

Poetry Reference Tables

POETIC CONSTANTS

Types of Rhyme

End	At End of Line
Feminine	Multiple syllable Rhyme
Internal	Rhymes inside the lines
Masculine	Last Syllable Rhyme
Sight	Visual rhyme (<i>Have and Shave</i>)
Slant (near)	Like <i>Bank</i> and <i>Take</i>

Line – A single linear string of words in a poem

Specific Lines of Common Form Poems

Haiku	3
Limerick	5
Nonet	9
Sonnet	14
Tanka	7

Stanza – a group of lines of poetry

POETIC LANGUAGE THAT CONTRIBUTES TO POETIC SOUND AND QUALITY

- **Alliteration** - Initial consonant sound repeating in proximity (*Lettuce Leaf*)
- **Allusion** - Reference to a known person, place, thing, or character (*Thor's hammer*)
- **Assonance** - Repetition of vowel sounds (*Juicy moose*)
- **Cacophony** – short, sudden sounds (*my pop cap tapped...*)
- **Consonance** - Repetition of consonant sound not first letter (*Daddy's Fiddle*)
- **Echoing** - Repetition of words or phrases throughout the poem
- **Euphony** – harmonious sound - opposite of cacophony ; pleasant spoken sound that is created by smooth consonants (*restless princess ruffled her dress*)
- **Imagery** - Appeals to the senses (*sight, sound, taste, touch, smell*)
- **Metaphor** - a direct comparison that adds meaning (*your brother is a little devil*)
- **Onomatopoeia** - duplicates a sound with a word or expression (**SLAM!**)
- **Personification** - Human traits to non-human objects/animals (*the toaster waited hungrily*)
- **Refrain** - A repeated portion of a poem, usually at the ends of stanzas
- **Repetition** - Repeating sounds or words
- **Rhyme** - Similarity or match of end sound (*ghost, most*)
- **Rhyme scheme** - Analysis of end rhyme using ABABCD, etc.
- **Simile** - Comparison using like/as (*She had a face like a stony wall*)
- **Voice** - Unique human personality conveyed by writing-comes from diction, syntax, figurative language

RHYME GUIDE:

A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
J
K
L
M
N
O
P
Q
R
S
T
U
V
W
X
Y
Z

SOME FORMS OF POETRY:

- Abecedarian
- Acrostic
- Anaphora
- Ballad
- Blues Poem
- Bop
- Cento
- Cinquain
- Clerihew
- Concrete Poem
- Diamante
- Didactic
- Elegy
- Epic
- Epigram
- Epitaph
- Etheree
- Fable
- Free Verse
- Ghazal
- Haiku
- Kyrielle
- Kyrielle Sonnet
- Lanturne
- Limerick
- Minute Poetry
- Mirrored Refrain
- Monody
- Monorhyme
- Naani
- Nonet
- Ode
- Ottava Rima
- Palindrome
- Pantoum
- Quatern
- Quatrain
- Quinzaine
- Rispetto
- Rondeau
- Rondel
- Rondelet
- Sapphic
- Sedoka
- Senryu
- Septolet
- Sestina
- Shape Poetry
- Song
- Sonnet
- Tanka
- Terza Rima
- Terzanelle
- Tetractys
- Tongue twister
- Triolet
- Tyburn
- Villanelle

Poetic era timeline: these are the main eras of western poetry

1250-800 BC Homer creates The Iliad and The Odyssey

600-550 BC Greek Poet Sappho (female poet)

350 BC – Aristotle’s Poetics



Old English 449-1066

Middle English 1066-1485

Early Modern English 1485-1800:

Renaissance 1485-1603



17th Century 1603-1667

Augustan 1667-1780



Romantic 1780-1830

Victorian 1833-1903

Georgian 1903-1920

Modern 1920-1960

The Beat Generation 1950-1970

The Movement 1960-1980

Postmodern 1980- present

“A poem
should not
mean,
but be”

-Archibald MacLeish

STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS OF POETRY

Robert Frost

Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening → Title – adds meaning and mystery or focuses the poem

Whose woods these are I think I know. → Line – a single linear line of words, not always a sentence
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year. } → Stanza – a group of lines of poetry in a poem

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

Consider the number of stanzas. This poem has four quatrains.

