

Elements of Poetry

The Parts of a Poem:

Verses [lines] NOT sentences - each line has a specific purpose, watch out for how things are punctuated

Stanzas NOT paragraphs - stanzas can be significant. Like paragraphs, they sometimes group ideas or serve as a way to separate the speaker's thoughts

Speaker NOT a narrator - the speaker is not a narrator. The speaker is often much more subjective than a narrator. He/she can trick us into taking a particular point of view

Tone/Mood NOT always a setting - though settings are depicted a lot of poems, the speaker does not always give us a time and place when his/her thoughts occur. We should be concerned with the language,

not the environment of the poem.

Theme = Theme - Themes don't change when applied to poetry. Themes are just harder to grasp and more difficult to interpret.

With these concepts in mind you should know the following things **about interpreting poems.**

When you read a poem, pay attention to some basic ideas:

1. Voice -> (Who is speaking?
How are they speaking?)

2. Stanzas -> (how lines are
grouped)

- couplets
- quatrains
- free Verse
- other patterns

3. Sound (includes rhyme, but
also many other patterns)

- Meter & Rhythm

4. Rhythm (what kind of "beat"
or meter does the poem have?)

- pacing

- placing

5. Figures of speech [Figurative language] - (many poems are full of metaphors and other figurative language)

- literary devices
- imagery
- syllabic patterning

Form (there are standard types of poem)

Title of Poem
Poem

Title of Poem	Type of Poem	Format - stanza, verses & speaker	Personal reading - paraphrased meaning & thoughts	Effect of Form on Character of poem?

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The Types of Poems - There are four categories of poems that are further subdivided into more structured forms of poetry

1. Narrative - Gives brief Record events, highly objective told by a speaker that is detached from the action

A. Epic -> A long [can be shorter] dignified poem about the deeds of a hero **ex -> the Batman saga, Milton's "Paradise Lost"**

B. Ballad -> Simple and fairly short narrative that is designed to be sung

- begins abruptly, usually written in quatrains & usually has a refrain [chorus in poetic speak] **ex -> Tupac's "Changes"**

1. **Lyric** - A subjective reflective poem. The speaker [persona] expresses personal thoughts and the poem usually has a rhyme scheme

A. Song -> Regular pattern & is designed to be sung -> **ex** - Katy Perry's "firework"

B. Elegy -> A poem that mourns the death of a person or persons -> **ex.** "In Flanders' Fields" **By: John McRae**

C.Ode -> Lengthy poem on a serious subject, usually praises someone or something. This is more commonly used in older poetry -> **ex - “Ode to a Nightingale” By: John Keats**

D.Sonnet -> Verse form, containing 14 lines [usually in iambic pentameter] & has a complicated rhyme schemes -> **ex - Shakespeare’s “Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?”**

2. Dramatic -> A narrative that tells a story through speech and action **ex.**

Movies - comedies, tragedies, farces

3. Special

A. Dramatic Monologue - A poem from a single character who reveals in his speech the nature of the dramatic situation

B. Haiku -> structured syllabic poem, usually 5-7-5 [though not always].

C. Limerick -> humorous nonsense-verse in five

lines. Rhymes scheme
aabba

D. **Blank Verse** ->

unrhymed lines of iambic
pentameter - **ex. Macbeth**

E. **Free Verse** -> no consistency
in line's rhyme or meter but is
very rhythmic - **ex. Spoken word**

Voice

Voice is a word people use to talk about the way poems "talk" to the reader.

Lyric poems and narrative poems are the ones you will see most. Lyric poems express the feelings of the writer. A **narrative** poem tells a story.

Some other types of voice are **mask, apostrophe, and conversation**. A **mask** puts on the identity of someone or something else, and speaks for it. **Apostrophe** talks to something that can't answer (a bee, the moon, a tree) and is good for wondering, asking, or offering advice.

Conversation is a dialogue between two voices and often asks us to guess who the voices are.

Stanza

A **stanza** is a group within a poem which may have two or many lines. They are like paragraphs.

Some poems are made of REALLY short stanzas, called **couplets**--two lines that rhyme, one after the other, usually equal in length.

