

# Poetry

1. Look at the items. One has already been defined. Identify the other four and write the appropriate definition for each of them.



**PEANUT BUTTER BLOSSOMS**  
 PREP: 25 MINUTES BAKE: 10 MINUTES PER BATCH Oven 350°  
 For a whole wheat version, use only 1 cup all-purpose flour and add 1/4 cup whole wheat flour.

1/2 cup shortening  
 1/2 cup peanut butter  
 1/2 cup granulated sugar  
 1/2 cup packed brown sugar  
 1 teaspoon baking powder  
 1/8 teaspoon baking soda  
 1 egg  
 2 tablespoons milk  
 1 teaspoon vanilla  
 1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour  
 1/4 cup granulated sugar  
 Milk chocolate kisses or stars

1. In a large mixing bowl beat the shortening and peanut butter with an electric mixer on medium speed 30 seconds. Add the 1/2 cup granulated sugar, brown sugar, baking powder, and baking soda. Beat till combined, scraping the sides of bowl. Beat in egg, milk, and vanilla till combined. Beat in as much of the flour as you can with the mixer. Stir in remaining flour (see photo 1, page 187).  
 2. Shape dough into 1-inch balls. Roll the balls in the 1/4 cup granulated sugar. Place 2 inches apart on an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake in a 350° oven 10 to 12 minutes or till edges are firm and bottoms are lightly browned. Immediately press a chocolate kiss into each cookie's center. Transfer cookies to a wire rack; let cool. Makes about 54 cookies.

**Nutrition Facts per cookie:** 85 cal., 4 g total fat (2 g sat. fat), 4 mg chol., 27 mg sodium, 10 g carbs, 0 g fiber, 1 g pro.  
**Daily Values:** 0% vit. A, 0% vit. C, 1% calcium, 2% iron

Dear Miss Spark:

Thank you so much for your lovely letter and your enthusiasm at the idea of my playing Lise - I cannot tell you how pleased and flattered I am. I shall do my very best to live up to your faith in my portrayal.

Richard and I are, and always have been, great fans of your enormous talent and look forward so very much to meeting you.

With respectful affection,

Elizabeth Taylor  
 Burton.

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

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TABLE #	42
COVERS	3
2x BOMBARDIER	2.90 5.80
TONIC WATER	0.80
PLYMOUTH	1.90
PALESTRA 1/2	8.25
ESPRESSO	1.00
EAGLE BITTER	2.80
DRINK	20.55
SOLD	7.60
Sprats	4.60
Trise	11.00
small quail	9.00
cajamarl	8.00
Salad	3.20
custard	4.20
FOOD	47.80
TABLE AWAY	
JUG OF WATER	0.00
MISC	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>68.35</b>

THE RIVER SWEATS  
 OIL AND TAR  
 THE BARGES DRIFT  
 WITH THE TURNING TIDE  
 RED SAILS  
 WIDE  
 TO LEEWARD, SWING ON THE HEAVY SPAR  
 THE BARGES WASH  
 DRIFTING LOGS  
 DOWN GREENWICH REACH  
 PAST THE ISLE OF DOGS.  
 FROM THE WASTE LAND. T. S. ELIOT.

C. \_\_\_\_\_

D. \_\_\_\_\_

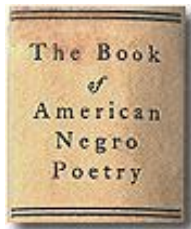
Train TO Croy from Glasgow Queen Street, Bishopbriggs & Lenzie  
 Monday to Saturday (between 12.00 & 3.00 p.m.)

Glasgow Queen Street	1148	1200	1218	1230	1248	1300	1318	1330	1348	1400	1418	1430
Bishopbriggs	1154	-	1224	-	1254	-	1324	-	1354	-	1424	-
Lenzie	1159	-	1229	-	1259	-	1329	-	1359	-	1429	-
<b>Croy</b>	<b>1206</b>	<b>1212</b>	<b>1236</b>	<b>1242</b>	<b>1306</b>	<b>1312</b>	<b>1336</b>	<b>1342</b>	<b>1406</b>	<b>1412</b>	<b>1436</b>	<b>1442</b>
train destination	Dunblane	Edinburgh	Stirling	Edinburgh	Dunblane	Edinburgh	Stirling	Edinburgh	Dunblane	Edinburgh	Stirling	Edinburgh

E. Timetable



**E.E. Cummings**  
(1894-1962) is best known for his poems and their unorthodox usage of capitalization, layout, punctuation and syntax.



