THE POETRY HANDBOOK

Uncovering the world of poetry

01

C H A P T E R

01

It's Rhyme Time!

Important: This is a literary device that focuses specifically on sound, not spelling. As such, rhyming words often feature final syllables that are connected by similar sounds. Types of rhyme are defined by how similar they sound, and where in a line of poetry they are placed.

Rhyme is said to date back to the last seventh century, but it unsure exactly when and where, but is does have a long and varied history actions languages and cultures. Thomas Campion once described it as "a vulgar and easie kind of poesie". However, it has since developed into the device that many people most often associate with poetry. Indeed, rhyme became almost compulsory for a poem to be considered a poem – this is no longer the case, however. For example, Modernist and Postmodernist movements have shown a re-imagined world of poetry, where rhyme is no longer the poetic staple it once was.

There are various styles or *combinations* of rhymes. The structural, schematic level of rhyme can be seen in full poems, called rhyme schemes. Rhyme patters can also exist at the stanza level, and at the line level.

Rhyme Scheme:

Definition: Set patterns of rhyming sounds. It determines the lines in which words rhyme as how these are changed or repeated throughout the poem. This can vary by country and language, and other cultural considerations. Typically, the rhyme scheme is consistent throughout the poem, but a poem can change its rhyme scheme wile moving from stanza to stanza, or even line to line.

We assign an alphabetical letter to the lines that end with words that rhyme with each other. Every time a new rhyme appears in a poem, the next letter of the alphabet is assigned to mark the rhyme.

Rhyme schemes make the pome sound pleasant and structured but can also be used to depict shifting moods in a poem. For example, a poem about sorrow and pain can be loosely structures compared to a pome that is happy and upbeat. The reader's attention is also drawn to the particular words that are being rhymed and the meanings associated with them.

Traditional poetry follows a strict rhyme scheme as poems at the time were often read aloud and even performed in theatres. As such a rhyme scheme would sound more pleasant to a listening audience and give the performers a beat and rhythm to follow. Modern poetry now tends to follow a more 'free' approach to avoid the constraints of a rhyme scheme. Indeed, the free verse style, with no rhyming structure, is increasingly popular.

Sonnets:

Have originated in Italy, it is thought Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Spender first introduced the sonnet form to the English language during the 16th century. Shakespeare pioneered the style, making one such style so famous it is names after him, but it is important to remember that he did not invent the form. Technically, the sonnet is though to have been invented in Italy by a 13th century notary named Giacomo da Lentini, but the form was popularised by a 14th century humanist scholar names Francesco Petrarch. Its name is derived after the Italian word 'sonetto' which means 'little song', and as such were typically used to convey expressions relating to the theme of love, especially during the Renaissance period.

All sonnets contain a total of fourteen lines; they can be constructed in different way, with the rhyme scheme allowing us to identify them. They can also contain various combinations of stanza length. Which can range from octaves (8 lines) to sestets (6 lines), quatrains (4 lines), and couplets (2 lines).

They all have a regular rhyme scheme that should remain consistent throughout the poem.

Shakespearean: ABAB CDCD EFEF GG

Spenserian: ABAB BCBC CDCD EE – a variation of the Shakespearean sonnet, whereby the second rhyme in one stanza is ugly carried o to be the first rhyme in the subsequent stanza.

Petrarchan: ABBAABBA (octave), CDCDCD (or CDECDE – sestet).

The Petrarchan sonnet is the oldest form of sonnet. It is split into two types of stanza: the octave, which as a set rhyme scheme as above, and the sestet, which can have a variable rhyme scheme (CDECDE, CDCDCD, CDCDEE). A well-known English language Petrarchan sonnet is Sir Thomas Wyatt's *Whose List to Hunt* (1557), which is a reinterpretation of Petrarch's *Sonnet 190*.

Types of Rhyme Schemes:

Rhyming Couplets: Two lines that follow one after the other and rhyme. There are two types: open and closed. Open rhyming couplets exist when the two lines can be read as one single element; they are not broken up by any punctuation at the end of the first line. On the other hand, closed rhyming couplets are those that are read as two separate lines, broken up by punctuation and linked only by the rhyme.

Eye rhyme: When two words visually rhyme but do not sound the same such as the words ‘love’ and ‘move’. Appearance vs. Reality/ deception.

Internal rhyme: A word in the middle of a line rhymes with a word at the end of a line. A rarer form of internal rhyming is the leonine which derives from Medieval Latin verse. It is found in poems of longer measure where the stressed syllable preceding a caesura rhymes with the last stressed syllable of the line.

End rhyme: Where the rhyme end come at the end of the line.

Slant rhyme: A more subtle type of rhyme whereby words do not exactly rhyme, such as ‘worm’ and ‘swarm’.

Partial rhymes (also called slant rhyme or pararhyme – near rhyme and of rhyme are also used): Rhyming via assonance or consonance (eye-rhyme and wrenched rhyme). Rhyming via assonance means that the vowels match but the consonants do not. This is typically found in internal rhyme. Assonance in end-rhymes is most commonly found in folk ballads, nursery rhymes, and other song lyrics. Rhyming via consonance means that the consonant match but the vowels do not, which works well on the page.

Feminine rhyme: A rhyme between stressed syllables followed by one or more unstressed syllables.

Triple rhyme (Sdrucciolo): Three-syllable rhymes, which are almost mostly ironic, mock-heroic, comic or facetious in effect. Such forced and arch rhyming is sometimes called hudibrastic after Samual Butler’s *Hudibras*, a mock-heroic verse satire on Cromwell and Puritanism.

Rich rhyme: The rhyming of of identical words that have different meanings (homonyms), or the rhyming of words that sound the same but are different in spelling and meaning (homophones). Another kind, rich eye-rhyme, is when the words are identical in appearance but the same neither in sound nor meaning.

Rhyming triplets: A tercet in which all three lines follow the same rhyme.

Cross-rhyme: Rhymes alternating lines – abab etc.

Envelope rhyme: A couplet is ‘enveloped’ by an outer rhyming pair – abba.

