ReadBox Project
-Daily Poetry-

Chances are you have probably read a poem or two in school. Perhaps you even had to memorise a poem at some point or even had to write a poem yourself.

But what exactly is poetry ? Poetry refers to literary works written in verse. A poet pays attention to structure, tone, form and choice of words. All of these things together create the effect the poet is trying to achieve.

Poetry serves many purposes. It can be entertaining and moving; it can communicate; it can produce an emotional response in the reader and create an experience. If a poet follows a specific structure of writing a poem – with rhymes and meters (the poem's rhythm structure), it is considered to be a great poem. The beauty of these literary works is that they may have different meanings, depending on the readers' understanding. Poetry should make contact with every part of you. You should think of poetry as a creative form of expression. A poet, like an artist, has many tools for crafting a poem - each having a different effect on how the poem sounds, feels, looks and is read.

Types of Poetry

Poetry can be divided into several genres. To understand what poetry is all about, it is helpful to group poems based on some common characteristics.

Narrative poetry is poetry that tells a story. Just like a literary narrative, there's a plot or some sort of action taking place. One popular type of narrative poetry is **epic poetry**. An epic poem is a long narrative poem that usually follows the life and adventures of a hero.

Lyric poetry doesn't necessarily tell a story, have a plot, or follow a logical progression. It is more about using elements like rhyme and rhythm to create an overall effect or feeling. A good way to remember this is to think of lyrics in music, because at times, lyric poetry is set to music.

Another genre is **dramatic poetry** which is written with the intention of being performed.

Sound effects in Poetry

Poets have many tools that they can use to create their poems. The one you might be most familiar with is the effect of sound. When words are spoken aloud, they have lots of great sound qualities that poets can incorporate into their poems.

The most recognisable sound effect used in poems is **rhyme.** When two words rhyme, they have a similar ending sound. Poetry also makes use of **near rhymes** (or slant rhymes), which are words that almost rhyme, but not quite -- such as "bear" and "far."

Other sound effects make use of repeating letters or combinations of letters. **Consonance** is repeating the same consonants in words that are near each other. The statement "**m**u**mm**y's **m**o**mm**y was no co**mm**on du**mm**y" is an example of consonance because the letter **m** is repeated. If the repeated letters appear only at the beginning of the words, this is known as **alliteration.** For example, "the **b**ig **b**rown **b**ear **b**it into a **b**lueberry" is an example of alliteration because several words close together begin with the letter **b**.
If the letters or sounds that are repeated are vowels instead of consonants -- as in **"**I m**i**ght l**i**ke to f**i**ght n**i**ne p**i**rates at a t**i**me" -- it is known as **assonance.** Assonance can be pretty subtle sometimes, and more difficult to identify than consonance or alliteration.
Sometimes a poet might want to make you imagine you're hearing something. This is part of a concept called **auditory imagery,** or giving an impression of how something sounds**.** One common way to create auditory imagery is through the use of **onomatopoeia**. Think about words that describe a sound -- words like buzz, clap or meow. When you say them aloud, they kind of sound like what they are describing. For example, the "zz" in the word buzz kind of sounds like the noise a bee makes.
There are many other types of sound effects that a poet can use, but these are just a few of the most common ones.

(source: *http://entertainment.howstuffworks.com/arts/literature/poetry1.htm*)

Structural Effects -- Poetic Meter

Another tool poets have is structure. Even though not all poems follow a structure, many poems do.

When you write an essay or a story, you probably structure your text in paragraphs. Poems can be broken into paragraphs, too -- these are called **stanzas.**

In addition, in most prose, when your text reaches the end of a line, it just continues on to the next line. In poetry, however, the breaking of text from line to line is usually planned. Sometimes a poet might choose to break a sentence in the middle of a line -- this is called **enjambment**, for example:

Sometimes poets put a whole sentence on one line.
Sometimes they choose to break a sentence
In the middle. Either way is fine.