Sound

One of the most important things poems do is play with sound. That doesn't just mean rhyme. It means many other things. The earliest poems were memorized and recited, not written down, so sound is very important in poetry.

Rhyme - Rhyme means sounds agree. "Rhyme" usually means end rhymes (words at the end of a line). They give balance and please the ear. Sometimes rhymes are exact. Other times they are just similar. Both are okay.

Repetition - Repetition occurs when a word or phrase used more than once. Repetition can create a pattern

Refrain - Lines repeated in the same way, that repeat regularly in the poem.

Alliteration - Alliteration is the repetition of the same sound in different words.

Onomatopoeia - Onomatopoeia means words or phrases that sound like the things they are describing. (hiss, zoom, bow-wow, etc.)

Consonance - Consonance happens when consonants agree in words, though they may not rhyme. (fast, lost)

Assonance - Assonance happens when vowels agree in words, though they may not rhyme. (peach, tree)

Rhythm

Meter (or metrics) - When you speak, you don't say everything in a steady tone like a hum--you'd sound funny. Instead, you **stress** parts of words. You say different parts of words with different volume, and your voice rises and falls as if you were singing a song. Mostly, we don't notice we're doing it. Poetry in English is often made up of poetic units or **feet**. The most common feet are the iamb, the trochee, the anapest, and the dactyl. Each foot has one stress or beat.

Depending on what kind of poem you're writing, each line can have anywhere from one to many stressed beats, otherwise known as feet. Most common are:

Trimeter (three beats)

Tetrameter (four beats)

Pentameter (five beats)

You also sometimes see dimeter (two beats) and hexameter (six beats) but lines longer than that can't be said in one breath, so poets tend to avoid them.

Figures of speech

Figures of speech are also called figurative language. The most well-known figures of speech are simile, metaphor, and personification. They are used to help with the task of "showing, not telling."

Simile - a comparison of one thing to another, using the words "like," "as," "as though," or "than."

Metaphor - comparing one thing to another by saying that one thing is another thing. Metaphors usually make stronger connections than similes, but they are more difficult to identify.

Personification - speaking as if something were human when it's not.

<http://www.dmtturner.org/English/Poetry/elements.htm>

Questions:

1. What type of poem is this? Narrative? Lyric? Descriptive? Dramatic? Special kind?
2. Identify the form in which this poem appears -> ode, elegy etc.
3. Using TPCASTT, review each poem and provide an analytical reading
4. Explain how the poem's form affects your analysis of the poem
5. Are some poetic forms better than others?

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Music to hear, why hear'st thou music sadly?
Sweets with sweets war not, joy delights in joy.
Why lovest thou that which thou receivest not gladly,
Or else receivest with pleasure thine annoy?
If the true concord of well-tuned sounds,
By unions married, do offend thine ear,
They do but sweetly chide thee, who confounds
In singleness the parts that thou shouldst bear.
Mark how one string, sweet husband to another,
Strikes each in each by mutual ordering,
Resembling sire and child and happy mother
Who all in one, one pleasing note do sing:
Whose speechless song, being many, seeming one,
Sings this to thee: 'thou single wilt prove none.'

- William Shakespeare

Notes

Music to hear (1): An address to his dear friend: O you, whom it is music to hear.

Sweets with sweets war not (2): you are sweet, thus you should delight in things that are also sweet.

Why lovest thou...annoy (3-4): why listen to music that you don't appear to love; or do you receive some gratification from your boredom ('annoy')?

concord (5): harmony.

unions (6): harmonious chords. **chide (7):** scold. **confounds (7):** destroys.

In singleness...bear (8): by remaining a childless bachelor, the friend is failing to play his part in the harmony of life, which *is* family.

thou single wilt prove none (14): you will amount to nothing by remaining single. Most editors reference Dowden's annotation noting that the line is an allusion to the common saying "one is no number" (see also Sonnet 136).