Alternating rhyme: Commonly used is four-line stanzas where the rhyme scheme is ABAB, and so every alternating line ends with a rhyming word.

Ballad: A narrative poem that follows the rhyme scheme ABAB or ABCB. For example, Samual Taylor Coleridge’s *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

Monorhyme: When all the lines in a stanza or even the entire poem end with the same rhyme – AAAAA etc. For example, William Blake’s *Silent, Silent Night*.

Enclosed rhyme: This is a sandwiched rhyme, where the first line and the fourth line of the stanza end with rhyming words, thereby sandwiching or enclosing the second and third lines that Alison end in a rhyme – ABBA.

Triplet: A three-line stanza or tercet where all the lines end with the same rhyme – AAA, BBB, CCC etc.

Terza rima: Three-lines stanzas that follow an interlocking chain pattern where the first line of the stanza rhymes with the third line of the stanza, whereas the second line of the stanza rhymes wit the first line of the subsequent stanza. As such the rhyme scheme looks as such: ABA BCB CDC DED etc. For example, Percy Bysshe Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind*.

Limerick: A poem with five lines that follows the rhyme scheme AABBA. It is usually a humorous poem with outrageous and comical thoughts strung together that builds up to a punchline in the last line of the poem.

Villanelle: Consists of five three-line stanzas that all follow the rhyme scheme of ABA. The sixth concluding stanza is a four-lined stanza with the rhyme scheme ABAA. The first line of the stanza is repeated as the last line of the second and fourth stanzas, whereas the third line of the first stanza is repeated as the last line of the third and fifth stanzas. For example, *Mad Girl's Love Song* by Sylvia Plath.

02

CHAPTER

02

Making Metre Make Sense:

Definition: A term used to refer to how syllables are all ranged in a line of poetry.

Why: It is an integral part of any poem as it creates structure due to the way it instructs the length of every line in the poem.

How: It is dependent on two key factors – the number of syllables per line, and the way these syllables are grouped together in what is known as a metrical foot.

- ✓ Metrical foot: A combination of stressed and unstressed syllables in one unit of a line of poetry; how the stresses are 'arranged'. One metrical foot can consist of two syllables, and the way stresses are placed on these syllables will determine what metrical foot it exactly is.

Metrical Feet:

Binary:

Iamb: one unstressed syllable, followed by one stressed syllable. An iamb can be made up of one word ("lit-tle"), or two words ("one man").

Trochee: one stressed syllable, followed by one unstressed syllable (the opposite of an iamb). Lines written in the trochaic metre will end on an unstressed syllable, allowing lines of poetry to flow into each other, making it simpler to follow and read. This metre, however, can also sound quite unnatural, hence creating a tone of discomfort or dread. A good example of this is Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven*, 1845.

Spondee: two stressed syllables.

Pyrrhic: two unstressed syllables.

Ternary:

Anapaest: three syllables, the first two syllables are unstressed, followed by one stressed syllable.

Dactyl: three syllables, the first is stressed, followed by two stressed syllables.

Molossus: three stressed syllables.

Tribrach: three unstressed syllables.

Amphibrach: three syllables, the first and last being unstressed, and the second syllable being stressed.

Amphimacer: three syllables, the first and last being stressed, and the second syllable being unstressed.

Bacchius: one unstressed syllable, followed by two stressed syllable.

Antibacchius: Two stressed syllables, followed by one stressed syllable.

Quaternary:

Tetrabrach/ proceleusmatic: four unstressed syllables.

Dispondee: four stressed syllables.

Diamb: one unstressed, then one stressed, then one unstressed, and finally one stressed syllable

Ditrochee: one stressed, then one unstressed, then one stressed, and final one unstressed syllable.

Ionic minor: two unstressed syllables, followed by two stressed syllables; the joining together of an iamb and a spondee.

Ionic major: two stressed, followed by two unstressed syllables.

Antispast: one unstressed syllable, two stressed syllables, one unstressed syllable.

Choriamb: one stressed syllable, two unstressed syllables, and one stressed syllable.

First Paeon: one stressed syllable, followed by three unstressed syllables.

Second Paeon: one unstressed, one strssed, two unstressed syllables.

Third Paeon: two unstressed, one stressed, one unstressed syllable

Fourth Paeon: three unstressed, one stressed syllable.

First epitrite: one stressed, three unstressed syllables.

Second epitrite: one stressed, one unstressed, two stressed syllables.

Third epitrite: two stressed, one unstressed, one strssed syllable.

Fourth epitrite: three strssed, one unstressed syllable.

Number of metrical feet per line:

Monometer: one metrical foot

Dimeter: two metrical feet

Trimeter: three metrical feet

Tetrameter: four metrical feet

Pentameter five metrical feet

Hexameter: six metrical feet

Heptamter: seven metrical feet

Octameter: eight metrical feet

…. And now, put the two together:

- For example: a line with 10 syllables, with an alternating stress pattern starting with an unstressed syllable, will make a line in iambic pentameter.

How to determine metre:

1) Count the number of syllables in the line. It can be helpful to say the line out loud and slowly.
2) Now focus on the individual words and which part of the word/groups of letters are stressed or unstressed. It it helpful to say the word as it would normally be said in conversation and hear where these stresses naturally fall.
3) Mark these stresses on the page: use '-' for unstressed syllables and '/' for stressed syllables.
4) Identify the metrical foot: using the marked stresses choose the appropriate foot.
5) Count how many feet there are to determine the '-meter' part.

Disclaimer: it may not be as clear-cut as this; there can often be various, different scansions for each line, which is part of the beauty of poetry. Similarly, one line may not necessarily contain one singular type of metrical foot or the same number of them (see below).

Inversions/ Substitutions:

Often, each metrical foot will have an opposite: a trochee is the opposite of an iamb, and vice versa. In this sense, trochees are 'inverted iambs'. Thus, replacing an iambic foot for a trochaic foot is known as trochaic substitution. This is typically found in the first foot of the line.

Trochaic substitution of an interior foot is not as common, but certainly possible. This is often accompanied by the inclusion of a caesura, because it feels somewhat disjunct to read a trochee in the middle of a line dominated by iambs.

