

Poetic Devices

alliteration

Repetition of the first sound of a word

O western wind, when w

assonance

Similar vowel sounds in words
with different consonants

Tiger, tiger, burning bright

The Tiger by William Blake

Would you, could you in a
box?

*Green Eggs and Ham by Dr.
Seuss*

consonance

Similar consonant sounds at the ends of words

Think, thank, thunk

anaphora

repetition of the first words in a sentence

He bare him up, he bare him down,

He bare him into an orchard brown.

The Falcon, anonymous

epistrophe

similar to anaphora, epistrophe is repetition but at the **end** of a sentence or line of poetry

If you had known the virtue of the ring,
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
Or your own honour to contain the ring,
You would not then have parted with the
ring.

The Merchant of Venice - William Shakespeare

diction

The specific words an author chooses

Usually excluding articles etc.

simile

Comparison using the word “like”
or “as”

O my Luve is like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June;
O my Luve is like the melody
That's sweetly played in tune.

A Red, Red Rose by Robert Burns

metaphor

Comparison of two unlike things
(without using “like” or “as”)

Beauty is truth, truth is
beauty

-John Keats

Hope is the thing with
feathers

-Emily Dickinson

Extended metaphor

A metaphor that is applied throughout the entire poem

“Hope” is the thing with feathers -
That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the
words -
And never stops - at all -

*Hope with the Thing with Feathers by
Emily Dickinson*

hyperbole

Extreme exaggeration

She scorched you with her radiance.

-James Tate

Figurative language

Using language to create a particular effect, such as: simile, metaphor, and personification
(usually opposite of literal meaning)

Life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're gonna get.

-Forest Gump

Books are the mirrors of the soul.

-Virginia Woolfe

When death comes like the hungry bear in autumn;

-Mary Oliver

imagery

Images or pictures the author uses to convey meaning

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

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

Ode to the West Wind by Percy Bysshe Shelley

onomatopoeia

When the sound of the word is
the same as the meaning

“The moan of doves in immemorial
elms;

And murmuring of innumerable
bees.”

-Alfred Tennyson

iamb

A metrical foot consisting of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable

My long two-pointed ladder's sticking
through a tree
Toward heaven still,
And there's a barrel that I didn't fill
Beside it, and there may be two or three
Apples I didn't pick upon some bough.
But I am done with apple-picking now.
Essence of winter sleep is on the night,
The scent of apples: I am drowsing off.

Apple Picking by Robert Frost

meter

Deliberate use of stressed and unstressed syllables to create a particular beat for a poem

Types include:

iambic pentameter,
(Shakespeare's sonnets),
which is comprised of 5
pairs of “feet” or iambs

Dactyls, anapests, and
trochees

Iambic pentameter

A rhythmic pattern of stressed
and unstressed syllables
containing 5 pairs of iambs

Two households, both alike in dignity,
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.

Prologue, Romeo & Juliet by Shakespeare

couplet

Two rhymed lines of poetry

There is a Lady sweet and kind,
Was never face so pleased my mind
-Thomas Ford?

quatrain

4 lines of poetry, which may be
rhymed

How sweet I roam'd from field to field
And tasted all the summer's pride,
Till I the Prince of Love beheld
Who i the sunny beams did glide!

Song by William Blake

stanza

A group of lines in a poem (looks like a paragraph)

I remember, I remember,
The house where I was born
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn;
He never came a wink too soon,
Nor brought too long a day,
But now, I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away!

-Thomas Hood

tone

The attitude of behavior the speaker has toward the subject matter
(i.e. How does the speaker feel about the subject? How does he treat it?)

You're a mean one, Mr Grinch

You really are a heel

You're as cuddly as a cactus

You're as charming as an eel

Mr. Grinch!

You're a bad banana

With a greasy black peel!

You're a monster, Mr. Grinch!

Your heart's an empty hole

Your brain is full of spiders

You've got garlic in your soul

Mr. Grinch!

I wouldn't touch you

With a thirty-nine-and-a-half foot pole!

personification

Attributing human
characteristics to an inanimate
object (non-living)

My car sputtered down the road
with cries of pain. She cried one final
cry and released her last breath, a
puff of smoke escaping from beneath
the hood. She was dead.