Consider the rhyme scheme: how does it impact the poem's sound?

Consider the meter: Is it consistent? What is the meter of this poem?

Stanzas – “paragraph” of poetry

POEMS THAT ARE REGULARLY DIVIDED INTO STANZAS ARE REFERRED TO AS “STANZAIC”

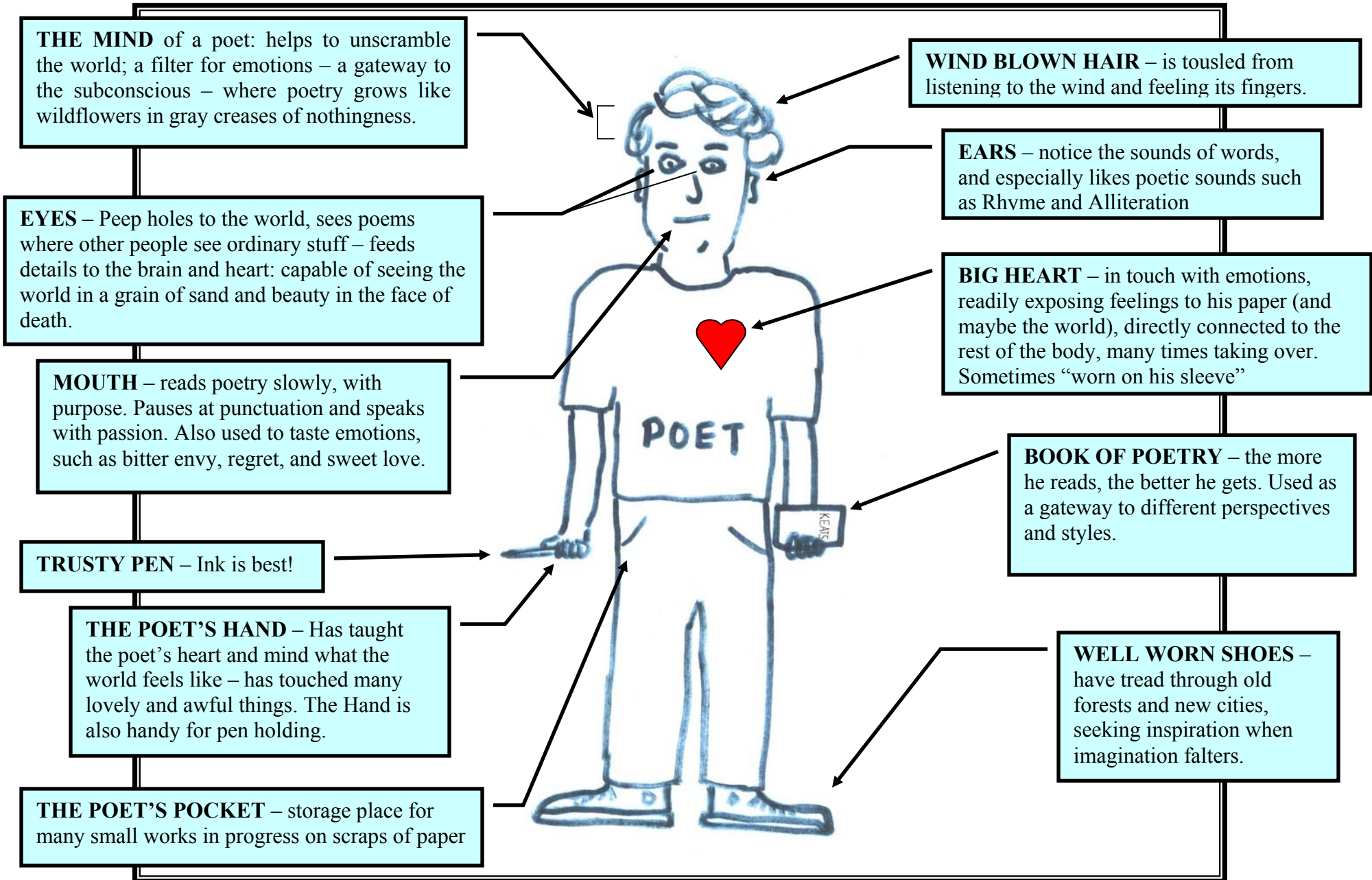
2. Couplet - two line stanza
3. Triplet - three lines
4. Quatrain - four lines
5. Quintet – five lines
6. Sestet - six lines
7. Septet - seven lines
8. Octave – eight lines
9. nine line stanza
10. ten line stanza