Shakespeare, William. *Sonnet 8*. Ed. Amanda Mabillard. Shakespeare Online. 20 Aug. 2000.
(date when you accessed the information) < <http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/8.html>
>.So

134

I find no peace, and have no arms for war,
and fear and hope, and burn and yet I freeze,
and fly to heaven, lying on earth's floor,
and nothing hold, and all the world I seize.

My jailer opens not, nor locks the door,
nor binds me to hear, nor will loose my ties;
Love kills me not, nor breaks the chains I wear,
nor wants me living, nor will grant me ease.

I have no tongue, and shout; eyeless, I see;
I long to perish, and I beg for aid;
I love another, and myself I hate.

Weeping I laugh, I feed on misery,
by death and life so equally dismayed:
for you, my lady, am I in this state.

- Francis Petrarch

Sonnets and background information were taken from *Literature of the Western World*,
Volume One. eds. Brian Wilkie and James Hurt. New York: MacMillan, 1984. 1586-87,
1593-94.

An _____ to Rap

They can't be bothered with grammar or phonics;
ain't nothin' wrong with talkin' ebonics.
They word up a rap, monophonic
to music nowheres near harmonic.
Some play da gangsta, act demonic,
show off a gun and break sardonic.
Their fans won't think that they're moronic
'cuz most of 'em are catatonic.
Most got no talent and it's ironic
that they get rich off their histrionics.

I'm sure the world will never hear
a rap that comes remotely near
to a metered line, crisp and clear,
that holds the English language dear.
A poet elicits a sigh, a tear,
or a thought to cherish and revere.
A lilting verse that brings you cheer
when read aloud to please the ear,
or the little jest that you see here,
a poem is a gift, sincere.

The differences between a rap and a poem?
They're obvious but some don't know 'em.
Rapping is talking with rhyme, not reason,
but words have souls and the poet frees 'em.

John Bushore

_____ Verse

I now delight
In spite
Of the might
And the right
Of classic tradition,
In writing
And reciting
Straight ahead,
Without let or omission,
Just any little rhyme
In any little time
That runs in my head;
Because, I've said,
My rhymes no longer shall
stand arrayed

Like Prussian soldiers on
parade

That march,
Stiff as starch,
Foot to foot,
Boot to boot,
Blade to blade,
Button to button,
Cheeks and chops and
chins like mutton.
No! No!
My rhymes must go
Turn 'ee, twist 'ee,
Twinkling, frosty,
Will-o'-the-wisp-like,
misty;

- Robert Graves

- The Lost Millennium

In a corner of the world

There was a land called Sumer

Whose waters once reached...

The Euphrates valley and the

Syrian desert, its high plateau,

As a result, the mud of two northern
streams

Created a delta, with a pitiless sun

But rich was the soil, as anywhere

On earth...and God created man

And man here made his home:

This was the beginning, diversified

By marshes and reed-beds,

Rivers flush with their banks...

After the Great Flood, retreating

Waters and cultivating took place.

Hence, into Sumer the giants of old

Went, degreed a civilization, among

The dark-haired people...sporadically

Circumstances would promote social
unity.

And there was Susa, Musyan, Elam

And the Persian Gulf--Mesopotamia;

And Queen shub-ad created style, and

Pottery formed, and temples were born.

And kings came and left, like King

Gilgamish; and thus came, gold vases,

And royal graves at UR, and the

Sumerian hymn, and they hummed

To the gods; and the villagers wore

Garments of sheepskins, and molded

Clay figurines, roughly chipped

From crystal, they wore necklaces

Of this kind, and beads;

This was the lost millennium.

They thought somehow or another,

Virtue was a necessity for the gods, thus

Came sacrifices and the daily ritual,

And spells that bind, hoping to remain
engaged

To keep their favor, feast-days came and
went,

Animals killed like flies, barbarism, yet

It drew the gods, and mans moral judgment.

Prompt, the gods exercised their power,

And man then started to build statues

To their likeness,

And now human sacrifice found its way,

With magic from the dismembered angelic beings,

Those who gave birth to giant children, and

So it was, an unusual phenomenon came.

Astrology was born, Sumerians now ruled

The skies; astronomical knowledge came

From the gods, and the gods (angelic beings)

Came from the sky: ecclesiastical beings.