What helped you in your choice was the layout. Now focus on the image of the poem. As you can see, it is set out in lines. This is the first thing that distinguishes a poem from a prose passage.

**2.** The following texts are two poems written all together. Read them, then in groups of four organize the layout and punctuation to make two poems out of them. (Remember that, usually, a line starts with a capital letter).

1. I too sing America I am the darker brother they send me to eat in the kitchen when company comes but I laugh an'eat well and grow strong to morrow I'll sit at the table when company comes nobody'll dare say to me "eat in the kitchen" then besides they'll see how beautiful I am and be ashamed I too am America.

2. seeker of truth follow no path all paths lead where truth is here

**When you have finished all the class will compare the texts and discuss the criteria of the layout.**

**Then write the original poems with the help of your teacher.**

Do you find differences in meaning between your division and that of the author? Which ideas did the poet want to highlight, and how did he use the layout to do so?



**Robert Frost** (1874-1963). His work frequently drew inspiration from rural life in New England, USA, using the setting to explore complex social and philosophical themes.



**3.** Below you will find another poem, divided into stanzas of four lines each. Some words are missing. Your task is to decide what words are appropriate to fill in the blanks. (Pair work).

*Robert Frost*  
**Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening**

Whose woods these are I \_\_\_\_\_ I know.  
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 \_\_\_\_\_  
The darkest evening of the \_\_\_\_\_ .

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

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

( year, sweep, think, mistake, lake, keep)

The layout is not the only thing that distinguishes verse from prose. Another important feature of traditional poetry emerges here. What is it?

**4.** This is one of the so called 'sound devices'. It is the easiest to pick out, but the others are equally important. It must be remembered that everything in a poem confirms, or emphasizes, the meaning emerging from verbal language. The sound devices are: *alliteration, assonance, consonance, onomatopoeia, rhyme, rhythm*. Here below are their definitions. They are followed by examples, in jumbled order. Read the definitions carefully and match them to the appropriate examples.

## SOUND DEVICES

- a) **Alliteration:** repetition of the previous consonant, usually at the beginning or in the main stressed syllable of words that are next or close to each other.
- b) **Assonance:** repetition of a vowel sound with a different end consonant.
- c) **Consonance:** repetition of the end consonant with a different vowel sound.
- d) **Onomatopoeia:** creation and use of words which imitate the sound that they describe.
- e) **Rhyme:** identity of sound in the final syllables of words. It usually occurs at line endings.
- f) **Internal Rhyme:** two rhyming words appearing within the same line.
- g) **Rhythm:** the beat, or rather internal pulse, created by the arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables, whose combination gives a particular sense of movement and is meant to appeal to the ear as well as to reinforce meaning.



Illustration of G. Doré for *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, by S.T. Coleridge.

**cobbler:** a person who makes and repairs shoes.

**surly:** gloomy  
**sullen:** sulky, ill-tempered.



1. **"It cracked and growled, and roared and howled"**  
(S.T. Coleridge, from *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*.)



2. **"I met a little cottage girl:  
She was eight years old, she said;  
Her hair was thick with many a curl  
That clustered round her head."**  
(W. Wordsworth, from *We are Seven*.)

.....  
**"Cobbler, cobbler, mend my shoe  
Get it done by half-past two,  
Half-past two is far too late  
Get it done by half past eight."**  
(A.A. Milne, from *Winnie-the Pooh*.)



3. **"Full fadom five thy father lies"**  
(W. Shakespeare, from *The Tempest*, Act I, Scene II.)

.....  
**"Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell"**  
(W. Shakespeare, from *Sonnet 71*)



4. **"Scarlet leather, sewn together"**  
(W. Allingham, from *The Lepri-caun; Or, Fairy Shoemaker*.)

.....  
**"Get him in sight, hold him tight"**  
(W. Allingham, from *The Lepri-caun; Or, Fairy Shoemaker*.)

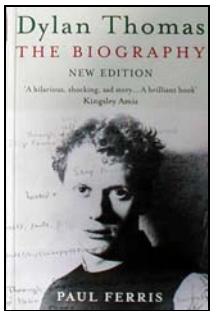
.....  
**"At length did cross an Albatross"**  
(S.T. Coleridge, from *The Rime of the Ancient Marriner*.)



5. **"How pure, how dear their dwelling-place."**  
(G. Byron, from *She walks in Beauty*)

.....  
**"Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray."**  
(D. Thomas, from *Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night*.)