When reading a poem, consider the impact of sounds on the poem. Are the sounds soft or harsh? Does that add to the meaning?

TYPES OF RHYME SCHEME:

- *Blank verse* – metered verse with no rhyme scheme
- *Couplets* – two lines rhyming in pairs – AA BB CC
- *Crossed rhyme, alternating rhyme, interlocking rhyme*: Rhyming in an abab pattern.
- *Intermittent rhyme*: Rhyming every other line, as in the standard ballad quatrain: xaxa.
- *Envelope rhyme, inserted rhyme*: Rhyming abba (as in the In Memoriam stanza).
- *Irregular rhyme*: Rhyming that follows no fixed pattern (as in the pseudopindaric or irregular ode).
- *Sporadic rhyme, occasional rhyme*: Rhyming that occurs unpredictably in a poem with mostly unrhymed lines.
- *Thorn line*: A line left without rhyme in a generally rhymed passage.

Generalized Poetic Regions of a Poet



IAMBIC (weak-strong)	TROCHAIC (strong-weak)	ANAPESTIC (weak-weak-strong)	DACTYLIC (strong-weak-weak)
<u>monometer</u> * /	<u>monometer</u> / *	<u>monometer</u> * * /	<u>monometer</u> / * *
<u>dimeter</u> * / * /	<u>dimeter</u> / * / *	<u>dimeter</u> * * / * * /	<u>dimeter</u> / * * / * *
<u>trimeter</u> * / * / * /	<u>trimeter</u> / * / * / *	<u>trimeter</u> * * / * * / * * /	<u>trimeter</u> / * * / * * / * *
<u>tetrameter</u> * / * / * / * /	<u>tetrameter</u> / * / * / * / *	<u>tetrameter</u> * * / * * / * * / * * /	<u>tetrameter</u> / * * / * * / * * / * *
<u>pentameter</u> * / * / * / * / * /	<u>pentameter</u> / * / * / * / * / *	<u>pentameter</u> * * / * * / * * / * * / * * /	<u>pentameter</u> / * * / * * / * * / * * / * *
<u>hexameter</u> * / * / * / * / * / * /	<u>hexameter</u> / * / * / * / * / * / *	<u>hexameter</u> (six feet)	<u>hexameter</u> (six feet)
<u>heptameter</u> * / * / * / * / * / * / * /	<u>heptameter</u> / * / * / * / * / * / * / *	<u>heptameter</u> (seven feet)	<u>heptameter</u> (seven feet)
<u>octameter</u> (eight feet)	<u>octameter</u> (eight feet)	<u>octameter</u> (eight feet)	<u>octameter</u> (eight feet)

METER TABLE KEY:

Hubcap = / * (you say HUBcap, not hubCAP)

* = unstressed syllable

/ = stressed syllable

| = foot separation

Please note that the templates above almost never fit an actual poem exactly. If we use this foot-based method to describe poetic meter in English, we have to allow for abundant "substitution," where any iamb (* /) can become a trochee (/ *), a spondee (/ /), or a pyrrhic (* *). Trochaic rhythm tends to be somewhat more regular, but substitutions occur there as well. Sometimes poets introduce three-syllable feet into a line of iambs or trochees, and three-syllable (or "triple") footed meters often shift from anapests (* * /), to dactyls (/ * *), amphibrachs (* / *), amphimacers (/ * /), and other combinations.

