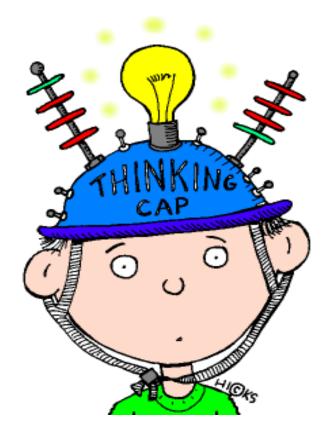
Understanding Poetry

By Mrs. Paula McMullen Library Teacher Norwood Public Schools

What is poetry?

- In poetry the sound and meaning of words are combined to express feelings, thoughts, and ideas.
- The poet chooses words carefully.
- Poetry is usually written in lines.



Poetry Elements

Writers use many elements to create their poems. These elements include:

Rhythm
Sound
Imagery
Form



Rhythm

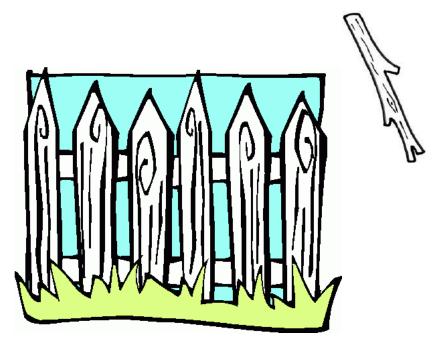
- Rhythm is the flow of the beat in a poem.
- Gives poetry a musical feel.
- Can be fast or slow, depending on mood and subject of poem.
- You can measure rhythm in *meter*, by counting the beats in each line.
- (See next two slides for examples.)



Rhythm Example

The Pickety Fence by David McCord

The pickety fence The pickety fence Give it a lick it's The pickety fence Give it a lick it's A clickety fence Give it a lick it's a lickety fence Give it a lick Give it a lick Give it a lick With a rickety stick pickety pickety pickety pick.



The rhythm in this poem is fast – to match the speed of the stick striking the fence.

Rhythm Example

Where Are You Now?

When the night begins to fall And the sky begins to glow You look up and see the tall City of lights begin to grow – In rows and little golden squares The lights come out. First here, then there Behind the windowpanes as though A million billion bees had built Their golden hives and honeycombs Above you in the air.

By Mary Britton Miller



The rhythm in this poem is slow – to match the night gently falling and the lights slowly coming on.

Sound

Writers love to use interesting sounds in their poems. After all, poems are meant to be heard. These sound devices include:

Rhyme
Repetition
Alliteration
Onomatopoeia



Rhyme

- Rhymes are words that end with the same sound. (*Hat*, *cat* and *bat* rhyme.)
- Rhyming sounds don't have to be spelled the same way. (*Cloud* and *allowed* rhyme.)
- Rhyme is the most common sound device in poetry.



Rhyming Patterns

- Poets can choose from a variety of different rhyming patterns.
- (See next four slides for examples.)

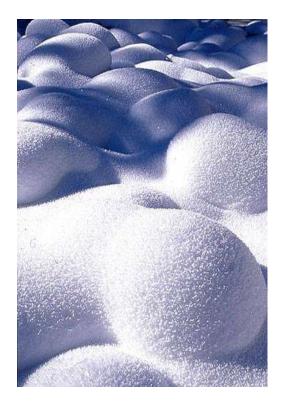
- AABB lines 1 & 2 rhyme and lines 3 & 4 rhyme
- ABAB lines 1 & 3 rhyme and lines 2 & 4 rhyme
- ABBA lines 1 & 4 rhyme and lines 2 & 3 rhyme
- ABCB lines 2 & 4 rhyme and lines 1 & 3 do not rhyme

AABB Rhyming Pattern

First Snow

Snow makes whiteness where it falls. The bushes look like popcorn balls. And places where I always play, Look like somewhere else today.

By Marie Louise Allen



ABAB Rhyming Pattern

Oodles of Noodles

I love noodles. Give me **oodles**. Make a mound up to the **sun**. Noodles are my favorite **foodles**. I eat noodles by the **ton**.

By Lucia and James L. Hymes, Jr.

