

WELCOME TO
YOUR
INTRODUCTION
TO POETRY
TERMS!

Poems are much more enjoyable and easier to understand if you know what to look for...

That's why it's important that you can locate and identify a wide range of poetry terms...

That's also why your teacher keeps going on and on about them whenever you study poetry!

Let's see if you can match up the poetry terms with the correct definitions and examples.

Alliteration

Where words close to each other begin with the same letter

eg "Full fathom five thy father flies"

Assonance

Where words close to each other have the same vowel sounds in them

eg "With dying light the silent fall of night"

Colloquial Language

Language that people use in everyday speech

eg "bloke" "dissing" "buff"

Couplet

A pair of rhyming lines in a poem.
Sometimes called a "rhyming
couplet"

eg "So long as men can breathe or eyes can see
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee"

Imagery

Poets often create 'pictures' which
help the reader or listener to imagine
something clearly

eg Metaphor, personification and simile are types of imagery.

"the merciless iced east winds that knife us"
Wilfred Owen has used personification to build
up an image of how cold the winds are.

Metaphor

A metaphor describes something by
saying it is something else.

eg A metaphor for the sea is:

"A monster chewing at the beach"

Onomatopoeia A word which sounds like what it describes eg "whisper" "snip" "squelch" "bang"

Personification When something that is *not* alive is written about as though it *were* alive eg "The wind whistled through the sails of the ship"

or

"The sun treads a path through the woods"

Rhyme Endings of lines of poetry that sound the same

eg "Red is a lipstick
Red is a shout,
Red is a signal
That says 'Watch out!' "

Stanzas

The 'verse' of a poem. There is often more than one stanza in a poem, and each stanza is separated by one or more blank lines.

Rhythm All poems have a rhythm, that is a pattern of beats or sounds. Some poems have a slow, steady rhythm, others a regular, sing-song rhythm.

eg "It was a sunboiled brightlight friedegg hotskin
suntanned sizzler of a day"

"Darius the Mede was a king and a wonder.
His eye was proud, and his voice was thunder."

Simile When a person or object is compared to something else, using the words 'as', 'like' or 'than'

eg "Her hands were as rough as sandpaper"

"His mood was blacker than night"

"The cat's fur was like silk"

Tone What message is the poet getting across in the poem? Is the poet angry? Sad? This is different to the 'mood' of a poem which might be spooky or joyful etc.

Example

Hard Frost

Personification

Frost called to water "Halt!"
And crusted the moist snow with sparkling salt;
Brooks, their own bridges, stop,
And icicles in long stalactites drop,
And tench in water-holes
Lurk under gluey glass like fish in bowls.

Rhyming Couplet

Simile

Stanzas

In the hard-rutted lane
At every footstep breaks a brittle pane,
And tinkling trees ice-bound,
Changed into weeping willows, sweep the ground;
Dead boughs take root in ponds
And ferns on windows shoot their ghostly fronds.

Assonance

Metaphor

But vainly the fierce frost
Interns poor fish, ranks trees in an armed host,
Hangs daggers from house-eaves:
In the long war grown warmer
The sun will strike him dead and strip his armour.

Alliteration

Andrew Young (1885-1971)

Half Rhyme