Pyrrhic substitution: typically, replacing and iamb for a pyrrhic, creating three unaccented beats in a row, resolves by the next accent. The following foot must be a proper iamb to maintain pulse and rhythm.

Different number of feet? No problem…..

Catalectic: a metrically is complete line of verse; it either lacks a syllable at the end, or ending with an incomplete foot. Known as catalectic subtraction.

- Headlessness/ Acephalous: the unstressed syllable is dropped from the beginning of the line
- Brachycatalectic: a line missing two syllables.

Hypercatalectic: a line of poetry having an extra syllable to syllables at the end of the last metrical foot. Known as hypermetric addition.

Caesura:

Definition: a break between words in one metrical foot

Purpose: to create an audible pause in a line of poetry, typically achieved by placing punctuation between metrical feet in a poem. They are used to emphasise the previous statements made in the poem. This creates a disjointed metre that will be broken up.

Enjambement:

Definition: when a line of poetry continues without a pause onto the next line.

It occurs when there is no clear punctuation distinguishing between lines of a poem – the first continues onto the next uninterrupted. This creates a fluid metre that runs throughout the poem and can give a prosaic quality.

Blank Verse:

Definition: verse with no rhyme scheme.

It is a special form of metre that does not use a rhyme scheme, suing iamb pentameter, although other metres, such as iambic trimester, can be used. It allows poets to use a form without being too restricted by a set rhyme scheme, allowing a greater exploration of themes in the poem.

Ballad:

Definition: a type of metre of four-line stanzas written as alternating lines of iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter; it is also referred to as common metre.

It is typically found in hymns and lyrical poems as the alternating lines create a musical rhythm, holding the reader's attention. This form of iambic metre is used in linger poems as the variation in the lines makes it earlier to listen to.

03

C H A P T E R

03

Poetic Form:

Definition: the structure of a poem, measured by its metre, use of line (line action and stanza), and rhyme, along with its stanza length and use of repetition if any.

There are various complexities in relation to form; for example, some poems are very strict in the form, such as the sonnet or haiku, which are restricted by line number. On the other hand, form such as free verse do not follow ant strict rules, giving the poet much freedom.

1) Lineation – the consideration of stanza and line breaks, the number of lines, and the length of each of the lines. Line length is determined by the number of syllables, a specific rhyme scheme, or the metre, if any, used.
2) Stanza – typically contains a singular idea. Traditionally, they are required to have a set number of lines:
    - Monostich – 1 line
    - Couplet – 2 lines
    - Tercet – 3 lines
    - Quatrain – 4 lines
    - Quintain – 5 lines
    - Sestet – 6 lines
    - Septet – 7 lines
    - Octave – 8 lines
    - Nonet 9 lines
    - Dizain – 10 lines
3) Rhyme scheme – a combination of words that sound alike; it was traditionally used to aid poets or bards recite poem, giving them cues when presenting poetry orally.
    - Terminal/ End – when the last word in a line rhymes.
    - Internal – when there are two rhyming words within a single line.
    - Slant – when two words are used together that sound similarly, but are not identical; words may have similar consonant sounds or vowel sound, but never both of these.

    When these combinations of rhyme are put together, we form a rhyme scheme. Some of these include: alternating/ cross rhyme, envelope, couplets, triplets, and those specific to individual forms.

4) Metre: how may syllables are in a line, and where the stresses (and 'unstresses') fall.
    - Iamb – unstressed, stressed
    - Trochee – stressed, unstressed
    - Pyrrhic – unstressed, unstressed

- Spondee – stressed, stressed
- Anapaest – unstressed, unstressed, stressed
- Dactyl – stressed, unstressed, unstressed
- Amphibrach – unstressed, stressed, unstressed
- And so on (see metre section)

The use of metre determines a poem's line length and so it directly linked to its form.

Different Forms:

Sonnets:

Traditionally, they consist of 14 lines, on the theme of love (because of this close connection, poets have also used the form to subvert the readers' expectations about love). The word has its roots in the Latin word 'souno', meaning sound. It was invented in the 13th century by Giacomo de Lentini in the Sicilian court of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II. Dante and d'Arezzo. However, it was Francesco Petrarca (Petrarch) who pioneered its popularity in Europe. They are also typically written exclusively in iambic pentameter, with a regular rhyme scheme. During the 16th and 17th centuries, the sonnet was developed by various poets including Edmund Spenser and William Shakespeare.

Petrarchan: 14 lines, split into 2 stanzas (an octave and sestet). For example, John Milton's *When I Consider How My Light is Spent* (1673).

- Octave: abba-abba (split into 2 quatrains)
- Sestet: cdecde or cddccd or cdccdc
- The ninth line contains to Volta (turn), the moment when a contrary pint of view, denial, or doubt is put forward, acting as the sonnet's fulcrum or pivot. A Volta can also be known as a crisis. There are other sub-division possible – there are two groups of four and two of three are natural, two quatrains and two tercetos.
- Follows an iambic pentameter rhythm throughout.
- Tone: used to discuss themes of love and romance. A tonal shift comes during the Volta; the purpose of the sestet is to resolve the Volta.

Elizabethan/ Shakespearean/ English: 14 lines split into 3 quatrains (or two sestets and a couplet) and a couplet with a rhyme scheme of abab cdcd efef gg, as such, each stanza will typically be used for a separate idea. This arrangement better suited the English language compared to the Petrarchan sonnet that required two sets of four rhyming words, easier in Italian where most words end in -ella or -ino. It is also written in iambic pentameter. Its tone can be centred around various themes, such as humour, love, or politics.

Spenserian: Developed by Edmund Spenser in the 16th century, inspired by the Petrarchan sonnet upon the developments made by Sir Thomas Wyatt. They are divided into three quatrains followed by a rhyming couplet, written in iambic pentameter. Its rhyme scheme is abab bcbc cdcd ee, and so it features a rhyme that is present in one stanza, followed through to the next. It also makes use of a Volta, which is typically presented at the end of the second stanza and works as a climax or epiphany. The Ned of the poem will focus on resolving or developing this epiphany, with the rhyming couplet providing a conclusion to this idea.