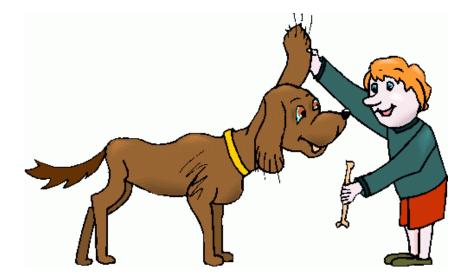


ABBA Rhyming Pattern

From "Bliss"

Let me fetch **sticks**, Let me fetch **stones**, Throw me your **bones**, Teach me your **tricks**.

By Eleanor Farjeon



ABCB Rhyming Pattern

The Alligator

The alligator chased his **tail** Which hit him in the **snout**; He nibbled, gobbled, swallowed **it**, And turned right **inside-out**.

by Mary Macdonald

Repetition

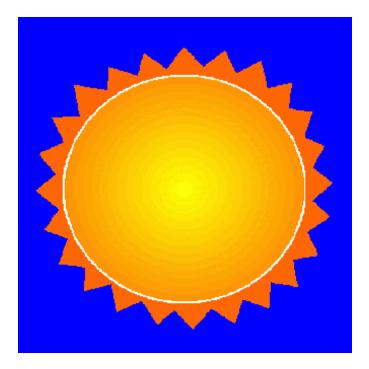
- Repetition occurs when poets repeat words, phrases, or lines in a poem.
- Creates a pattern.
- Increases rhythm.
- Strengthens feelings, ideas and mood in a poem.
- (See next slide for example.)

Repetition Repetition tition

Repetition Example

The Sun

Some one tossed a pancake, A buttery, buttery, pancake. Someone tossed a pancake And flipped it up so high, That now I see the pancake, The buttery, buttery pancake, Now I see that pancake Stuck against the sky.



by Sandra Liatsos

Alliteration

Alliteration is the repetition of the first consonant sound in words, as in the nursery rhyme "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers." (See next slide for example.)



Alliteration Example

This Tooth

I jiggled it jaggled it jerked it.

- I pushed and pulled and poked it. But – As soon as I stopped, And left it alone
- This tooth came out On its very own!

by Lee Bennett Hopkins



Onomatopoeia

- Words that represent the actual sound of something are words of onomatopoeia. Dogs "bark," cats "purr," thunder "booms," rain "drips," and the clock "ticks."
- Appeals to the sense of sound.
- (See next slide for example.)



Onomatopoeia Example

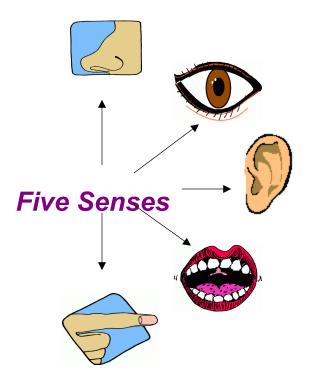
Listen

Scrunch, scrunch, scrunch. Crunch, crunch, crunch. Frozen snow and brittle ice Make a winter sound that's nice Underneath my stamping feet And the cars along the street. Scrunch, scrunch, scrunch. Crunch, crunch, crunch.

by Margaret Hillert

Imagery

Imagery is the use of words to create pictures, or images, in your mind. Appeals to the five senses: smell, sight, hearing, taste and touch. Details about smells, sounds, colors, and taste create strong images. To create vivid images writers use figures of speech.



Figures of Speech

- Figures of speech are tools that writers use to create images, or "paint pictures," in your mind.
- Similes, metaphors, and personification are three figures of speech that create imagery.



Simile

- A simile compares two things using the words "like" or "as."
- Comparing one thing to another creates a vivid image.
- (See next slide for example.)



Simile Example

Flint

An emerald is as green as grass,A ruby red as blood;A sapphire shines as blue as heaven;A flint lies in the mud.

A diamond is a brilliant stone, To catch the world's desire; An opal holds a fiery spark; But a flint holds fire.

By Christina Rosetti



Metaphor

- A metaphor compares two things without using the words "like" or "as."
- Gives the qualities of one thing to something that is quite different.
- (See next slide for example.)



The winter wind is a wolf howling at the door.

Metaphor Example

The Night is a Big Black Cat

The Night is a big black cat The moon is her topaz eye, The stars are the mice she hunts at night, In the field of the sultry sky.



By G. Orr Clark

Personification

- Personification gives human traits and feelings to things that are not human – like animals or objects.
- (See next slide for example.)