.....  
**"Those are pearls that were his eyes."**  
(W. Shakespeare, from *The Tempest*.)



6. "Tyger, tyger, burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?"  
(W.Blake, from *The Tyger*.)  
.....

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,  
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,  
The ploughman homeward lods his weary way,  
And leaves the world to darkness and to me."  
(Th. Gray, from *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*.)



7. "Old age should burn and rave at close of day;"  
(D. Thomas, from *Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night*.)  
.....

"She walks in Beauty, like the night"  
(G. Byron, from *She walks in Beauty*.)  
.....

"Till now the doubtful dusk reveal'd  
The Knolls once more where, couch'd at ease"  
(A.Tennyson, from *In Memoriam*.)

A unifying device between sound and meaning is **repetition**. It may involve sounds, syllables, words, phrases, stanzas, or any feature of language. Basically, it is used to emphasize ideas. But it also contributes to the patterning of a literary work and to its musical effects.

Ex.: "O horrible! O horrible! Most horrible!"  
(W. Shakespeare, from *Hamlet*, Act I, Scene V.)  
.....

"Alone, alone, all all alone,  
Alone on the wide wide Sea;"  
(S.T. Coleridge, from *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*.)

**Enjambment** is another important device, which involves rhythm, meaning and syntax. It consists in the grammatical continuation from one line to the next. It affects rhythm because it can create an idea of tension, speed, going on. But it can also serve to put into evidence, or link, certain words, thus emphasizing ideas or creating association of concepts.

Ex.: " ...O thou  
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seed, where they lie cold and low,  
Each like a corpse within its grave, until  
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill  
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)  
With living hues and odours plain and hill:"  
(P.B. Shelley, from *Ode to the West Wind*.)  
.....

"I think I know enough of hate  
To say that for destruction ice  
Is also great  
And would suffice."  
(R. Frost, from *Fire and Ice*)





# MEANING DEVICES

To appreciate a poem a vital contribution is given by the so-called meaning devices. The most important of them are simile, metaphor, personification.

**Simile** is a figure of speech in which one thing is said to be like another. In a simile the words *like* or *as* are always used.

Ex.: "You are my true and honorable wife,  
As dear to me as are the ruddy drops  
That visit my sad heart."  
(W. Shakespeare, from *Julius Caesar*, Act II, Scene I)  
.....

"Like the bright hair uplifted from the head  
Of some fierce Maenad, ..."  
(P.B. Shelley, from *Ode to the West Wind*.)

**Metaphor** is an implied comparison describing one thing as being another, thus carrying over from one object to another certain particular aspects relevant to emphasize meaning.

Ex.: "But that dread of something after death,  
The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn  
No traveller returns, ..."  
(W. Shakespeare, from *Hamlet*, Act III, Scene I)  
.....

"My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,  
And I must pause till it come back to me."  
(W. Shakespeare, from *Julius Caesar*, Act III, Scene II)

**Personification** endows animals, objects, or inanimate entities with human characteristics. It can be linguistic, when personal pronouns or possessives are used, like 'he', 'his', etc., semantic when human thoughts and feelings are attributed to objects or animals or other.

Ex. "And 'tis my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes."  
(W. Wordsworth, from *Lines Written in Early Spring*)  
.....

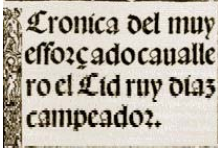
"The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear  
The saples foliage of the ocean, know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear,  
And tremble and despoil themselves: Oh, hear!"  
(P.B. Shelley, from *Ode to the West Wind*)

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Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill  
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)  
With living hues and odours plain and hill."  
(P.B. Shelley, from *Ode to the West Wind*)



**John Ruskin** (1819-1900), writer, critic and artist. He criticized the ugliness of the industrial world, supporting art and literature and constantly trying to express his intense perception of beauty.

# KINDS OF POETRY

There are three main kinds of poetry: **narrative**, **dramatic** and **lyrical**. It is not always possible to make a neat distinction between them. For example, an epic poem can contain lyrical passages, or a lyrical poem can present narrative parts.

- **Narrative poetry** is poetry which tells a story. Typical examples are the epic, the tale in verse, the romance. The ballad can also be included into narrative poetry because it contains a story.

**The epic.** The hero of an epic poem is a special man endowed with physical strength, courage, leadership, who represents a nation or race, and performs superhuman deeds. The dominant tone is heroic. The poem starts with the poet announcing the subject and then invoking the muse. The style is elevated, stylized, formal.