Quatorzain: 14-lined poem.

Curtal: Invented by Gerald Manley Hopkins; an eleven-line sonnets, but rather than the first eleven lines of a standard sonnet, it has precisely the structure of a Petrarchan sonnet in which each component is three-quarters of its original length. As such, it rhymes abcabc dcbdc or abcabc dbcdc, with the last line a tail, or half a line.

Caudate: From the Latin for 'tail' – the same root as 'coda' which feature a three-line envoi or cauda. The first line of the cauda is trimetric and rhymes with the last line of the main body of the sonnet; the next two lines are in the form of a rhyming couplet in iambic pentameter. For example, john Milton's *On the New Forcers of Conscience Under the Long Parliament*.

Meredithian- George Meredith: 19th century poet and novelist – developed a form of 16 line sonnets with four sets of envelope rhyme (abba cddc effe ghhg).

Sonnet sequences:

- Elizabeth Barrett Browning's 44 *Sonnets from the Portuguese*
- Meredith's sequence 'Modern Love' in his own Meredithian 16-line form.
- Christina Rossetti's *Monna Innominata* – a sequence of 14 sonnets, which in itself is known as a sonnet of sonnets.
- Corona sequence – a sequence of indeterminate length in which each new sonnet opens with the last line of the previous until you reach the final sonnet which terminated with the opening line of the first.
- Sonnet redoublé – a corona sequence of 14 sonnets terminating with a 15th which is wholly composed of each linking line of the corona in sequence.

<u>Shaped Verse:</u>

Pattern poems are those that are shaped on the page to make a picture. For example, George Herbert's *Easter Wings* and *The Altar*.

Concrete poetry: poetry in which the meaning or effect is conveyed partly or wholly by visual means, using patterns of words or letter and other typographical devices.

Rictameter: A nine-line syllabic structure. The lines start at two syllables, incrementing upward by two to ten in the fifth line and ending with the same two syllable word as the first line.

Diamante: Diamon-shaped, 7-line verse form in which one word becomes its opposite or antithesis by way of a succession of ratted words. The second line is composed of related adjectives and the third of related participles the first two words of the middle line are nouns or nominal phrases connected to the top of the diamond, the next pair connect to the bottom. The process is then repeated symmetrically down to the end-word.

Rhopalics: A line in which each successive word has one more syllable than its predecessor. Other variations included increasing each word in a line letter by letter or decreasing rather than increasing the count.

Tetractys: Five lines of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 10 syllables. The 'tetra' in the name links to the 'mystic tetrad' in Pythagoreanism and kabbalism, and Tarot card layout and the four elements. Indeed 1+2+3+4 = 10, which is the sum on which Ray Stebbing, the form's inventor, based the poetic tetractys.

Nonet: The syllabic count starts at one and increases until it reaches nine.

Acrostics: A poem where each letter beginning each line spell a word when put together. Double acrostics are where this occurs at the beginning and end of the line. A mesostich is when words are spelt from the middle of a line.

Lipogram: a composition from which the writer systematically omits a certain letter or kind of letter of the alphabet.

Paragram: A pun made by changing the letters of a word, especially the initial letter.

Lyric Poetry:

Traditionally accompanied by music, the name lyric takes its original from the Ancient Greek instrument, the lyre (a small harp-shaped instrument), and so lyric poems are often though of as song-like. They are typically short, where the speaker expresses their emotions or feelings. Traditional, classical Greek lyrics had strict rules for metre and rhyme, but today they encompass many forms with different rules regarding how they are structured.

In Ancient Greece, lyric poetry was seen as an alternative to dramatic verse and epic poetry where both forms contained a narrative. They did not necessitate narrative, allowing poets to concentrate on a speaker's feelings and emotions, and as such they have always been considered expressive and emotional. There are various types of

lyrics poetry: the sonnet, ode, and elegy are examples, despite being quite different forms, and as such lyric poetry is difficult to classify.

Characteristics:

- The first-person: due to their expressive nature and explorations of emotion and feelings, the first-person point of view allows the speaker to express their innermost thoughts. Lyrics often speaker of adoration or love and as such use the first-person narrative to enhances this intimacy.
- Length: typically short. If it is a sonnet, it will contain 14 lines; if a villanelle, 19. The ode is longer – typically 50 lines.
- Song-like: due to its origins, they have many different techniques that make them sound song-like. For example, rhyme schemes and verse, which are techniques used in modern-day music. They often used metre and repetition to give them a rhythmic quality.
- Metre: this once again varies depending on the type of lyric, for example, sonnets traditionally use iambic pentameter, whereas the elegy used a dactylic metre.
- Emotion: in it origins, Ancient Greek poets, such as Sappho wrote lyric poetry about love. For example, often the subject of sonnets is love. Elegies lament on a person's death and the ode is a statement of adoration. No matter their specific form, they are almost always emotive.

Examples: sonnet, ode, villanelle (see all previously or below), the dramatic monologue, and the elegy.

Dramatic Monologue: a form of lyric poetry written in first-person, where the speaker addresses an audience or another character, who never respond. Although presented in dramatic form, the poem still presents the speaker's innermost thought. They do not usually follow formal rules. For example, Robert Browning's *My Last Duchess*.

A monologue is a theatrical term for a lengthy speech from a single character, and as such the dramatic monologue in poetry is similar because it is also from the perspective of one person. The speaker is usually thought of as a character, and as the poem progresses, more of their personality is revealed. The speaker is also often fictional although they can also be a known person from history. Importantly, the speaker is usually considered distinctly different from the poet, allowing the poet to explore themes or narrative that are outside their own experiences, whilst also presenting the character as biased and unreliable.

The dramatic monologue also allows the poets to express somewhat contrarian ideas in a theatrical scenario. The speaker often acts as a mask for the poet, and the ideas expressed can be seen as different tot heir own, meaning the points of view can be

darker or more exaggerated than they might usually be. Typical themes include: obsessive love, jealousy, or anxiety, showing the more extreme side of human emotion. As such, the dramatic monologue is one of the rare poetic forms that can dictate a poem's theme and tone.