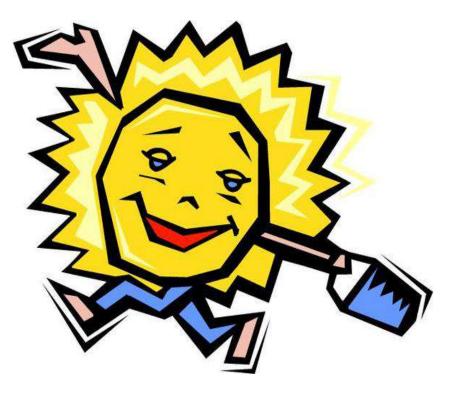


Personification Example

From "Mister Sun"

Mister Sun Wakes up at dawn, Puts his golden Slippers on, Climbs the summer Sky at noon, Trading places With the moon.

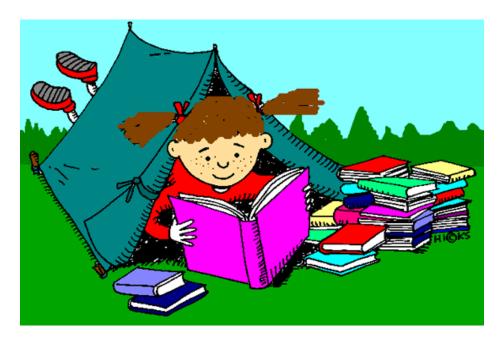
by J. Patrick Lewis



Forms of Poetry

There are many forms of poetry including the:

- Couplet
 - Tercet
- Acrostic
- Cinquain
- Haiku
- Senryu
- Concrete Poem
- Free Verse
- Limerick



Lines and Stanzas

- Most poems are written in lines. –
- A group of lines in a poem is called a stanza.
- Stanzas separate ideas in a poem. They act like paragraphs.
- This poem has two stanzas.

March

- A blue day
- A blue jay
- And a good beginning.

One crow,

Melting snow –

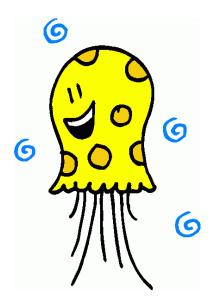
-Spring's winning!

By Eleanor Farjeon

Couplet

A couplet is a poem, or stanza in a poem, written in two lines.

Usually rhymes.



The Jellyfish

Who wants my jellyfish?

I'm not sellyfish!

By Ogden Nash

Tercet

- A tercet is a poem, or stanza, written in three lines.
- Usually rhymes.
- Lines 1 and 2 can rhyme; lines 1 and 3 can rhyme; sometimes all 3 lines rhyme.



Winter Moon

How thin and sharp is the moon tonight! How thin and sharp and ghostly white Is the slim curved crook of the moon tonight! By Langston Hughes

Quatrain

- A quatrain is a poem, or stanza, written in four lines.
- The quatrain is the most common form of stanza used in poetry.
- Usually rhymes.
- Can be written in variety of rhyming patterns.
- (See slide 9 entitled "Rhyming Patterns.")



The Lizard The lizard is a timid thing That cannot dance or fly or sing; He hunts for bugs beneath the floor And longs to be a dinosaur.

By John Gardner

Traditional Cinquain

- A cinquain is a poem written in five lines that do not rhyme.
- Traditional cinquain has five lines containing 22 syllables in the following pattern:
 - Line 1 2 syllables
 - Line 2 4 syllables
 - Line 3 6 syllables
 - Line 4 8 syllables
 - Line 5 2 syllables



Oh, cat are you grinning curled in the window seat as sun warms you this December morning?

Word-Count Cinquain

- Word-count cinquain for younger students uses the following pattern:
- Line 1: One word (title)
- Line 2: Two words (describe the title)
- Line 3: Three words (describe an action)
- Line 4: Four words (describe a feeling)
- Line 5: One word (another word for title)



Owl Swift, ferocious Watches for food Soaring through the night Hunter

Diamante



- A diamante is a sevenline poem written in the shape of a diamond.
- Does not rhyme.
- Follows pattern.
- Can use synonyms or antonyms.
- (See next two slides for examples.)

