

As you can see, each strong stress is marked with a slanted line (/) and each weak stress with a horseshoe symbol (^).

The weak and strong stresses are then divided by vertical lines (|) into groups called feet.

Rhyme is the repetition of a sound in two or more words or phrases. It is sound, not spelling, that determines rhyme. The common type of the rhyme that occurs at ends of the lines is called end rhyme.

Here she lies, a pretty bird,
Lately made of flesh and blood,
Who as soon fell fast asleep,
And her little eyes did peep.

When the rhyme occurs elsewhere than at the ends of lines, it is called Internal Rhyme. In the following example from Samuel Taylor Coleridge, note the internal rhymes in the first and third lines:

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

A rhyme scheme is a regular pattern of rhyming words in a poem. The rhyme scheme of a poem is indicated by using different letters of the alphabet for each new rhyme. In an abab stanza, for example, line one rhymes with line three and line two rhymes with line four.

I wandered lonely as a cloud,
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside ...

a
b
a
b

Repetition in poetry is the use, again and again, of a word or phrase. When the word or phrase appears in the same position in all or many of the stanzas of the poem, it is termed a refrain. In the following lines from a traditional Eskimo poem, the refrain has been italicized:

I wonder what the dear south wind
has on its mind
as it blows past?
Does it think about the small people
Who live north of us?
Does it think of them
as it blows past?

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another without using like or as - "Genuis is a fountain". Personification gives human characteristics to an animal, object, or idea - "The sun is a wizard".

As you read the poems in this book, look for the figures of speech. Notice how they enrich meaning and add vividness and force to expression.

Imagery

Imagery means a poet's use of words to create mental pictures, or images, that communicate experience. Images are impressive because they make ideas concrete. It is presented in language in such a way that we can see, hear, smell, taste and touch it. So an image may appeal to one of the five senses, though in literature visual images are the most common. As you read *The Pasture* (p. 8), look for specific words Robert Frost uses to create vivid word pictures. You must be able to picture in your mind what the poet means by his use of imagery in order for his poem to be effective. Imagery is one of the most important resources poets make use of to capture and express experience.

Sound System

The best way to read a poem is to read it aloud, for although poems usually come to us as a visual experience, as words locked into the printed page, they are intended to be heard as well as seen. An attentiveness to the sounds and patterns of sounds is essential to the full appreciation of most poems. The basic elements of the sound system in poetry are rhym, meter, and rhyme.

In poetry, rhym is the arrangement, or pattern of accented and unaccented syllables - in a word "the beat". For example, if you read the following lines from Tennyson's poem aloud, you will hear the forceful rhythm of the lines:

Theirs is not to make reply,
Theirs is not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die.

Like songs, different poems have different rhythms. Usually a poet will use a rhythm that is appropriate to the subject and the poet's feeling about it. When you read a poem, your first concern should be with understanding what the lines mean. Your next concern should be with "catching the beat" and responding to it.

Meter is the pattern of accented and unaccented syllables that form the basis of a poem's rhythm. So the meter of a poem can be called its metrical pattern. This pattern is determined by the number and types of stresses, or beats, in each line. To describe the meter of a poem, you must scan its lines. Scanning involves marking the stressed and unstressed syllables, as follows:

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