They are also referred to as a persona poem, with the poem's speaker regarded as the 'persona'. Elements of dramatic monologue can be found in epic poetry, but it is thought to have come into prominence in the early 19th century. For example, romantic poets such as Robert Browning and William Wordsworth are seen as early pioneers of the form. They also continued to be poplar in the 20th century as seen in T.S Eliot's *The Love Song of J.Alfred Prufrock*.

Characteristics:

- First person perspective: a speech from a character markedly different from the poet and so the reader only hears their point of view, thoughts, and feelings. The speaker is normally addressing their thoughts to an audience that the reader is unaware of.
- A silent audience: they often take the form and tone of a conversation, but the reader does not her the thoughts of the audience the speaker addresses. The speaker ay addresses the audience directly and even ask questions, but their answers are unheard and as such the audience is largely only ever implied rather than explicitly referenced.
- The slow reveal of character: they often occur before or after a significant moment for the speaker. The speaker tends to reveal more of their personality or intentions as the poem progresses.

Types:

- Romantic: poems that are on the subject of love and relationships. Sometimes, they are about past or current loves, and occasionally they can be about a love desired or unrequited. For example T.S. Eliot's *The Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock* is about unrelated love. Romantic monologues can also express other difficulties with relationships such as Anthony Hecht's *Dilemma,* which is about a woman having trouble choosing between two men.
- Conversational: the poem is depicted in the style and tone of a conversation. The speaker appears to be talking to another person and often responding to their audience, but the readers only ever hear the speech of one character.
- Psychological or philosophical: the speaker is either musing on their philosophy or providing an insight into their psychology. For example, Sylvia Plath's *Lady Lazarus,* whereby the reader is made aware of the speaker's state of mind after failing to commit suicide.

Elegy: A poem of serious reflection – mourning the loss of close family, remembering the lives of best friends, or coming to terms with the natural cycles of life and death, using much symbolism and imagery. Elegies today have no set metre or rhyme scheme and are instead entirely defined by their subject matter. They are written in the first-person, giving them a personal nature.

The elegy as a poem about death and mortality is a modern concept, as earlier, they were defined by their metre, form, and structure, rather than their content. Indeed, the term 'elegy' was first used in Greek and Latin writing to describe a verse written in elegiac couplets, a form of poetry featuring one line of dactylic hexameter and one line of dactylic pentameter. Early elegies also covered a wide range of topics, ranging from death and war, to love and mythology. They were expressions of sorrow and grief, but poets were not limited to mournful subjects as elegiac verse was sloes used as an opportunity for humour and satire; the for was seen as a vehicle for poets to express deep emotions. As long as they consisted of elegiac couplets (not based on content), it was considered an elegy.

During the 16th century, the elegy became associated with lamentation and loss. The style was developed in the 18th century when it flourished during the Romantic movement.the deeply emotive, personal nature of the elegy suited the ideas and values of the romantics. The form was so popular with them that they also reconstructed the conventions of the elegiac stanza. Elegies from the 18th century are typically written in iambic pentameter, quatrains, and an ABAB rhyme scheme. Poets did still experiment with form and metre, however, with the only true defining characteristic of a contemporary elegy being the subject of loss, death, and grief.

Function:

- Lament the loss of life: by articulating their feelings on the page, the elegy can help the poet come to terms with their grief. They will often convey their pain and sorrow through their poetry, with the primary goal being personal expression over stylistic perfection or commercial success.
- Express admiration: a way for the poet to commemorate their lost loved one, remembering all of their positive contributions, achievements, and ideas.
- Reach consolation: allow the poet to reach some form of closure, and so they typically end with a consolation. The previous functions allow them to reach this point, reflecting on mortality and the nature of death. The consolation often contains religious overtones as a way for the poetry to maintain faith in the afterlife.

Types:

- Pastoral: combines feature of the elegy with features of pastoral poetry (depicts the fantasy of living in an idyllic rural world, comparing the bleakness of the city

with the beauty of living with nature). The poet takes typical tropes of an elegy, such as mourning and admiration for a loved one, and ties it to pastoral elements. The deceased subject of the poem is often presented as a shepherd. Natural imagery is symbolically used to depict the impact of the specific person's death will have on nature. The poem may end with the poet using the beauty of the natural world to reach a consolation about the inevitability of death and renewal.

- Personal vs. Impersonal: a personal elegy laments the death of a specific individual whilst an impersonal is not tied to a specific person but mourns death or loss on a broader scale – poets may mourn over human nature, destiny, or conditions.

Closed Forms:

Have a specific form – metre, line length, rhyme scheme, poem length

The Villanelle: A poem that contains 19 lines divided into 5 tercets and ends with a quatrain. The tercets have a rhyme scheme of ABA while the quatrain has a rhyme scheme of ABAA. For example, Dylan Thomas' *Do Not Go Gentle into that Goodnight* (1951). It is derived from the Italian word 'villanella' meaning rustic or rural song. It follows strict, structural rules. Some people, however, find this more freeing than limiting, as when the poet's attention is on the technical detail, the content of the poem can flow in a more unconscious, uninhabited way. It makes use of the power of repetition to create a melodic poem that is capable of creating powerful imagery with words.

It originated as a simple, ballad-like song – seemingly opposite to the structured poetic form it takes today. Before the 17th century, they were written with no intended rhyme schemes or refrain and written with the character of Italian and Spanish dance songs that has simple and rustic themes. Although its origins are debated, it is said to have originated in 1606 when the French poet Jean Passerat published a poem titled *Villanelle (I lost my turtledove)*.

It was not a particularly popular form until French romantic poets discovered Passerat's poem and mimicked the style in their poetry during the 1800s. The form then became popular in Britain after English poets Austin Dobson and Edmund Gosse published poetry using this form.

Poets who also adhere to the modernist artistic movement look down upon the villanelle due to its strict aesthetic which they believe to be a limitation on creativity.

