feet tetrameter
- 5- feet pentameter
- 6- feet hexameter
- 7- feet heptameter
- 8- feet octameter
- 9- feet nonameter

Pauses do not usually figure significantly in scansion, but they do affect the rhythm of a line, just as they affect the rhythm of music. There are three types of pauses:

End-stopped which is a pause at the end of a line.

Caesura which is a pause that occurs within a line.

Enjambement which is a line that “runs over” to the next line without a pause.

WHAT IS Rhythm?

Like music, each poem has melody (i.e., sound devices). A poet chooses words for their sound, as well as for their meaning. Rhythm, of course, is a kind of sound device based upon pattern. Euphony (literally “good sound”) and cacophony (literally “bad sound”) contribute to producing melody, or a musical quality in verse.

One of the principle tools of melody is rhyme — that is where two words have the same sound on their last accented vowel preceded by different consonants, such as:

Single (Masculine) Rhyme, for example, (dame, same, love, dove)

Double (Feminine) Rhyme, for example, (napping, tapping, weather, heather)

Triple Rhyme, for example, (mournfully, scornfully, victorious, glorious)

Other rhyming terms include:

Sight (Eye) Rhyme in which two words look alike but don't sound alike, such as "LOVE" and "JOVE" or "DAUGHTER" and "LAUGHTER."

Slant (Imperfect) Rhyme in which two words are nearly rhymed but have a slight variation in vowel sound, such as "LAKE" and "FATE." NOTE: Sometimes what is now a sight rhyme was once a true rhyme, but pronunciation changes have occurred, such as "AGAIN" and "RAIN."

Identical Rhyme (Rime Riche) in which two words are spelled differently but have the same pronunciation (also called homonyms), such as "TWO" and "TOO" or "RITE" and "RIGHT."

End Rhyme in which the rhyming words occur at the ends of lines of poetry.

Internal Rhyme in which the rhyme occurs inside a line, such as –

"Let's BEAT the HEAT."

Besides rhyme, poets also use other sound effects:

Alliteration is the repetition of similar speech sounds in closely associated words or syllables. There are three kinds of alliteration:

Consonantal Alliteration Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.

Vowel Alliteration Apt alliteration's artful aid is often an
occasional ornament in prose.

Internal Alliteration The moan of doves in immemorial elms,

And murmuring of innumerable bees.

Assonance is the repetition of identical vowel sounds in syllables that have different consonant sounds, such as "LAKE" and "FAKE" or "In Xanadu did Kubla Khan" (which repeats only vowel sounds).

Consonance is the repetition of identical consonant sounds in syllables that have different vowel sounds, such as "BILL" and "BALL" or "BORN" and "BURN."

Onomatopoeia is the use of words which sound like their meanings, such as "HISS," "MURMUR," "BUZZ," and so on. A really skillful poet may merely use S-sounds in a poem about a snake, rather than the word "HISS."