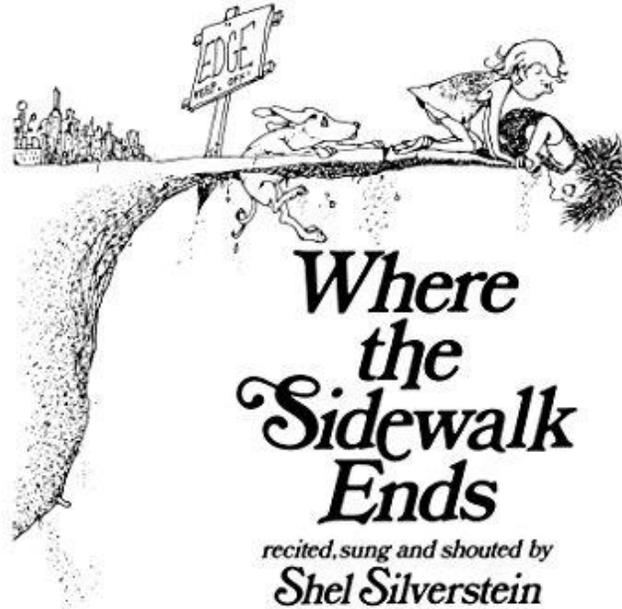




**For What's in a Poem?**  
**Bryana Williams M.S. CCC-SLP**

Ahh, POETRY! That beautiful play of language and music that has been IMMORTALIZED (given long-lasting recognition) in such great works as SHAKESPEARE'S "Romeo and Juliet", "The ODYSSEY" by HOMER, and the more modern "Where the Sidewalk Ends" by SHEL SILVERSTEIN. But what is it about this writing style that is so captivating? Let's take a look at what makes up a work of poetry to find out!



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Spell: Poetry, Immortalized, Homer

What are we talking about today? Poetry

What does "immortalized" mean according to the lesson? Given long-lasting recognition

Tell me one poem I mentioned. Odyssey, Romeo and Juliet, Where the Sidewalk Ends

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What comes to mind when you think of poetry?

One of the first aspects that makes a poem unique from other types of writing is STRUCTURE. Generally speaking, structure has to do with the overall organization of lines and/or the CONVENTIONAL (typical) patterns of sound. Many modern poems may not have any identifiable structure (i.e. they are FREE VERSE), so don't panic if you can't find it!

Spell: Structure, patterns, free verse

What is the first thing that makes poems unique? Structure

What does "conventional" mean? Typical

Let's use "conventional" in your own sentence.

What's another synonym for conventional? Established, usual, predictable, etc.

A poem with no identifiable structure is called \_\_\_\_\_. Free verse

What is a free verse poem? A poem without identifiable structure

The structure for most poems comes in the form of STANZAS, which are a series of lines grouped together and separated by an empty line. They are the equivalent of a paragraph in an essay. Stanzas are often identified and named by the number of VERSES (i.e. lines) they contain.

COUPLET (2 lines)

TERCET (3 lines)

QUATRAIN (4 lines)

CINQUAIN (5 lines)

SESTET (6 lines) (sometimes it's called a SEXAIN)

SEPTET (7 lines)

OCTAVE (8 lines)

Spell: Stanza, couplet, cinquain

Poems are organized in \_\_\_\_\_. Stanzas

What are they considered equivalent to? A paragraph in an essay

I have a poem that contains seven lines per stanza. What is it called? A Septet

Tell me the name of one type of stanza and how many verses it contains.

Summarize the important points regarding the structure of most poems.

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[https://www.poets.org/sites/default/files/styles/286x289/public/images/biographies/EdgarGuest\\_NewBioImage.jpg?itok=HQXa6PJW](https://www.poets.org/sites/default/files/styles/286x289/public/images/biographies/EdgarGuest_NewBioImage.jpg?itok=HQXa6PJW)

We'll use a poem called "It Couldn't Be Done" to find examples of this and the other poem features we'll talk about today. Here's the first stanza to start us off!

It Couldn't Be Done

BY EDGAR ALBERT GUEST (pictured above)

Somebody said that it couldn't be done  
But he with a chuckle replied  
That "maybe it couldn't," but he would be one  
Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried.  
So, he buckled right in with the trace of a grin  
On his face. If he worried, he hid it.

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He started to sing as he tackled the thing  
That couldn't be done, and he did it!

Spell: Albert, chuckle, features

Who wrote this poem? Edgar Albert Guest

What type of stanza structure did he choose? Octave

How would you describe this poem's form? It is organized into an octave

In one sentence, tell me your initial reaction to this stanza.

Point to the picture of the poem's author.

A second aspect that defines a poem is its style, or FORM. There are several categories, but the majority of poems can be grouped into three main types. Firstly, LYRICAL poems have only one speaker (not necessarily the poet) who expresses strong thoughts and feelings. Most poems-especially modern ones-are lyric poems. Subtypes that fit this form include ODES (addressed to someone or something), ELEGIES (honoring a deceased person), SONNETS, and HAIKUS.

Spell: Lyrical, thoughts, elegies

The second thing that makes up a poem is its style or \_\_\_. Form

What's the second aspect that makes up a poem? Style or form

A poem with one speaker is a \_\_\_. Lyrical poem

Can you think of something else that has lyrics? Songs, music, etc.

What is expressed in a lyrical poem? Strong thoughts and feelings

What is one subtype of poem that falls in this category? Ode, elegy, sonnet, haiku

Which type of poem honors a deceased person? Elegy

If you were to write an ode, who or what would it be addressed to? Why?