Despite this, the form still advanced in Britain. The form became more popular with the rise of New Formalism in American poetry that took place in the late 20th century. Le

- Length – 19 lines, 5 tercets, quatrain; the length or meter of the individual lines is not restricted, giving writers some creative freedom in this area.
- Rhyme scheme – each tercet has two repeating rhymes, thus following an ABA rhyme scheme. The final stanza, slightly different, follows an ABAA rhyme scheme.
- They have two refrains: line 1 is repeated in lines 6, 12, and 18, while line 3 is repeated in lines 9,15, and 19. This repetition and rhyme offers a sense of nostalgia to the tone due to the speaker seemingly revisiting certain ideas of expressions by repeating them multiple times. As such the rhyme scheme could be written as A1bA2 abA1 abA2 abA1 abA2 abA1A2.

Sestina: A poem with six stanzas of six lines (sixains) and a final triplet (envoi) in a kind of summation or code, with all stanzas having the same six words at the line ends in six different sequences. There is no set metre to the modern English sestina, but traditionally it has been cast in iambs. The end words of each line take focal point: instead of being rhymes, they are reused in a set patter, a technique known as lexical repetition. The envoi contains all the hero words in a strict order: the second and fifth words in the top line, the fourth and third in the middle line, the sixth and first in the bottom line. In this sense they are incredibly mathematical. Indeed, they were invented by a 12th century mathematician and troubadour Arnaud Daniel.

As such, the scheme becomes: ABCDEF, FAEBDC, CFDABE, EGBFAD, DESCFB, BDFECA, BE/ DC/ FA, giving it a short of spiral shape.

There even exists a double sestina: twelve stanzas of twelve lines each, first achieves by Sir Philip Sidney.

The Pantoum: A strict 15th-century form that must be composed in full cross-rhymed quatrains (abab cdcd and so on). It must begin and end with the same line. The second and fourth lines of the first stanza become the first and third lines of the second stanza, the second and fourth lines of the second stanza become the first and third lines of the third stanza and so on until you reach the end. There is no prescribed length so the end can come whenever the poet decrees. However, when the end comes the poet must use the two lines not yet repeated, the first and third of the opening stanza, in which they are reversed in order and become the second and fourth of the final quatrain. This has quite a hypnotic or doom-laden effect – due to its lexical repetitive and patterned schemes - and as such suits poems concerning memory, time, and desire. To combat

this restriction, a poet can choose open-ended repeating lines allowing ambiguity and room for manoeuvre.

It arrived in France from the Malayan peninsula in 1830, attribute to the works of Victor Hugo. It is possible to still see the original form being used in the Far East, using an abba rhyme scheme with 8 syllables per line and thematic changes in each quatrain. French writers such as Baudelaire, Hugo, and others increased its popularity in Europe, with it becoming popular in England and especially America through the works of Peter Schaffer, who wrote *Juggler, Magician, Fool,* Donal Justice, Anne Waldman, and John Ashberry.

The Ballade: Not to be confused with the ballad, is a French form. It is complex due to the number of rhyme sounds needed. It closes with an envoi which traditionally must be addressed to a prince, and as such the typical first word of the envoi is 'Prince'.

It is a nod to the royal patronage enjoyed by early practitioners such as Eustache Deschamps and François Villon, and as such is quite a happy convention. They begin with the invocations 'Prince Jesus!' Or 'Prince and Saviour!'. Each stanza, with the envoi included, end with the same refrain or rentrement. Modern English-language poets now use the form of an eight-line stanza with an envoi of four lines. The usual rhyme chime is ababbabA ababbabA ababbabA babA.

The Rondeau: there are various forms of the Rondeau, but the common them is the concept of a musically sung round. These forms are based on the principle of a poetic round which is typically a short poem that is characterised by the nature of its refrain, also known as its rentrement. It is a light, graceful, and merry form that refuses to take life too seriously.

It is typically between 13 and 15 lines that has two rhymes and a refrain R, formed by the first half of the opening line (hemistich). As such the rhyme scheme is R-aabba aabR aabbaR. There are of course variations to this such as Leigh Hunt's *Rondeau: Jenny Kissed Me,* which uses the same refrain structure but alters some of the rhymes. Other variations include:

- Rondeau Redoublé: each line of Stanza 1 forms in turn an end-refrain to the next four stanzas. The first line of stanza one becomes the refrain – last line – for the second stanza, and so on. The opening hemistich is repeated to form a final coda/ mini-envoi and each stanza alternates in rhyme between abab and baba.
- Rondel: the first couplet is repeated as a final refrain. Although there is not set length they are typically between 13 and 14 lines, with the rentrements also repeated in the middle of the poem. This is known as Rondel Prime and seems to be the standard in English verse. Although there are variations of the variations, the nature of the refrain stays the same each time. Dobson demonstrates what the rondel's correct form is: that it should contain two rhymes, one should be

masculine, and the other feminine, contributing to the overall call-and-response of the form.

- Roundel: An English version developed by Swinburne, closer in form to the rondeau than the rondel.
- Rondelet: AbAabbA
- Roundelay: Quite different; pairs of lines repeat in order. For example, the third and fourth lines of the first stanza become the first two lines of the second stanza. The last two line of the first stanza become the last two lines of each other stanza – a refrain. And then the third and fourth lines of the second stanza become the first two lines of the third stanza and so on. Other versions, such as those in line with 17th-century poet Thomas Scott, a formed with the same two-line refrain at the beginning and the end of each stanza.
- Triolet: An eight-line poem whose first and second lines are repeated at the end. The first line also repeats as the fourth creating a rhyme scheme of ABaAbbAB. They seem to be perfect for light love poetry.
- Kyrielle: Derives from Mass, whose wail of *Kyrie eleison!* (meaning *Lord, have mercy upon us*), is a familiar element. The final line of every stanza is the same, indeed rime en kyrielle, is an alternative name for repeated lines in any style of poetry. They are typically written in iambic tetrameter. There is no set length or rhyming patter for that matter. For example, quatrain of aabB and abaB, or couplets of aA and aA are used. Interestingly, many were written in 1666 due to the importance of numbers, seen when the Roman numerals in '**L**or**D** ha**V**e **M**er**CI**e **V**pon **V**s' add up to 1666 – this is known as a chronogram.