Note that spondaic meters or pyrrhic meters (as opposed to individual feet) in English are impossible because of the constant alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables. Despite this obvious truth, some discussions of English metrics speak of spondaic meter and even attempt to illustrate it with lines isolated from poems written in iambic or anapestic meters.

TYPES OF SONNETS:

Shakespearian (English):

The English sonnet has the simplest and most flexible pattern of all sonnets, consisting of 3 quatrains of alternating rhyme and a couplet:

XV

When I consider every thing that grows
 Holds in perfection but a little moment,
 That this huge stage presenteth nought but shows
 Whereon the stars in secret influence comment;
 When I perceive that men as plants increase,
 Cheered and checked even by the self-same sky,
 Vaunt in their youthful sap, at height decrease,
 And wear their brave state out of memory;
 Then the conceit of this inconstant stay
 Sets you most rich in youth before my sight,
 Where wasteful Time debateth with decay
 To change your day of youth to sullied night,
 And all in war with Time for love of you,
 As he takes from you, I engraft you new.

Italian (Petrarchan):

The Italian sonnet is divided into two sections by two different groups of rhyming sounds. The first 8 lines is called the octave, the remaining 6 lines is called the sestet and can have either two or three rhyming sounds, arranged in a variety of ways:

"London, 1802"

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour:
 England hath need of thee: she is a fen
 Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
 Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
 Have forfeited their ancient English dower
 Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
 Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
 And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
 Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart;
 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
 Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
 So didst thou travel on life's common way,
 In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
 The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

“A Poet’s Advice to Students”

- e e cummings

A poet is somebody who feels, and who expresses his feeling through words.

This may sound easy. It isn't

A lot of people think or believe or know they feel---but that's thinking or believing or knowing; not feeling. And poetry is feeling---not knowing or believing or thinking.

Almost anybody can learn to think or believe or know, but not a single human being can be taught to feel. Why? Because whenever you think or you believe or you know, you're a lot of other people: but the moment you feel, you're nobody-but-yourself.

To be nobody-but-yourself---in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody else---means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight; and never stop fighting.

As for expressing nobody-but-yourself in words, that means working just a little harder than anybody who isn't a poet can possibly imagine. Why? Because nothing is quite as easy as using words like somebody else. We all of us do exactly this nearly all of the time---and whenever we do it, we're not poets.

If, at the end of your first ten or fifteen years of fighting and working and feeling, you find you've written one line of one poem, you'll be very lucky indeed.

And so my advice to all young people who wish to become poets is: do something easy, like learning to blow up the world---unless you're not only willing, but glad, to feel and work and fight till you die.

Does this sound dismal? It isn't.

It's the most wonderful life on earth.

Or so I feel.

REVISING YOUR POETRY

Read your poem out loud to yourself.

Answer these questions:

- Does it make sense?
- Is it grammatically correct?
- Are there enough adjectives?
- Did you overdo adjectives, adverbs, or force a rhyme?
- Are there enough images?
- Is the conflict clear?
- Is it uniquely your own?
- What can you cut out that is redundant or unimportant to your poem?

Now revise...cross things out, move things around, add things. Re-write for your final draft. Keep all of your drafts.

POETRY WRITING TIPS

- ↑ Use images
- ↑ Use your senses: sight, sound, touch, smell, taste, feeling...
- ↑ Eliminate redundancies – in a poem, unless you are using specific repetition pattern, saying the same thing more than once is not necessary. Poems should be precise and concise.
- ↑ Use poetic elements: alliteration, assonance, etc.
- ↑ Avoid adverbs
- ↑ Try rhyming
- ↑ Try not rhyming
- ↑ Experiment with form
- ↑ Use similes
- ↑ Use metaphors
- ↑ Don't stress. Write more poems than you need and pick the best ones.