Diamante Pattern

- Line 1 Your topic (noun)
- Line 2 Two adjectives about
- Line 3 Three "ing" words about

Line 4 – Four nouns or short phrase linking topic (or topics)

Line 5 – Three "ing" words about

- Line 5 Two adjectives about
- Line 7 Your ending topic (noun)

Synonym Diamante

Monsters

Creepy, sinister, Hiding, lurking, stalking, Vampires, mummies, werewolves and more – Chasing, pouncing eating, Hungry, scary, Creatures



Antonym Diamante

Day

Bright, sunny, Laughing, playing, doing, Up in the east, down in the west – Talking, resting, sleeping, Quiet, dark, Night



Haiku

- A haiku is a Japanese poem with 3 lines of 5, 7, and 5 syllables. (Total of 17 syllables.)
- Does not rhyme.
- Is about an aspect of nature or the seasons.
- Captures a moment in time.



Little frog among rain-shaken leaves, are you, too, splashed with fresh, green paint? by Gaki

Senryu

- A senryu follows same pattern as haiku.
- Written in 3 unrhymed lines of 5, 7, and 5 syllables, with total of 17 syllables.
- Is about human nature, rather than natural world.



First day, new school year, backpack harbors a fossil... last June's cheese sandwich.

By Cristine O'Connell George

Concrete Poem

- A concrete poem (also called shape poem) is written in the shape of its subject.
- The way the words are arranged is as important what they mean.
- Does not have to rhyme.



Free Verse

- A free verse poem does not use rhyme or patterns.
- Can vary freely in length of lines, stanzas, and subject.

Revenge

When I find out who took the last cooky

out of the jar and left me a bunch of

stale old messy crumbs, I'm going to take

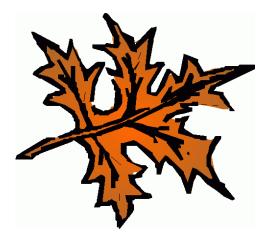
me a handful and crumb up someone's bed.

By Myra Cohn Livingston



Acrostic

- In an acrostic poem the first letter of each line, read down the page, spells the subject of the poem.
- Type of free verse poem.
- Does not usually rhyme.



Loose brown parachute Escaping And Floating on puffs of air. by Paul Paolilli

Limerick

- A limerick is a funny poem of 5 lines.
- Lines 1, 2 & 5 rhyme.
- Lines 3 & 4 are shorter and rhyme.
- Line 5 refers to line 1.
- Limericks are a kind of nonsense poem.



There Seems to Be a Problem

I really don't know about Jim. When he comes to our farm for a swim, The fish as a rule, jump out of the pool. Is there something the matter with him? By John Ciardi

Nonsense Poems

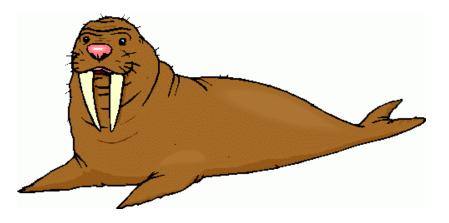
- A nonsense poem is a humorous poem with silly characters and actions. It is meant to be fun.
- Can be written as a limerick or as another form of poetry.



A Princess Laments I kissed a frog because I'd heard That it would turn into a prince. That's not exactly what occurred, And I've been croaking ever since. by Jack Prelutsky

Word Play

Some poets use a special kind of word play by making up words or misspelling them on purpose.



The Walrus The pounding spatter Of salty sea Makes the walrus Walrusty. By Douglas Florian

Voice



"Voice" is the speaker in a poem. The speaker can be the poet himself or a character he created in the poem. There can be one speaker or many speakers.

- Poet as speaker (slides 47-49)
- Human character in poem as speaker (slide 50)
- Object or animal as speaker (slides 51-52)
- More than one speaker (slides 53-54)

Voice: Poet as Speaker

The Wind

Who has seen the wind?Neither I nor you:But when the leaves hang trembling The wind is passing thro'.

Who has seen the wind? Neither you nor I: But when the trees bow down their heads, The wind is passing by.

by Christina Rosetti



In this poem, the poet speaks of her feelings about the power of the wind.

Voice: Poet as Speaker

The Sugar Lady

There is an old lady who lives down the hall, Wrinkled and gray and toothless and small. At seven already she's up, Going from door to door with a cup. "Do you have any sugar?" she asks, Although she's got more than you. "Do you have any sugar?" she asks, Hoping you'll talk for a minute or two.

by Frank Asch



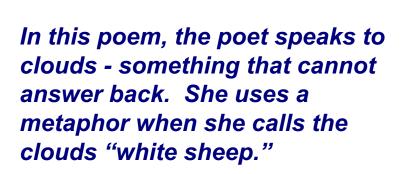
In this poem, the poet tells a story about a lonely old woman hoping to talk.