Ballad: Dervied from the French word 'balade', meaning a song that people dance to. It's etymology can be traced further back to the Latin word, 'ballare', which means to dance. They were traditionally sing or recited within rural communities in a form know as the traditional or folk ballad, and originated as a poetic form in Europe around the 14th century. The classical form was popularised orally by wandering minstrels and began to appear in print by the late 15th century. Their content was often a play on local legends from wandering minstrels of medieval times. The poetic form underwent a metamorphosis with the introduction of the literary ballad, which is a written form of ballad that embodies the spirit of the traditional ballad.

They are typically structured as a narrative, and the stories implement much imagery to convey the themes. Common themes include: religion, love stories, life and death, the supernatural, tragic romance, ancient legends, comical stories, and archetypal stories, which are a form of narrative that follows a very set and well-known pattern or model, often the original story that other iterations are seen as copies of.

Traditionally, as a type of formal verse, they follow a set meter and rhyme scheme. In contrast, modern iterations have more variation. They are typically written in iambic meter, although there is no set metre. The only rule is that the metre must remain consistent throughout. European ballads commonly use alternating lines of iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter, known as ballad meter. The consistency in metre and the use of rhyme is what gives the ballad a song-like quality.

The stanza typically follow the ABCB rhyme scheme, meaning that the second and fourth lines rhyme. The reason for this is that ballads originally consisted of rhyming couplets. They also contain a refrain. For example, John Keats' *La Belle Dame sans Merci*. Whilst quatrains are traditional, they are not compulsory. A six-line stanza is commonly found, rhyming xbxbxb, as in Lewis Caroll's *The Walrus and the Carpenter* and Wilde's *Ballad of Reading Goal*.

Ballads are a Goode example of accentual verse; it does not matter how may syllables a line contains, but rather it is the beats that matter, as ballads could be recited to a background piano, such as Marriot Edgar's *Albert and the Lion*. This highlights the importance of timing and the way a poem is said – it s not just words or a page, but rather and experience and performance.

Since its origins, poets have created their own variations, leading to different types of ballads, which can be classified into four major groups: traditional or classical, broadside, literary, and modern:

- Traditional: also known as classical ballads. They were traditionally sung or recited before they could be written down, and as such the classical form was not attributable to any specific author.one of the oldest known written examples is *Robin Hood* in Wynkyn de Worde's collection from 1495.
- Broadside; an early product of the printing press, as ballads would be printed on small broadsheets which were quite cheap to produce. They are also known as street ballads or slip songs, and first appeared in the 16th century, used in communities as a source of news, as new and exciting public events would often be written in ballad form. Topics included traditional themes of love, death, and religion. They can also be seen as an early form of journalism as they also discussed political events and natural disasters.
- Literary: a variant of the traditional ballad that appeared in the 18th century and was developed after intellectuals from the Romantic movement became interested in the form. Literary figures such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Burns produced their own ballads, imitating the folk ballad while also maintaining their distinctive style characteristic of the Romantic period. The subject matter discussed expanded to go beyond classical themes, but traditionally aspects such as rhyme and rhythm remained.

- Modern: tend to be less restricted and do not necessarily adhere to the rules of rhyme pr metre previously associated with the form. The connotation the balled returned to its musical root in the 19th century with the contemporary meaning of a slow love song. Old ballads now heavily influence the modern music industry for example, a genre known as the sentimental ballad is used to describe an emotional style of music with themes reminiscent of the traditional ballad. They tend to have a slow tempo and are accompanied by soft, acoustic instruments such as pianos and guitars. From this style, sub-genres have developed such as power ballads, jazz, and pop.

<u>The Ode:</u>

A lyric poem addressed to a subject with a varied or irregular rhyme scheme. The ode dates back to Ancient Greece, where it was used in public settings for celebrations. It derives from 'odein', the Greek for 'to chant', and as such is an open form of lyric verse made public Monument. It was pioneered by the Greeks lyric poet Pindar, whose 45 surviving victory odes (which are odes celebrating the victory at events such as the Olympics or war) provide the basis for many famous odes in English literature. Many of Pindar's odes were based on the tradition of the Greek chorus and were performed suing choirs. Another Grecian form of ode was the Aeolic ode, which was commonly used by Sappho, who developed the single voice ode. Sappho's odes focused more on a feminine perspective. Sappho was a Greek lyricist commonly regarded as the 'Tenth Muse'. The term 'lesbian' is widely regarded as an allusion to her as she lived on the island of Lesbos with her female lover, to whole many of her odes were dedicated. Much of her poetry was destroyed in 391 BC by Christian zealots, but her surviving odes led her to be considered a feminist and LGBTQ+ icon.

In Rome, the ode took another form, moving away from choral tradition, and instead being used for spoken word pieces. Horatio, a Roman poet, was a key figure within this movement who further developed the Aeolic ode. The Horatian ode became a distinctive type within poets and formed the basis of how the ode is used in English literature.

The Elizabethan age saw the ode experience a revival, used by poets such as John Milton, Ben Johnson, and Andrew Marvell. The English ode was typically written in either the Horatian or Pindaric form, used to make observations about life and religion. During the 17th and 18th centuries, the old e was further used by poets including John Dryden and Alexander Pope.

The 19th century, with the Romantic movement, saw another noticeable revival of the ode, with the poetry of Percy Bysshe Shelley, and a series of poems by John Keats. These poems turned the form on itself. However, the form has been used less frequently

throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, although it was notably used by poet W.H Auden. Indeed, in English poetry it was once the most grand, ceremonial, and high-minded of forms, but for the last hundred years it has fallen short of that orinigal grandeur, becoming no more than a (frequently jokey) synonym for 'poem'.