The 'primary' epic was based on the oral traditions of a country -see the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The major Anglo-Saxon example is *Beowulf*. Ours is *El Cantar del Mio Cid*. The 'literary' or 'secondary' epic was modelled on the primary epic, and was the work of a learned refined writer. Examples are Virgil's *Aeneid* in Italy and, in English literature, John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. The commonest metre of the epic is **blank verse** (unrhymed iambic pentametre).

The solemnity and seriousness of the epic led, almost inevitably, to parody and burlesque. This is how **mock-heroic** or **mock-epic poetry** was born. One of the best examples in English is Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* (about an aristocrat cutting off a lock of a girl's hair to the great indignation of her family).

**The tale in verse.** Narrative in verse was very popular during the Renaissance, and met great favour again in the Romantic period thanks to Walter Scott, who started his career as a poet, and Lord Byron.

**The Romance.** The mediaeval romance was a tale in verse dealing with chivalry and love. An example is Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene* and Alfred Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* are modelled on the mediaeval chivalric romance.

- **Dramatic poetry.** The word 'drama' implies one or more characters and action. Dramatic poetry aims at involving the reader in an experience or situation, and creates tension, immediacy, expectation, conflict. The speakers act out roles and therefore must not be identified with the poet.

When one speaker only is involved and the poem is his/her speech, we have the **dramatic monologue**. Its aim is to get the reader to understand the personality and state of mind of the speaker, and thus sympathize with him/her. This form of composition was made famous by poets like Alfred Tennyson, Robert Browning, T.S. Eliot.

- **Lyrical poetry** has, and has always had, the most appeal. As the name suggests, lyrical poetry was originally associated with music, and the term 'lyrical' is still used to indicate a song accompanied by a musical instrument.

As Patrick Murray writes in *Literary Criticism*:

**"In general terms, it is its personal quality, its expression of individual thought and feeling, that gives lyrical poetry its character. Ruskin defined it as 'the expression by the poet of his own feelings.' A lyric is a non-narrative poem, featuring a single speaker, whose purpose is to share a state of mind, a mood or attitude with his reader."**

It is easy to identify this speaker with the poet, especially when the poem reflects feelings and events that characterized that poet's life. However, what makes a poem significant as a work of art is the universal value of the emotions and concepts it expresses.



**Dante Gabriel Rossetti** (1828-1882), painter and poet, the son of an Italian refugee. He was the leader of the Pre-Raphaelites, a group of poets and painters who protested against the conventions in art and literature, and tried to reproduce the simplicity and spirituality of the ages before the Italian artist Raphael.

The more common lyric poems are:

**The ode.** A rather long poem, elevated in tone and elaborate in style. It usually begins with an invocation and contains archaisms. The subject is usually serious, and the concept conveyed is abstract.

**The sonnet.** A poem of fixed form, in fourteen line. It can be divided into an octave and a sestet (Petrarchan form) or three quatrains and a couplet (Elizabethan form). It appeals to feelings directly and intensely. D.G. Rossetti, defined it a moment's monument".

**5. Consider the various features of poetry and the literary forms that have been examined and go back to the poem *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*. Which features can you find in this poem? What is their contribution to the interpretation of its message?**

**When you have answered these questions write a short appreciation. You must deal with the following points:**

- form
- stanza division
- contents
- sound devices
- meaning devices
- message
- your own personal response





"Si se me pregunta en qué consiste la poesía, diré, sin pretender agotar la definición, que en ir cargando a las cosas de significados de los que aparentemente carecen y que, no obstante, se encuentran desde siempre en ellas, en espera de que alguien los descubra y nos ayude, al hacerlo, a comprender al mundo y a comprendernos a nosotros mismos. Estos significados pueden ser puramente estéticos -lo que nos justifica enteramente- o pueden tener un carácter más profundamente poético y revelador." Angel Crespo.

## POETS ON POETRY

Enjoy what some major poets thought about poetry:



"Poetry is emotion put into measure." Thomas Hardy.



"Poetry may be defined as a way of remembering what it would impoverish us to forget." Robert Frost.



"Poetry is a composition of words set to music." Ezra Pound.



"Poetry is a precision instrument for recording a man's reaction to life." Louis Macneice



"...perfection of form united with significance of feeling. All poetry is difficult, almost impossible, to write; and one of the great permanent causes of error in writing poetry is the difficulty of distinguishing between what one really feels and what one would like to feel, and between the moments of genuine feeling and the moments of falsity." T.S. Eliot