Poetry Vocabulary
Alliteration:

Definition:

• The repetition of consonant sounds in words that are close together.

• Example:

• Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. How many pickled peppers did Peter Piper pick?
Assonance:

Definition:
• The repetition of vowel sounds in words that are close together.

Example:
• And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
  Of my darling, my darling, my life and my bride.

-Edgar Allen Poe, from “Annabel Lee”
Ballad:

Definition:
• A song or songlike poem that tells a story.

Examples:
• “The Dying Cowboy”
• “The Cremation of Sam McGee”
Cinquain:

Definition:

• A five-line poem in which each line follows a rule.

  1. A word for the subject of the poem.
  2. Two words that describe it.
  3. Three words that show action.
  4. Four words that show feeling.
  5. The subject word again-or another word for it.
End rhyme:

Definition:
• Rhymes at the ends of lines.
• Example:
  - “I have to speak-I must-I should
    -I ought…
  I’d tell you how I love you if I thought
  The world would end tomorrow afternoon.
  But short of that…well, it might be
  too soon.”

The end rhymes are ought, thought and afternoon, soon.
Epic:

Definition:

• A long narrative poem that is written in heightened language and tells stories of the deeds of a heroic character who embodies that values of a society.

• Example:
  – “Casey at the Bat”
  – “Beowulf”
Figurative language:

Definition:

• An expressive use of language.

• Example:
  – Simile
  – Metaphor
Form:

Definition:
• The structure and organization of a poem.
Free verse:

Definition:

• Poetry without a regular meter or rhyme scheme. These poems may use internal rhyme, repetition, alliteration, onomatopoeia.
**Haiku:**

**Definition:**

- Originating in Japan, a Haiku is a three-line poem which contains seventeen syllables.
  - 5 syllables in the first line
  - 7 syllables in the second line
  - 5 syllables in the last line
Imagery:

Definition:

• Language that appeals to the seven senses.

• Example:
  – “Mrs. Flowers”
Internal rhyme:

Definition:

• Rhymes within lines.

• Example:
  – “Back into the chamber turning, all my soul
    Within me burning.”
  -Edgar Allen Poe, from “The Raven”
Limerick:

Definition:

• A very short humorous or nonsensical poem with five lines.

• Example:
  – “I sat next to the Duchess at tea;
    It was just as I feared it would be;
    Her rumblings were abdominal
    Were truly phenomenal,
    And everyone thought it was me!”
  -President Woodrow Wilson
Line:

Definition:
• A series of words written, printed, or recited as one of the component’s units of a larger piece of writing, such as a poem.
Lyric poetry:

Definition:

• Poetry that expresses the feelings or thoughts of a speaker rather than telling a story. These poems are usually short and imply, as opposed to stating, a strong emotion or idea.
Metaphor:

Definition:

- An imaginative comparison between two unlike things in which one thing is said to be another thing.
  - Not a simile: metaphors do not use the words “like” and “as”

Example:

- Jonny has a heart of stone.
Narrative poem:

Definition:

• A poem that tells a story.
  – Not an epic: Epics have superhuman or extraordinary happenings, narratives do not.

• Example:
  – “Paul Revere’s Ride”
Ode:

Definition:

• A lyric poem, rhymed or unrhymed, on a serious subject. These are typically addressed to one person/thing.

• Example:
  – “Ode to Thanks”
Onomatopoeia:

Definition:
• Using words whose sounds suggest their meaning.

• Example:
  – Buzz
  – Rustle
  – Tinkle
  – Thud
Quatrain:

Definition:
- A poem or stanza of four lines.

Example:
- Fly away, fly away over the sea,
  Sun-loving swallow; for summer is done;
  Come again, come again, come back to me,
  Bringing the summer and bringing the sun.
  -Emily Dickinson
Repetition:

Definition:

• Repeating a word, phrase, line, or stanza multiple times within the poem.

• Example:
  – “Go Down, Moses” chorus
Rhyme scheme:

Definition:

• The pattern of end rhymes in a poem. You can identify this by using different letters of the alphabet for each rhyme.

• Example:
  – “A gentleman dining at Crewe, (a)
    Found quite a large mouse in his stew (a)
    Said the waiter, “Don’t shout, (b)
    And wave it about, (b)
    Or the rest will be wanting one too!” (a)
  – The Rhyme scheme of this limerick is aabba.
Rhyme:

Definition:

• The repetition of accented vowel sounds and all sounds following them in words that are close together in a poem.
Rhythm:

Definition:
• A musical quality produced by the repetition of stressed and unstressed syllables or by the repetition of other certain sound patterns.
• Example:
  – “The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
    And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
    And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
    When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.
    -Lord Byron, from “The Destruction of Sennacherib”
Simile:

Definition:

• A comparison between two unlike things, using a word such as *like*, *as*, *than*, or *resembles*.

• Example:
  – Her face was as round as a pumpkin.
  – The wind is roaring like a banshee.
Sonnet:

Definition:

• A fourteen-line poem, usually written in iambic pentameter.

• 2 kinds:
  – Shakespearean: 3 four-line units and ends with a couplet.
  – Italian: poses a question or makes a point in first eight lines and responds to that in the last six lines.
Sound devices:

Definition:
• Words that explain different sounds and functions within writing.
• Example
  – Alliteration
  – Assonance
  – Rhyme
  – Rhythm
Speaker:

Definition:

• The voice talking to us in a poem. The voice is NOT always the poet.
Stanza:

Definition:

• A group of consecutive lines in a poem that form a single unit. It is comparable to a paragraph in an essay.