In the short poem above, the second sentence is broken between the second and third lines. If you look at the third line in the poem, you'll also see that there is a period in the middle of the line. This is known as a **caesura,** or a pause in the middle of a line. Another way to add structure to a poem is with a **rhyme scheme,** or a pattern in how the lines of a poem rhyme. In the poem above, the first line rhymes with the third line, so it has a rhyme scheme of a-b-a. If the second line rhymed with the third line instead, the rhyme scheme would be a-b-b.

Structure can even be found within each line of a poem. **Meter** is the poem's rhythm structure, and it is usually established by having a certain pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in the words on each line. A **stressed syllable** is a syllable that, when spoken aloud, may sound louder, have a longer duration or be higher in pitch than another syllable. An **unstressed syllable**, on the other hand, might sound softer, have a shorter length or be lower in pitch. You might also notice that the stressed and unstressed syllables alternate in a regular pattern. This creates a rhythm.

In poetry, a **foot**, the basic unit of rhythm, is made up of a set number of stressed and unstressed syllables. There are many types of feet that are made up of different combinations of stressed and unstressed syllables.

(source: *http://entertainment.howstuffworks.com/arts/literature/poetry1.htm*)
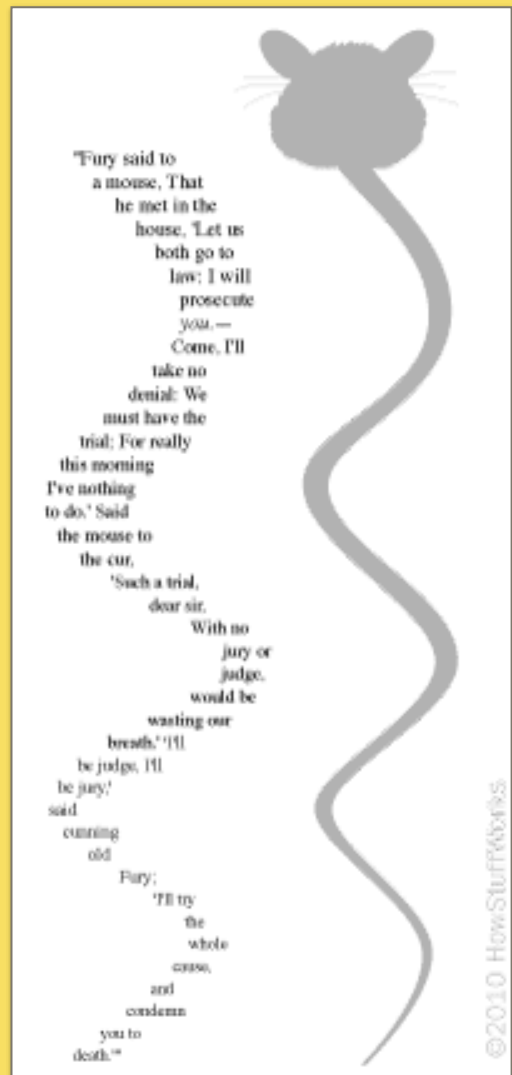
Visual Effects in Poetry

Just as poets can use sound techniques like onomatopoeia to create auditory imagery, they can also enlist visual techniques to help create **visual imagery,** or the sense of how something looks. Most of the time, this is done with descriptive language that gives you a mental image of something, but another clever way that poets can create visual imagery is with visual effects, such as altering the poem's physical shape or placement on the page, or adding illustrations.

Word placement, line placement, line breaks -- these all can affect the visual imagery or even the meaning of the poem. One interesting example of this is **concrete poetry**, or shape poetry, where the words or lines of the poem actually make a picture or visually reflect what the poem is about. In concrete poetry, the words are arranged so that when you look at it as a whole, you can see an image formed by the placement of the poem's parts.

A famous example of concrete poetry comes from Lewis Carroll's "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland." In the story, a mouse tells Alice his "long and sad tale," which in the book itself is written as a shape poem. The words in the poem are placed so that the poem looks to be in the shape of a mouse's tail.

