

Poetry Background



Basics You Should Know

Types of Poetry

Lyric

- ❖ subjective and reflective
- ❖ thoughts of a single speaker
- ❖ limited length
- ❖ regular rhyme scheme and meter
- ❖ single, unique impression

Types of Lyrics

- ❖ 1. Elegy-poem of lament, meditating on the death of an individual
- ❖ 2. Idyll/Pastoral-describes the life of shepherd in bucolic, idealistic terms; it is technically a pastoral if setting is in height of summer, nature's fecundity
- ❖ 3. Ode-elaborate; usually lengthy; deals seriously with a dignified subject

Types of Lyrics

4. Sonnet-fourteen lines

Italian/Petrarchan

- octave and sestet
- abba, abba, cde, cde

Miltonian

- all Italian characteristics except octave and sestet are not divergent

English/Shakespearian

- three quatrains and a couplet
- iambic pentameter
- abab, cdcd, efef, gg

Spenserian

- all English characteristics except abab, bcabc, cdcd, ee

Types of Lyrics

- ❖ 5. Villanelle-five tercets and a quatrain; lines 1, 6, 12, and 18 are a refrain; lines 3, 9, 15, and 19 are a refrain; rhyming aba, aba, aba, aba, aba, abaa.

Types of Poetry

Narrative

- ❖ nondramatic
- ❖ objective
- ❖ regular rhyme scheme and meter
- ❖ tells a story

Types of Narratives

- 1. Epic: long, dignified narrative which gives account of hero important to a nation/race
- 2. Ballad: orally transmitted; tells story from local history or popular legend; quatrains abab; lines 1 and 3 iambic tetrameter and 2 and 4 iambic trimeter (also in song section)

Types of Poetry

Dramatic

- ❖ presents a voice of an imaginary character speaking directly, without additional narration from the author
- ❖ usually addresses a specific audience
- ❖ usually written as part of a play

Types of Dramatic Poetry

-1. Dramatic Monologue: a speech made by character (not author) at a decisive moment which is addressed to a specific audience who remains silent

Types of Poetry

Light Verse

- ❖ written for entertainment
- ❖ can be a lyric
- ❖ can be silly or serious
- ❖ can be parody or satire

Types of Light Verse

- 1. Limerick: five anapestic lines; lines 1,2 and 5 are trimeter and lines 3 and 4 are dimeter; aabba; usually silly/nonsensical
- 2. Epigram: short poem with witty or ingenious turn of thought at end

Types of Poetry

Song

- ❖ intended for musical expression
- ❖ usually brief, straightforward and emotional
- ❖ can be a lyric

Types of Songs

- 1. Ballad: (see narrative section)
- 2. Dirge: song of lament, usually a commemoration for the dead; less elaborate than an elegy
- 3. Hymn: religious emotion, usually praising a divine or venerated being; can be lyric
- 4. Rap: spoken word set to music; usually with a rhythm of beats
- 5. Blues: poem of sadness, pain, or deprivation consisting of rhyming tercets in which the first two lines are identical; usually shows some wisdom from bitter life experience

Forms of Poetry

Closed Form

- ❖ follows a pattern
- ❖ looks symmetrical to the eye

Closed Form Patterns

- ❖ Blank Verse-Unrhymed Iambic Pentameter (line pattern, not stanza pattern)
- ❖ Couplet two-line stanza, usually rhymed with lines of equal length
 - 1. heroic couplet: rhymed, end-stopped, iambic pentameter; parallel or antithesis
 - 2. octosyllabic couplet: iambic or trochaic tetrameter

Closed Form Patterns

- ❖ Tercet three-line stanza
 1. Terza Rima: linked tercets; aba, bcb, cdc
- ❖ Quatrain four-line stanza
- ❖ Cinquain five-line stanza
- ❖ Sestet six-line stanza
- ❖ Septet seven-line stanza
- ❖ Octet (Octave) eight-line stanza

Open Form Patterns

- ❖ Free Verse-without regular rhyme scheme or meter, relies heavily on artful breaking of lines and sound techniques
- ❖ Projective Verse-varying amounts of white space between words/lines show pauses
- ❖ Concrete-words of poem in a specific shape

Structure of Poetry

- ❖ Repetitive-repeated words, lines, stanzas, syntax, sentences, types of sentences, punctuation, rhyme, literary devices, feet, meter. . .; may contain parallelism, antithesis, anaphora, epistrophe, anadiplosis, epanalepsis, end-stopped/enjambed lines, cadence, antimetabole, chiasmus, epithets, motif, rhetorical questions, etc.

Structure of Poetry

- ❖ Narrative-tells a story
- ❖ Logical-argues a case or comes to a conclusion; may use verbal irony, understatement, litotes, overstatement, hyperbole, paradox, logos, pathos, ethos, etc.

Metrics of Poetry

- ❖ Foot-basic unit of measure in a line of poetry
 - Iambic: u/; da-DUM; a trot, except, the tree
 - Trochaic: /u; DUM-da; canter, asking, make it
 - Spondaic: //; DUM-DUM; football, heartbreak
 - Pyrrhic: uu; da-da; on a
 - Anapestic: uu/; da-da-DUM; anapest, understand
 - Dactylic: /uu; DUM-da-da; tenderly, talk to me
 - Amphibrach: u/u; da-DUM-da; addresses, I make it
 - Amphimacer: /u/; DUM-da-DUM; Sound the flute, day and night

Metrics of Poetry

❖ Meter-the number/pattern of feet in a line of poetry

-Monometer-one foot in the line

-Dimeter-two feet in the line

-Trimeter-three feet in the line

-Tetrameter-four feet in the line

-Pentameter-five feet in the line

-Hexameter-six feet in the line

-Heptameter-seven feet in the line

-Octometer-eight feet in the line

Metrics of Poetry

- ❖ Rhythm-stresses happen at regular intervals in the poem; each line should have a certain rhythm and you begin a new line to repeat the rhythm; ex. iambic pentameter
- ❖ Scansion-the process of drawing the stressed and unstressed symbols above syllables in poetry
- ❖ Prosody-the study of principles of verse structure (feet, meter, rhyme, sound, stanzas)