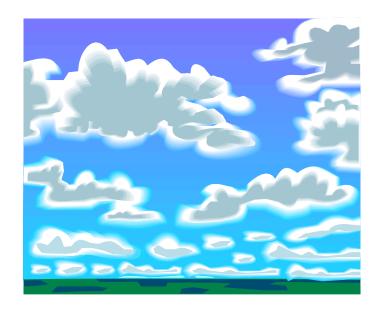
Voice: Poet as Speaker

Clouds

White sheep, white sheep, On a blue hill, When the wind stops You all stand still. When the wind blows You walk away slow. White sheet, white sheep, Where do you go?

by Christina Rosetti





Voice: Human Character as Speaker

For Keeps

We had a tug of war today Old March Wind and I. He tried to steal my new red kite That Daddy helped me fly. He huffed and puffed. I pulled so hard And held that string so tight Old March Wind gave up at last And let me keep my kite.

by Jean Conder Soule



In this poem, the voice is that of a child flying a kite on a windy day. The child is the character in the poem.

Voice: Object as Speaker

Crayon Dance

The cardboard ceiling lifts *Pickmepickmepickme*, I pray The fingers do! They choose *me*, Sky Blue! Hurrah! Hooray!

by April Halprin Wayland





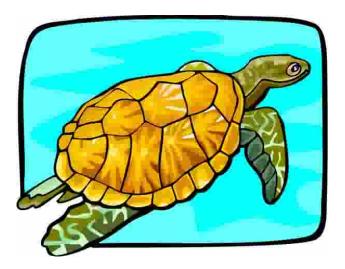
In this poem, the voice is that of a blue crayon, happy to be picked by the artist. The crayon is the character in the poem.

Voice: Animal as Speaker

Turtle in July

Heavy Heavy hot Heavy hot hangs Thick sticky Icky But I lie Nose high Cool pool No fool A turtle in July

by Marilyn Singer



In this poem, the voice is that of a turtle keeping cool on a hot July day. The turtle is the character in the poem.

Voice: Two Speakers

I Talk With the Moon

I talk with the moon, said the owl While she lingers over my tree I talk with the moon, said the owl And the night belongs to me.

I talk with the sun said the wren As soon as he starts to shine I talk with the sun, said the wren And the day is mine.

By Beverly McLoughland



There are two voices in this poem. In the first stanza the voice is that of the night-time owl. In the second stanza the voice is that of the day-time wren.

Voice: Multiple Speakers

Monster Mothers By Florence Parry Heide

When monster mothers get together They brag about their babies. The other day I heard one say, "He's got his very first fang today!"

"Mine is ugly." "Mine is mean." "Mine is turning nice and green." *"Mine's as scaly as a fish." "Mine is sort of yellowish."*

"Mine breathes fire and smoke and such." "Mine has skin you'd hate to touch."





In this poem, there are many voices. The speakers are the monster mothers describing their babies.

Author's Purpose



The poet has an "author's purpose" when he writes a poem. The purpose can be to:

- Share feelings (joy, sadness, anger, fear, loneliness)
- Tell a story
- Send a message (theme something to think about)
- Be humorous
- Provide description* (e.g., person, object, concept)

*Although description is important in all poems, the focus of some poems is the description itself rather than feelings, story-telling, message, or humor.

Author's Purpose: Share Feelings

When I Was Lost

Underneath my belt My stomach was a stone. Sinking was the way I felt. And hollow. And alone.

By Dorothy Aldis



The author's purpose is to share her feelings about being lost and scared.

Author's Purpose: Tell Story

Jimmy Jet By Shel Silverstein

I'll tell you the story of Jimmy Jet – And you know what I tell you is true. He loved to watch his TV set Almost as much as you.

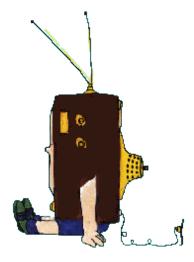
He watched all day,he watched all night Till he grew pale and lean, From "The Early Show" to "The Late Late Show" And all the shows between.

He watched till his eyes were frozen wide, And his bottom grew into his chair. And his chin turned into a tuning dial, And antennae grew out of his hair.

The author's purpose is to tell the story of a boy who watched too much television.