Other structural elements might be a bit more subtle. **Acrostics**, for example, are poems with hidden messages. In a basic acrostic, the first letters of each line might together spell out a word or a phrase. Acrostics that are more complicated might make the hidden message difficult to find by putting the essential letters elsewhere.

Other ways poems can make use of visual elements are by using fancy lettering, like calligraphy, or by including pictures on the page with the poem. Sometimes, the illustration enhances the meaning of the poem.

(source: *http://entertainment.howstuffworks.com/arts/literature/poetry1.htm*)

Literary Effects in Poetry (Poetic Devices)

Since poetry is, essentially, a form of creative writing, it uses some of the same tools found in other types of literature. Do you remember all of those "literary devices" from English class -- foreshadowing, irony, allegory, personification and so on? Well, those can all be used in poetry as well. Each can be used by the poet to change the content and meaning of the poem.

One of the most popular literary devices used in many poems is **symbolism**, or when one thing is used to represent another. For example, Robert Frost's famous poem "The Road Not Taken" describes two different paths in the woods. While the poem makes sense if it's read literally, the roads he writes about are actually symbols for something else -- they represent the different choices you make in life.

Metaphors and similes also compare one thing to another thing, and can add a deeper layer of meaning to a poem. A **simile** compares two things using the words "like" or "as." For example, the phrase "a poem is like a beautiful painting" is a simile that compares a poem to a beautiful painting.

A **metaphor** compares things by saying something is something else. For example, "a poem is a blooming flower." Sometimes, however, a metaphor doesn't explicitly tell you what it's comparing. For example, "The Road Not Taken" never actually says that the roads represent choices you make in life. Because of this, metaphors can be interpreted in many different ways, and sometimes people can even perceive a metaphor in a poem when there really isn't one.

Some other common literary devices used in poetry include irony, puns, analogies, oxymorons, and many others. These are by no means the only literary devices that can be used in poems. In fact, when it comes to writing poetry, the sky's the limit on what you can use.

As you can see, there are plenty of tools a poet can use when writing a poem. Sometimes the devices a poet applies to a poem produce such a fantastic effect that the poet, or even other people, want to copy the style it's written in. As a result, there are a bunch of poetic traditions that poets over the centuries have used repeatedly. Find out more about these on the next page.

Poetry Terms and Poetic Traditions

With all of the different tools that poets can use to construct a poem, it's not surprising that poets sometimes like to recreate the structures and themes of other poems.
There are many existing structures and themes to choose from. These structures have rules, such as the number of lines in the poem, the type of meter that is used, the rhyme scheme needed or the subject of the poem. Some of the most popular include:

- A **sonnet** is fourteen lines long and has a specific rhyme scheme.

- A **ballad** is usually written in stanzas of four lines each and has a meter that alternates between iambic tetrameter (four feet) and iambic trimeter (three feet).

- A **haiku** is structured based on the number of syllables in each line. A traditional haiku is three lines long, has five syllables in the first line, seven syllables in the second line and five syllables in the third line.

- A **sestina** is unusual because instead of a rhyme scheme, it repeats words. It's broken up into several stanzas, each with six lines. The six words that end each line in the first stanza are then repeated as end-words in every other stanza in a prescribed order.

- A **villanelle** is made up of only two end-rhyme sounds that are repeated throughout the poem. To make things more complicated, the first and third lines of the poem are repeated in a specific pattern all through the poem.

- An **ode** is a poem written to celebrate a person or thing.

- An **elegy** is written for or about someone who has died.

- An **epigram**, is a poem that is meant to be funny or satirical.

- An **aubade** is a poem about the arrival of the morning. It's usually a love poem expressing disappointment that an evening rendezvous has ended. ,

- An **epistle** is typically a poem addressed to someone the poet is close to, though many are written as open letters to people the poet may or may not know.

Of course, there are many other poetic structures and forms that a poet can follow, if he or she chooses, but these are just a few.

(source: *http://entertainment.howstuffworks.com/arts/literature/poetry1.htm*)

Before getting started

Remember that your poem needs to be approved by your teacher before you can use it for your ReadBox project, so please check beforehand that the poem doesn't have inappropriate language or inappropriate content. If you are not certain, ask your teacher. Also make sure that your that the poem is suitable for you.