Mesopotamia came under Sumerian rule,

And Ur, Lagash and Nippur honored the

Moon-god, and then came more public works.

And it became the Sacred Way,

And the walls of the Ziggurat [Temples]

Were built, sanctuaries, with an inner court,

And doors decorated, narrow chambers,

The holy of holies, shrines, sacred vessels;

It was an unusual phenomenon...

This day and age...platforms, brickwork, statues

Gods and goddesses, oil-jars; a lost dynasty.

- *Dennis Siluk Ed.D.*

Article Source:

<http://EzineArticles.com/332490>

Dear Mama

When I was young me and my
mama had beef
Seventeen years old kicked out on
the streets
Though back at the time, I never
thought I'd see her face
Ain't a woman alive that could take
my mama's place
Suspended from school; and scared
to go home, I was a fool
with the big boys, breakin all the
rules
I shed tears with my baby sister
Over the years we was poorer than
the other little kids
And even though we had different
daddy's, the same drama
When things went wrong we'd
blame mama
I reminice on the stress I caused, it
was hell
Huggin on my mama from a jail cell
And who'd think in elementary?
Heey! I see the penitentiary, one
day
And runnin from the police, that's
right
Mama catch me, put a whoopin to
my backside
And even as a crack fiend, mama
You always was a black queen,
mama
I finally understand
for a woman it ain't easy tryin to
raise a man
You always was committed
A poor single mother on welfare, tell
me how ya did it
There's no way I can pay you back
But the plan is to show you that I
understand
You are appreciated

*[Chorus: Reggie Green & "Sweet
Franklin" w/ 2Pac]*

Lady...
Don't cha know we love ya? Sweet
lady
Dear mama
Place no one above ya, sweet lady
You are appreciated
Don't cha know we love ya?

*[second and third chorus, "And dear
mama" instead of "Dear mama"]*

[Verse Two: 2Pac]

Now ain't nobody tell us it was fair
No love from my daddy cause the
coward wasn't there
He passed away and I didn't cry,
cause my anger
wouldn't let me feel for a stranger
They say I'm wrong and I'm
heartless, but all along
I was lookin for a father he was
gone
I hung around with the Thugs, and
even though they sold drugs
They showed a young brother love
I moved out and started really
hangin
I needed money of my own so I
started slangin
I ain't guilty cause, even though I
sell rocks
It feels good puttin money in your
mailbox
I love payin rent when the rent's
due
I hope ya got the diamond necklace
that I sent to you
Cause when I was low you was
there for me

And never left me alone because
you cared for me
And I could see you comin home
after work late
You're in the kitchen tryin to fix us a
hot plate
Ya just workin with the scraps you
was given
And mama made miracles every
Thanksgivin
But now the road got rough, you're
alone
You're tryin to raise two bad kids on
your own
And there's no way I can pay you
back
But my plan is to show you that I
understand
You are appreciated

[Chorus]

[Verse Three: 2Pac]

Pour out some liquor and I
reminsce, cause through the drama
I can always depend on my mama
And when it seems that I'm
hopeless
You say the words that can get me
back in focus
When I was sick as a little kid
To keep me happy there's no limit
to the things you did
And all my childhood memories
Are full of all the sweet things you
did for me
And even though I act craazy
I gotta thank the Lord that you
made me
There are no words that can express
how I feel
You never kept a secret, always
stayed real

And I appreciate, how you raised
me
And all the extra love that you gave
me
I wish I could take the pain away
If you can make it through the night
there's a brighter day
Everything will be alright if ya hold
on
It's a struggle everyday, gotta roll
on
And there's no way I can pay you
back
But my plan is to show you that I
understand
You are appreciated

[Chorus]

Sweet lady
And dear mama

Dear mama
Lady *[3X]*

- HAMLET:

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
The heartache, and the thousand
natural shocks
That flesh is heir to. 'Tis a
consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To die, to
sleep--
To sleep--perchance to dream: ay,
there's the rub,
For in that sleep of death what dreams
may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal
coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life.
For who would bear the whips and
scorns of time,
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's
contumely
The pangs of despised love, the law's
delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th' unworthy
takes,
When he himself might his quietus
make

With a bare bodkin? Who would
fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after
death,
The undiscovered country, from whose
bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we
have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of
us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of
thought,
And enterprise of great pitch and
moment
With this regard their currents turn
awry
And lose the name of action. -- Soft
you now,
The fair Ophelia! -- Nymph, in thy
orisons
Be all my sins remembered.