The second type, a NARRATIVE poem, is one that tells a story; its structure resembles the plot line of a narrative [i.e. the introduction of CONFLICT and characters, rising action, CLIMAX (most intense point) and the DENOUEMENT or resolution]. Subtypes in this category include ballads, epic poems, and LIMERICKS.

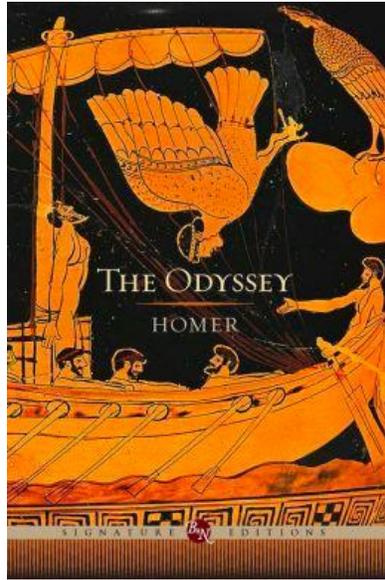
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<http://static.tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pub/images/theodyssey15.jpg>

Spell: Narrative, Denouement, Limerick, Resolution

What's the next type of poem we are discussing? Narrative

A narrative poem tells a \_\_\_\_ . Story

Tell me in a sentence about the next type of poem.

The most intense part of a story is the \_\_\_\_ . Climax

What is one subtype in this category? Ballads, epic poems, limericks

Can you list a character from a story you know?

What is the resolution of a story known as? Denouement

Use "denouement" in your own sentence.

Last but not least, DESCRIPTIVE poems are used to describe the world that surrounds the speaker. These poems use ELABORATE IMAGERY (visually descriptive language) and adjectives. While emotional, it is more "outward-focused" than lyric poetry, which is more personal and INTROSPECTIVE (reflective to oneself).

Spell: Descriptive, elaborate, outward

A poem that describes the world around a speaker is a \_\_\_\_ . Descriptive poem

Visually descriptive language is called what? Imagery

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How do descriptive poems describe the world? By using elaborate imagery/visually descriptive language

Compare and contrast lyrical and descriptive poetry.

We talked a moment ago about the connection between lyrical poems and lyrics in music. Why do you think these are related?

Now that we have some idea of poem styles, let's read the second stanza of "It Couldn't Be Done" and see what form it might be following!

Somebody scoffed: "Oh, you'll never do that;  
At least no one ever has done it;"  
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat  
And the first thing we knew he'd begun it.  
With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin,  
Without any doubting or QUIDDIT (subtily/ambiguity),  
He started to sing as he tackled the thing  
That couldn't be done, and he did it.

Spell: Scoffed, tackle, ambiguity

What word that means "ambiguity" was used here? Quiddit

Complete the line: "He \_\_\_\_ as he tackled the thing". Started to sing

Of the types we just learned, what poem style would you say "It Couldn't Be Done" best falls into? Lyrical, Narrative, Descriptive

Tell me one aspect of the poem that you feel supports this stance.

The third major attribute of poetry is RHYME SCHEME. This refers to the pattern of rhyme (i.e. words that have similar-sounding endings) that comes at the end of each verse or line in poetry. This, in combination with the pattern of SYLLABLES (parts of a word) in each verse, lends to the MELODIC rhythm of a lot of poetic works. However, some poems follow non-rhyming structures, paying attention only to the number of syllables. Let's look at the rhymes in the third stanza of "It Couldn't Be Done"

There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,  
There are thousands to prophesy failure,  
There are thousands to point out to you one by one,

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The dangers that wait to assail you.  
But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,  
Just take off your coat and go to it;  
Just start in to sing as you tackle the thing  
That “cannot be done,” and you’ll do it.

Spell: Rhyme, syllables, melodic

What is the third attribute? Rhyme scheme

Rhyme scheme refer to the pattern of words that have \_\_\_\_\_. similar sounding endings

Tell me about rhyme scheme.

What combines with rhyme scheme to create melody in poems? Pattern of syllables

How many syllables would you say the word “syllables” has? 3

Tell me two words or word combos that form the rhyme scheme between two verses/lines. done/one, failure/assail you, grin/thing, to it/do it

Why do you think the writer chose to “rhyme” the words “failure” and “assail you”?

Together, the aspects of organization, form, and rhyme scheme allow us chances to hear a message in a different way, explore our feelings, or just appreciate the rhythmic beauty created when certain words are combined. Poetry is a wonderful art in that it can be experienced and interpreted differently by each person who reads it, so the question is: where does poetry take you?

Creative Writing:

1. We listed three poems in the beginning of our lesson. Which one would you be most interested in reading? Make the case for selecting your poem of choice for our next discussion!
2. Write your own poem! What style of poetry will you choose? What will the title be? How many stanzas/what type of stanza structure?

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- Multiple aspects combine to make a poem. Some might argue that one particular aspect is most important, while others say it's the relationship between all three? What would your stance be and why?



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#### Resources:

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44314/it-couldnt-be-done>

<http://learn.lexiconic.net/elementsofpoetry.htm>

<http://www.dictionary.com/browse/poem>

<https://literarydevices.net/rhyme-scheme/>

*The mission of I-ASC is to advance communication access for nonspeaking individuals globally through [training](#), [education](#), [advocacy](#) and [research](#). I-ASC supports all forms of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) with a focus on methods of spelling and typing. I-ASC currently offers [Practitioner training](#) in [Spelling to Communicate \(S2C\)](#) with the hope that other methods of AAC using spelling or typing will join our association.*

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