And his brains turned into TV tubes, And his face to a TV screen. And two knobs saying "VERT." and "HORIZ." Grew where his ears had been.

And he grew a plug that looked like a tail So we plugged in little Jim. And now instead of him watching TV We all sit around and watch him.



Author's Purpose: Send Message

Share the Adventure

Pages and pages A seesaw of ideas – Share the adventure

Fiction, nonfiction: Door to our past and future Swinging back and forth

WHAM! The book slams shut, But we read it together With our minds open

by Patricia and Frederick McKissack



The author's purpose is to send a serious message.

The message, or theme, is that reading is an adventure that can be shared.

Author's Purpose: Be Humorous

Insides

I'm very grateful to my skin For keeping all my insides in – I do so hate to think about What I would look like inside-out.

By Colin West



The author's purpose is to write a humorous poem about the purpose of skin.

Me by Karla Kuskin

"My nose is blue, My teeth are green, My face is like a soup tureen. I look just like a lima bean. I'm very, very lovely. My feet are far too short And long. My hands are left and right And wrong. My voice is like the hippo's song. I'm very, very, Very, very, Very, very Lovely?"



The author's purpose is to describe a strange-looking person.

Vacuum Cleaner

Roars over carpet *zig-zag-zips* sucking up fuzz through metal lips.

By Dee Lillegard



The author's purpose is to describe an object – a vacuum cleaner.

Beetles

Emerald, ruby, turquoise blue, Beatles come in every hue: Beetles that pinch or sting or bite, Tiger beetles that claw and fight, Beetles whose burnished armor gleams, Whirligig beetles that dance on streams, Antlered beetles in staglike poses, Beetles that smell – and not like roses, Others that click like castanets. That dig or swim or zoom like jets, Hard as coffee beans, brown as leather, Or shimmering bright as a peacock feather!



The author's purpose is to describe a variety of beetles.

By Ethel Jacobson

Understanding

Sun And rain And wind And storms And thunder go together.

There has to be a bit of each To make the weather.

By Myra Cohn Livingston



The author's purpose is to describe a concept – weather.

Mood

- Mood is the atmosphere, or emotion, in the poem created by the poet.
- Can be happy, angry, silly, sad, excited, fearful or thoughtful.
- Poet uses words and images to create mood.
- Author's purpose helps determine mood.
- (See slides 65-72 for examples.)



Mood - Barefoot Days

Barefoot Days by Rachel Field

In the morning, very early, That's the time I love to go Barefoot where the fern grows curly And grass is cool between each toe, On a summer morning-O! On a summer morning!

That is when the birds go by Up the sunny slopes of air, And each rose has a butterfly Or a golden bee to wear; And I am glad in every toe – Such a summer morning-O! Such a summer morning!



The mood in this poem is happy. What clues in the poem can you use to determine the mood?

Mood - Mad Song

Mad Song

I shut my door To keep you out Won't do no good To stand and shout Won't listen to A thing you say Just time you took Yourself away I lock my door To keep me here Until I'm sure You disappear.

By Myra Cohn Livingston



The mood in this poem is angry. What clues in the poem can you use to determine the mood?

Mood - Poem

Poem

I loved my friend. He went away from me. There's nothing more to say. The poem ends, Soft as it began – I loved my friend:

By Langston Hughes



The mood in this poem is sad. What clues in the poem can you use to determine the mood?

Mood - Something is There

Something is There

Something is there there on the stair coming down coming down stepping with care. Coming down coming down slinkety-sly.

Something is coming and wants to get by.

By Lilian Moore



The mood in this poem is fearful. What clues in the poem can you use to determine the mood?

Mood - Joyful

Joyful

A summer day is full of ease, a bank is full of money, our lilac bush is full of bees, And I am full of honey.

By Rose Burgunder





The mood in this poem is happy. What clues in the poem can you use to determine the mood?

Mood - Foghorns

Foghorns

The foghorns moaned in the bay last night so sad so deep I thought I heard the city crying in its sleep.

By Lilian Moore



The mood in this poem is sad. What clues in the poem can you use to determine the mood?

Mood - Magic Landscape

Magic Landscape

Shall I draw a magic landscape? In the genius of my fingers I hold the seeds. Can I grow a painting like a flower?

Can I sculpture a future without weeds?

By Joyce Carol Thomas



The mood in this poem is thoughtful. What clues in the poem can you use to determine the mood?