- William Shakespeare "Hamlet 3:1

The things I love with a passion

I rock and roll with passion
I talk out my soul with a passion

I eat good food with passion
I defeat bad mood with a passion

I sleep well with passion
I weep hell with a passion

I dream endlessly with passion
I gleam ceaselessly with a passion

I aim for money with passion
I do the same for honey with a passion

I listen carefully with passion
I glisten dutifully with a passion

I search for fame with passion
I research to blame with a passion

I walk everyday with passion
I talk and play with a passion

I embrace life with passion
I face nightlife with a passion

I laugh out with passion
I chaffe about with a passion

I cook with others with passion
I look at mothers with a passion

I touch gently with passion
I clutch tightly with a passion

I work hard with a passion
I rock mad with a passion

I gear up goals with passion
I stir up roles with a passion

I make friends with passion
I take weekends with a passion

I love kissing with passion
I love teasing with a passion

I make love with passion
I take from above with a passion

If push comes to shove
Label me old fashioned
For these are things I caption
In life with all my passion

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**See no changes wake up in the
morning and I ask myself**

Is life worth living should I blast
myself?
I'm tired of bein' poor & even worse
I'm black
My stomach hurts so I'm lookin' for a
purse to snatch
Cops give a damn about a negro
Pull the trigger kill a ***** he's a hero
Give the crack to the kids who the hell
cares
One less hungry mouth on the welfare
First ship 'em dope & let 'em deal the
brothers
Give 'em guns step back watch 'em
kill each other
It's time to fight back that's what Huey
said
2 shots in the dark now Huey's dead
I got love for my brother but we can
never go nowhere
Unless we share with each other
We gotta start makin' changes
Learn to see me as a brother instead of
2 distant strangers

And that's how it's supposed to be
How can the Devil take a brother if
he's close to me?
I'd love to go back to when we played
as kids
But things changed, and that's the way
it is

I see no changes all I see is racist
faces
Misplaced hate makes disgrace to
races
We under I wonder what it takes to
make this
One better place, let's erase the wasted
Take the evil out the people they'll be
acting right
'cause both black and white is smokin'
crack tonight
And only time we chill is when we
kill each other

It takes skill to be real, time to heal
each other
And although it seems heaven sent
We ain't ready, to see a black
President, uhh
It ain't a secret don't conceal the fact
The penitentiary's packed, and it's
filled with blacks
But some things will never change
Try to show another way but you
stayin' in the dope game
Now tell me what's a mother to do
Bein' real don't appeal to the brother
in you
You gotta operate the easy way
"I made a G today" But you made it in
a sleazy way
Sellin' crack to the kid. " I gotta get
paid,"
Well hey, well that's the way it is

And still I see no changes can't a
brother get a little peace
It's war on the streets & the war in the
Middle East
Instead of war on poverty they got a
war on drugs
So the police can bother me
And I ain't never did a crime I ain't
have to do
But now I'm back with the blacks
givin' it back to you
Don't let 'em jack you up, back you
up,
Crack you up and pimp smack you up
You gotta learn to hold ya own
They get jealous when they see ya
with ya mobile phone
But tell the cops they can't touch this
I don't trust this when they try to rush
I bust this
That's the sound of my tool you say it
ain't cool
My mama didn't raise no fool
And as long as I stay black I gotta stay
strapped

& I never get to lay back
'Cause I always got to worry 'bout the
pay backs
Some buck that I roughed up way
back
Comin' back after all these years
Rat-a-tat-tat-tat-tat that's the way it is
uhh

- Title Unknown – Author unknown