Procedure

1   First of all you have to find your favourite poem of at least 10 lines. (see ReadBox Introduction for hyperlinks). Make sure that the poem that you choose has to have a deep meaning. Select a poem that appeals to you.

2   Log onto your Edmodo ReadBox folder, make a new folder and name it: ReadBox Daily Poetry. Upload the poem onto your Edmodo ReadBox folder). If you cannot upload it, make sure that you insert a hyperlink.

3   After that, fill in the title of the poem, poet (=author), year of publication on the next page.

4   The next step is to read the poem silently as many times as you need so you don't stumble on any words. While reading, consider the meaning, language, rhythm, and other features of the poem; Think about the narrator (verteller) and characters. Pay attention to the punctuation. Find out the meaning of any words you don't know. (Use your Vocabulary Notebook/ Notes Appendix) Pay attention to the line breaks and meaning and group words accordingly. Decide where you need voice changes. (louder, softer etc.)

5   Read the poem aloud to someone until it sounds perfect. Convey the meaning of the poem with your voice. Discuss the poem with your 'partner'.

READBOX   **Daily Poetry**

Name student & class   _____

Title of the poem   _____

Book   _____

Author   _____

Year of publication   _____

1   What does the poem say to you ?

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2   What is the tone or mood of this poem (Is it serious, sad or funny) ?

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3   How does the poem make you feel ? Write down some key words to support your

          answer.

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4   What does the poem make you think about ? Does it remind you of anything in your life ?

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5   What do you think the poet was thinking when he/ she wrote this poem ?

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6   What is the poet trying to get across ? What might be the message intended by the poet ?

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7   What kind of _poetic devices_ does the poet use to communicate his/ her message/ feelings ?

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8   What is the theme of the poem ?

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9   Who is the speaker in the poem ?

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10   What kind of poem is it ?

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11   Please express your own reflections and interpretations about the poem that you
(still) have. Which part did you like best ?; Were there any words of phrases that
you especially liked?

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12   What can you take from the poem and use in your own follow-up activity ?

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Follow-up activity

Now that you have uncovered the layers of meaning that lead to comprehension of the poem, it is time for your follow-up activity. Begin by examining your reactions and impressions from the previous pages.

You can choose from the following activities:

☐   **Make a storyboard / video cast** (Use *Storybird* or Inkle (They are online tools). Don't forget to upload it onto your Edmodo ReadBox folder.)

☐   **Use the poem as a writing prompt.**

Write a *short story* based on your understanding of the poem. Now you can create interesting characters, surprising plot twists, and as much description as you want. Make sure your story has an introduction, a body and a conclusion. Pay attention to the use of vocabulary, grammatical structure, punctuation and the flow of the story. *(About 350- 500 words* - check it with your teacher before handing it in.*)*

☐   **Create your own Visual Poetry/ Calligram** *(Between 100 - 150 words)*

Poets can use visual techniques to help create visual imagery, or the sense of how something looks. Most of the time, this is done with descriptive language that gives you a mental image of something, but another clever way that poets can create visual imagery is with visual effects, such as changing the poem's physical shape or placement on the page, or adding illustrations. Word placement, line placement, line breaks - these all can affect the visual imagery or even the meaning of the poem.

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Some ideas...

•   You could write a letter to a character in the poem, write about what happened before the beginning or after the ending of the poem.

•   You could use the poem as a starting point and model for some parallel writing. Contribute a verse or two to the poem.

•   You could write an agony aunt column (advice blog) based on the original text from a poem.

•   If you're stuck, you could use magnetic poetry (the kind that you put on your refrigerator and use to make messages with). It can be a tool for generating story ideas.

Please fill in the details below:

I am aware that this project is due no later than: _____.

I will upload my digital Daily Poetry to my personal Edmodo ReadBox folder no later than _____ and I will save a copy in my personal portfolio as well.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____