Mood - Higglety, Pigglety, Pop

Higglety, Pigglety, Pop!

Higglety, Pigglety, Pop! The dog has eaten the mop; The pig's in a hurry, The cat's in a flurry, Higglety, Pigglety, Pop!

By Samuel Goodrich



The mood in this poem is silly. What clues in the poem can you use to determine the mood?

Reading for Meaning



To find meaning in a poem, readers ask questions as they read. There are many things to pay attention to when reading a poem:

Title – Provides clues about – topic, mood, speaker, author's purpose?
Rhythm – Fast or slow? Why?
Sound Devices – What effects do they have?
Imagery – What pictures do we make in our minds?
Figures of Speech – What do they tell us about the subject?
Voice – Who is speaking - poet or character; one voice or more?
Author's Purpose – Sending message, sharing feelings, telling story, being funny, being descriptive?
Mood – Happy, sad, angry, thoughtful, silly, excited, frightened?
Plot – What is happening in the poem?

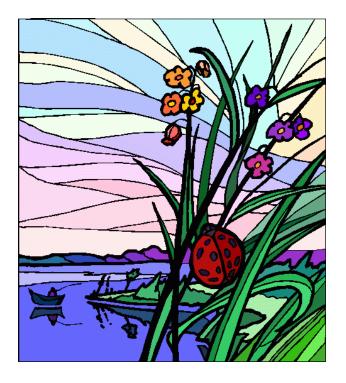
Remember, to make meaning, readers must make connections and tap into their background knowledge and prior experiences as they read.

What is poetry?

Poetry

What is poetry? Who knows? Not a rose, but the scent of a rose; Not the sky, but the light in the sky; Not the fly, but the gleam of the fly; Not the sea, but the sound of the sea; Not myself, but what makes me See, hear, and feel something that prose Cannot: and what it is, who knows?

By Eleanor Farjeon



Mass. Frameworks Poets

Click on the following link to access poems written by poets suggested in the Massachusetts English Language Arts Curriculum Frameworks (Grades 3-5).

Poetry Frameworks - Poets

Poets include: Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benet, Lewis Caroll, John Ciardi, Rachel Field, Robert Frost, Langston Hughes, Edward Lear, Myra Cohn Livingston, David McCord, A. A. Milne, Ogden Nash, Laura Richards, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow for Grade 5.



Resources for Teaching Poetry

Click on the following link to find suggested resources for teaching poetry.

Poetry Resources



Acknowledgements

Books:

- **Cobwebs, Chatters, and Chills: A Collection of Scary Poems**. Compiled and annotated by Patricia M. Stockland. Minneapolis, MS: Compass Point Books, 2004.
- **Dirty Laundry Pile: Poems in Different Voices**. Selected by Paul B. Janeczko. New York: HarperCollins, 2001.
- Easy Poetry Lessons that Dazzle and Delight. Harrison, David L. NY: Scholastic Professional Books, 1999.
- Favorite Poems: Old and New. Selected by Helen Ferris. NY: Doubleday. 1957.
- A Kick in the Head: An Everyday Guide to Poetic Forms. Selected by Paul B. Janeczko. Boston, MA: Candlewick Press, 2005.
- Knock at a Star: A Child's Introduction to Poetry. Kennedy, X. J. and Kennedy, Dorothy M. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1999.
- Pass the Poetry, Please. Hopkins, Lee Benett. New York: Harper Collins, 1998.
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- Poetry Place Anthology: More Than 600 Poems for All Occasions. NY: Scholastic Professional Books, 1983.

Acknowledgements

Books (Continued):

Random House Book of Poetry: A Treasury of 572 Poems for Today's Child. Selected by Jack Prelutsky. NY: Random House, 1983.

- Recess, Rhyme, and Reason: A Collection of Poems About School. Compiled and annotated by Patricia M. Stockland. Minneapolis, MS: Compass Point Books, 2004.
- Teaching 10 Fabulous Forms of Poetry: Great Lessons, Brainstorming Sheets, and Organizers for Writing Haiku, Limericks, Cinquains, and Other Kinds of Poetry Kids Love. Janeczko, Paul B. NY: Scholastic Professional Books, 2000.
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- The Twentieth Century Children's Poetry Treasury. Selected by Jack Prelutsky. NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999.
- Weather: Poems. Selected by Lee Bennett Hopkins. NY: HarperCollins, 1994.

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Acknowledgements

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