

ACADEMIC STUDIES

ENGLISH

**Support Materials and Exercises
for**

IAU - READING COMPREHENSION PART A : POETRY



SUMMER 1999

**IAU READING COMPREHENSION
PART A : POETRY**

ACADEMIC ENGLISH

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Summer 1999

OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to

1. recognize and read with understanding and enjoyment a variety of written genres.

| TEACHING POINTS | | Level |
|-----------------|--|-------|
| Journalism | 1 Parts of newspapers (e.g. editorial, features, hard news, etc.) | 7 |
| | 2 Masthead | 7 |
| | 3 Attention getters: headlines, placement, fonts, photos, colour | 7 |
| | 4 Recognize fact and opinion (objective vs. subjective) | 7 |
| | 5 Pyramid style of writing | 7 |
| | 6 Writing leads (who, what, when, where, why, how) | 7 |
| | 7 Parts of magazines: table of contents | 7 |
| | 8 editorials | 7 |
| | 9 feature stories | 7 |
| | 10 columns | 7 |
| | 11 ads and abbreviation, etc. | 7 |
| Short Story | 12 Narrator: (point of view) 1st, 3rd limited, 3rd omniscient | 7 |
| | 13 Plot: introduction, rising action, climax, denouement | 7 |
| | 14 Character: central/minor; round /flat);methods of development | 7 |
| | 15 Setting/mood | 7 |
| | 16 Theme: central message or lesson | 7 |
| | 17 Also myth, legend, fable | 7 |
| Poetry | 18 Style: traditional & modern (free & blank verse) | 8&9 |
| | 19 Types: ballad, limerick, narrative, sonnet, other | 8&9 |
| | 20 Rhyme and rhythm (in general) | 8&9 |
| | 21 Literary devices: simile, metaphor, personification | 8&9 |
| | 22 alliteration, onomatopoeia | 8&9 |
| Non-fiction | 23 define essay and prose; contrast with fiction | 8 |
| | 24 Types: diary/journal, autobiography, biography, memoir, essay | 8 |
| