

GLOSSARY OF TERMS FOR LYRIC POETRY

lyric poetry- any fairly short poem consisting of the utterance of a single speaker, who expresses a state of mind or a process of perception, thought, and feeling

IMAGERY TERMS

abstract- idea or generalization

concrete- can be known directly by the senses

image- a representation of a sense experience

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE TERMS

denotation- a word's primary signification or reference

connotation- the range of secondary or associated significations and feelings which it commonly suggests or implies

figurative language- expressions which are not meant literally, but to some extent must be understood imaginatively

simile- a figurative comparison between unlike things using "like," "as," or "as if"

metaphor- a figurative comparison between unlike things; a word or expression that in literal usage denotes one kind of thing is applied to a distinctly different kind of thing, without asserting a comparison; Aristotle noted in his *Poetics*, "the greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor. . . it is also a sign of genius, since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars."

personification- giving the characteristics of a human being to an animal, object, or abstraction

metonymy- (Gr. “change of name”) the literal term for one thing is applied to another with which it is closely associated because of a recurrent relationship in a common experience (e.g. “Hollywood” for “the film industry”)

synecdoche- (Gr. “taking together”) a part of something is used to signify the whole, or, more rarely, the whole is used to signify the part

symbol- a word or phrase, usually concrete, that denotes an object or event, which in its turn signifies something, usually abstract, or has a range of reference, beyond itself

fable- a short narrative, in prose or verse, that exemplifies an abstract moral thesis or principle of human behavior; usually at its conclusion, either the narrator or a character states the moral in the form of an epigram

allusion- a passing reference, without explicit identification, to a literary or historical person, place, or event, or to another literary work or passage

paradox- a seeming contradiction which appears to be logically contradictory or absurd, yet turns out to be interpretable in a way that makes sense

oxymoron- a paradox that joins two words that are usually contraries

hyperbole- bold overstatement, usually for a serious, comic or ironic effect

meiosis- understatement for effect

litotes- ironical understatement in which an affirmative is expressed by the negative of its contrary (e.g. my wife is not unattractive)

SOUND TERMS

rhyme- when the last stressed vowel of two words and any sounds following that vowel share an identical sound (*way* and *say*, *ringing* and *singing*)

masculine rhyme- rhyme that falls on a single stressed syllable (*well* and *fell*)

feminine rhyme- rhyme consists of a stressed syllable followed by one or more unstressed syllables (*fountains* and *mountains*)

end rhyme- rhyme that occurs at the ends of poetic lines

internal rhyme- rhyme formed within a line of poetry

eye rhyme- words whose endings are spelled alike, and in most instances, were once pronounced alike, but have in the course of time acquired different pronunciations (*daughter* and *laughter*, *prove* and *love*)

alliteration- the repetition of initial consonant sounds

assonance- the repetition of vowel sounds

consonance- the repetition of consonant sounds

onomatopoeia- using words that imitate the sound they denote (*buzz* and *murmur*)

euphony- a term applied to language which strikes the ear as smooth, pleasant, or musical

cacophony- also called dissonance- language which is perceived as harsh, rough, and unmusical

doggerel- rough, heavy-footed, and jerky versification, but also verse that is monotonously regular in meter and tritely conventional in sentiment

RHYTHM TERMS

scansion- the act of determining the component feet of a line of verse

rhythm- a recognizable though varying pattern in the beat of the stresses (the more forcefully uttered, hence louder syllables)

meter- the arrangement of rhythmic beats in verse

The meter of a poem is determined by the predominant metrical foot, and by the total number of feet per line that predominates in the poem. For example, a poem written in iambic pentameter consists mostly of lines that contain 5 metrical feet, the majority of which are iambs.

foot- the smallest unit of meter.

The following terms indicate the most common feet in English poetry:

<u>foot</u>	<u>pattern</u>	<u>adjective</u>
iamb	X /	iambic

x / x / x / x / x /
The curfew tolls the knell of parting day

(Thomas Gray, "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard")

trochee / X trochaic

/ x / x / x / x / x
There they are, my fifty men and women
(Robert Browning, "One Word More")

anapest X X / anapestic

x x / x x / x x / x x /
The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold.
(Lord Byron, "The Destruction of the Senacherib")

dactyl / X X dactylic

/ x x / x x
Eve, with her basket, was
/ x x / x /
Deep in the bells and grass.
(Ralph Hodgson, "Eve")

spondee / / spondaic

/ / / / x // / / /
Good strong thick stupefying incense smoke.
(Browning, "The Bishop Orders His Tomb")

The following terms indicate the number of feet per line:

<i>term</i>	<i>feet per line</i>
monometer	1
dimeter	2
trimeter	3
tetrameter	4
pentameter	5
hexameter	6
heptameter	7
octameter	8

Although there are terms for longer lines, longer lines beyond eight feet tend to break into two shorter lines, simply because the speaker must pause for breath.

catalexis- a missing final unstressed syllable at the end of a line of verse. Many trochaic lines lack the final unstressed syllable, and are therefore catalectic:

/ x / x / x /
Tiger! tiger! burning bright
/ x / x / x /
In the forest of the night. (Blake, "The Tiger")

couplet- two consecutive lines that share similar meter and end-rhyme

end-stopped line- a line of verse that ends in a natural pause, at the end of a sentence, clause, or other syntactic unit, usually indicated by punctuation

enjambment- a line of verse in which the pressure of an incomplete syntactic unit toward closure carries on over the end of the line into the next, usually without punctuation

caesura- a pause within a line of verse, traditionally marked during scansion with | | or //

accentual meter- also called **strong-stress meter**, verse in which only the number of stressed syllables per line is consistent, while the number of unstressed syllables is highly variable

sprung rhythm- a variant of accentual meter developed by Gerard Manley Hopkins: each foot begins with a stressed syllable, which may either stand alone or be associated with from one to three (or even more) unstressed syllables

anaphora- the repetition of the same word or words at the beginning of successive phrases, clauses, sentences, or lines of verse

FORM TERMS

stanza- a division of a poem made by arranging the lines into units separated by a space. Units that share a corresponding number of lines and a recurrent pattern of meter and rhyme are called stanzas. A poem with such divisions is described as having a stanzaic form, but not all verse is divided in stanzas.

closed form, also called “fixed form”- closed or fixed form poems are those that may be categorized by the a pattern of lines, meter, rhythm, or stanzas. A sonnet is a fixed form of poetry because by definition it must have fourteen lines. Other fixed forms include the limerick, sestina, and villanelle. However, poems written in a fixed form may not always fit into categories precisely, because writers sometimes vary traditional forms to create innovative effects.

open form, also called “free verse”- a fluid form which conforms to no set rules of traditional versification. The “free” in free verse refers to the freedom from fixed patterns of meter and rhyme, but writers of free verse employ familiar poetic devices such as assonance, alliteration, imagery, caesura, figures of speech etc., and their rhythmic effects are dependent on the syllabic cadences emerging from the context

blank verse- verse composed in unrhymed iambic pentameter

dramatic monologue- a literary work which consists of a revealing one-way conversation by a character or persona, usually directed to a second person or to an imaginary audience. It

typically involves a critical moment of a specific situation, with the speaker's words unintentionally providing a revelation of his character

apostrophe- a direct and explicit address either to an absent person or to an abstract or nonhuman entity

sonnet- a fixed form consisting of fourteen lines of five-foot iambic verse, usually concerning love. In the **English**, also known as the **Elizabethan or Shakespearean sonnet**, the lines are grouped in three quatrains (with six alternating rhymes: *abab cdcd efef*) followed by a rhymed couplet (*gg*) which is usually epigrammatic. A variant of the Shakespearean form is the **Spenserian sonnet** which links the quatrains with a chain or interlocked rhyme scheme, *abab bcbc cdcd ee*. In the original **Petrarchan, or Italian sonnet** form, the fourteen lines are divided into an octave of two rhyme-sounds arranged *abba abba* and a sestet of two additional rhyme sounds which may be variously arranged. This latter form tends to divide the thought at the “turn,” into two opposing or complementary phases of the same idea.

quatrain- a poem, unit or stanza of four lines of verse, usually with a rhyme scheme of *abab* or its variant, *xbyb*. It is the most common stanzaic form

couplet- two successive lines of poetry, of equal length and rhythmic correspondence, with end-words that rhyme

closed couplet- a couplet in which the sense and syntax is self-contained within its two lines, as opposed to an **open couplet-** a couplet of the Romantic period with run-on lines, in which the thought was carried beyond the rhyming lines of the couplet

octave- a stanza of eight lines sharing a pattern of end rhyme, especially the first eight lines of an Italian or Petrarchan sonnet

sestet- a stanza of six lines sharing a pattern of end rhyme, especially the last six lines of an Italian or Petrarchan sonnet

villanelle- a poem in a fixed form, consisting of five three-line stanzas followed by a quatrain and having only two rhymes. In the stanzas following the first, the first and third lines of the first stanza are repeated alternately as refrains. They are also the final two lines of the concluding quatrain

limerick- a light or humorous verse form of five chiefly anapestic verses of which lines one, two and five are of three feet and lines three and four are of two feet, with a rhyme scheme of *aabba*. The limerick, named for a town in Ireland of that name, was popularized by Edward Lear in his *Book of Nonsense* published in 1846.

ode- a long lyric poem that is serious in subject and treatment, elevated in style, and elaborate in its stanza structure

epigram- a pithy, sometimes satiric couplet or quatrain which was popular in classic Latin literature and in European and English literature of the Renaissance and the neo-Classical era.

Epigrams comprise a single thought or event and are often aphoristic with a witty or humorous turn of thought. Coleridge wrote the following definition:

What is an epigram? A dwarfish whole,
Its body brevity, and wit its soul.

ballad- a short narrative poem with stanzas of two or four lines and usually a refrain. The story of a ballad can originate from a wide range of subject matter but most frequently deals with folklore or popular legends. They are written in straight-forward verse, seldom with detail, but always with graphic simplicity and force. Most ballads are suitable for singing and, while sometimes varied in practice, are generally written in **ballad meter**, i.e., alternating lines of iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter, with the last words of the second and fourth lines rhyming (*xyyb*)

ballad stanza- a quatrain in alternate four- and three- stress lines; usually only the second and fourth lines rhyme

sestina- a fixed form consisting of six 6-line (usually unrhymed) stanzas in which the end words of the first stanza recur as end words of the following five stanzas in a successively rotating order and as the middle and end words of each of the lines of a concluding envoi in the form of a tercet. The usual ending word order for a sestina is as follows:

First stanza, 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6
Second stanza, 6 - 1 - 5 - 2 - 4 - 3
Third stanza, 3 - 6 - 4 - 1 - 2 - 5
Fourth stanza, 5 - 3 - 2 - 6 - 1 - 4
Fifth stanza, 4 - 5 - 1 - 3 - 6 - 2
Sixth stanza, 2 - 4 - 6 - 5 - 3 - 1
Concluding tercet:
middle of first line - 2, end of first line - 5
middle of second line - 4, end of second line - 3
middle of third line - 6, end of third line - 1

envoi or envoy- a short final stanza of a poem, for example a sestina, serving as a summary or dedication-- like an author's postscript

tercet- a unit or group of three lines of verse which are rhymed together or have a rhyme scheme that interlaces with an adjoining tercet.

pantoum- a poem in a fixed form, consisting of a varying number of 4-line stanzas with lines rhyming alternately; the second and fourth lines of each stanza are repeated to form the first and third lines of the succeeding stanza; the first and third lines of the first stanza form the second and fourth of the last stanza, but in reverse order, so that the opening and closing lines of the poem are identical

terza rima- a verse form consisting of tercets, usually in iambic pentameter in English poetry, with a chain or interlocking rhyme scheme, as: *aba, bcb, cdc*, etc. The pattern concludes with a

separate line added at the end of the poem (or each part) rhyming with the second line of the preceding tercet or with a rhyming couplet

haiku- a Japanese form of poetry, also known as *hokku*. It consists of three unrhymed lines of five, seven and five syllables. The elusive flavor of the form, however, lies more in its touch and tone than in its syllabic structure. Deeply imbedded in Japanese culture and strongly influenced by Zen Buddhism, haiku are very brief descriptions of nature that convey some implicit insight or essence of a moment. Traditionally, they contain either a direct or oblique reference to a season

cinquain- a five-line stanza of syllabic verse, the successive lines containing two, four, six, eight and two syllables. The cinquain, based on the Japanese haiku, was an innovation of the American poet, Adelaide Crapsey

THE FAR SIDE

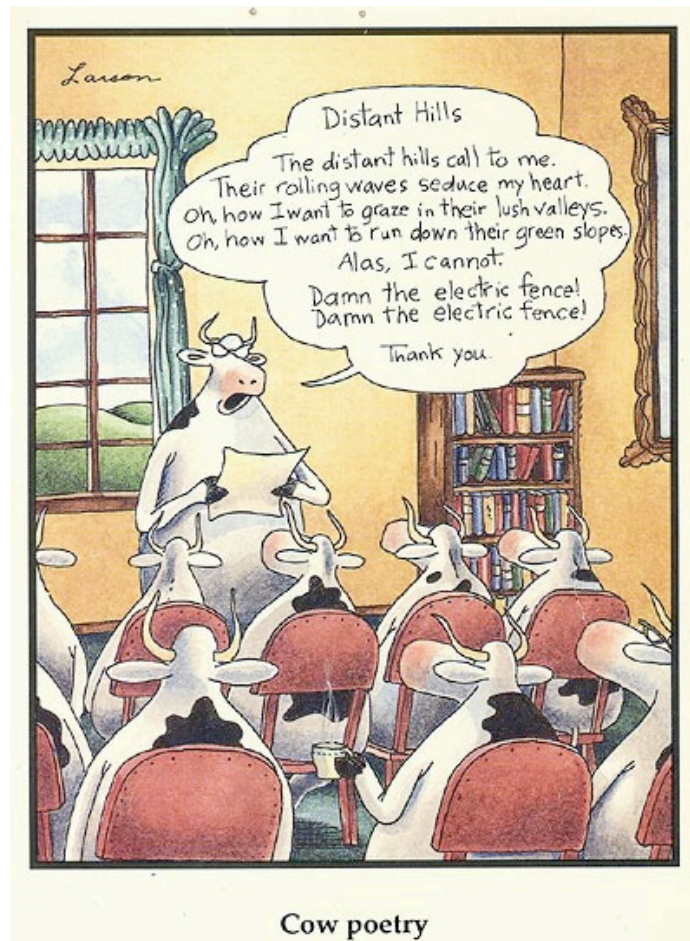


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