Types:

- Pindaric: also known as the Choiric ode, it is the oldest form of ode, used frequently in English literature. They have been traditionally used to celebrate Gods, rulers after victories, and athletes. During the Romantic period, the form was adapted by poets such as William Wordsworth to discuss themes centring around life. It is composed of three units and follows a strict structure where each stanza has a specific role. Each unit is then divided into three stanzas that have different purposes: the strophe, the antistrophe, and the epode.
  Strophe: the odes's first section, composed of three stanzas with lines of varying lengths. During the strophe, the Greek chorus would traditionally move from the right-hand side of the stage to the left-hand side during a performance. This elements of the ode is no longer common, but it is still important as it will typically lay out the ideas or arguments of the poem. It states a theme – addresses a hero, king, muse etc, praising them, celebrating their virtues and importance.
  Antistrophe: the second unit, where the Greek chorus would traditionally move from the left to right across the stage. Its purpose is to present either a counter argument to the strophe or to further explore the argument that the strophe offered. Can express doubt, another point of view, or a countervailing theme.
  Epode: its purpose is to summarise the ideas presented in the strophe and antistrophe and to provide a final statement. It was traditionally performed in the middle of the stage by the full Greek chorus. Unites the two previous idea, or comes down in favour of one view or the other.
  As such, it is thesis, antithesis, and synthesis to some extent, a dialectical structure.
  Ben Johnson gave these English names when he was writing: turn, counter-turn, and stand.

There is no set metre due to the variation in line length throughout each stanza, as long as the poem is in triads and each stanza is identical in scheme (this consistency is called a homostrophic structure). The important factor is that the epode will use a different metre to the strophe and the antistrophe before it. There is also no set rhyme scheme so it will vary poem to poem. They were traditionally used to celebrate art and the achievements of athletes and rulers, and as such, they tend to take on a celebratory tone as they would be performed orally by a chorus.

- Horatian: named after the Roman poet Horace, modelled around the Latin Aeolic ode. They focus on using a single choice to convey the central idea of the poem, which meant to be a calm message to its audience. It is arranged in a nonce stanzaic structure (which consists of 'nonce stanzas' or 'homostrophic stanzas' that follow a specific structure created for one specific poem). Many will be structured in quatrain or couplets and will be shorter in length than a Pindaric ode. They also do not have a set metre because of how the lines of the poem are constructed. They will have lines of irregular length throughout, and so there can be no set metre because of this irregularity. They can also contain different metres in one poem. There is also no set rhyme scheme. Historically, they were set to music and so would follow some rhyme scheme to add a sense of rhythm and pace. They were used to deliver a message to the audience about how the speaker admired the subject of the poem. Therefore, the tone is typically peaceful, clam, and contemplative.
- Irregular: also known as the Cowelyan ode (as it was partially developed by Abraham Cowelyan, who it was said could not matter the Pindaric or Horatian ode). It is one of the most popular form of ode with English literature, with many of the most famous odes being written in this formate. There is not set structure – it it usually left to the choice of the poet – but they often used quatrains or octaves as their stanza structure. There is also no set rhyme scheme or metre, the freedom that the poet has is a key feature of this form, as they are able to choose what metre and rhyme scheme they want to use. They tend to have a contemplative tone as they focus on the speaker's appreciation for a particular subject. For example, John Keats' *Ode to a Grecian Urn*.
- Sapphic: an Aeolic verse form of four lines – 3 liens contain 11 syllables, and the fourth contains 5. The first three lines (sapphic lines) follow the form of two torches, a dactyl, trochee and then another trochee (or a spondee). The fourth lines contains a dactyl and then a trochee (the last line is an adonic, often written as a parallel to the previous line, and can also be found as a pattern for the refrain in song to honour Adonis, from which it derived its name). The Adonic line can serve as a conclusion, envoi, question, denial and so on, as the poet wishes. It is important to the note that in its classical form, the verse is quantitative, measuring long/ short vowels (and not stressed or unstressed as in the English language). The classical original also contains anceps, a metrical unit (or semeion) which in classical verse can be long or short according to the poet's wishes. An anceps offers a free choice of trochee or spondee. There is also no prescribed number of stanzas.

  As such the scansion would like a follows: L=long s=short
  Ls-Ls-Lss-Ls-Ls
  Ls-Ls-Lss-Ls-Ls

Ls-Ls-Lss-Ls-Ls
Lss-Ls

Or with a substituted spondee:
Ls-Ls-Lss-Ls-LL
Ls-Ls-Lss-Ls-LL
Ls-Ls-Lss-Ls-LL
Lss-Ls

They were traditionally unrhymed, but in the Middle Ages the stanza acquired an ABAB rhyme scheme. Due to the prominent use of trochee and dactyl feet, the rhyme will generally be feminine or a 2-syllable rhyme with the last syllable unstressed.

It has been adapted to fit the English language by writing it in iambic tetrameter. It has generally been used for more personal and contemplative uses. Another Lesbian form is the Alcaic stanza.

- Lyric: a quieter, more contemplative and gently philosophical form, associated with the great romantics. These poets created their own forms, varying the stanzaic structure and length, rhyme scheme, and measure for each poem. It is not an ode in the typical classical sense but they do bear traces of a general tripartite structure and meditative-romantic feel. They do not follow the stricter Triadic design of the Pindaric form, but usually move from physical description to meditation, and finally to some kind of insight, resolution, or stasis. An object, phenomenon, or image is invoked, addressed, or observed by an ode writer; the observation provokes thought which in turn results in some kind of conclusion, decision, or realisation. Often the poet, as in grand public odes, opens with direct address, or they apostrophise their hero later in the poem.
- Anacreontics: Anacreon was a 6th-century Greek poet, whom we know little of; what we do known is from his work called the Anacreontea, published in France in the 16th century. It was after discovered that this was not *his* work but later imitations written in his honour. Despite this, the form is still widely respected and venerated. The poet most associated with English anacreontics is the 17th-century Abraham Crowley. Its structure takes the form of seven-syllable trochaic tetrameter that must concern itself with wine, pleasure, erotic love, and the fleeting nature of existence. Indeed, one of the enduring functions of all art is to remind us of the transience of existence, to stand as a 'memento mori' to remind us of all that has happened.

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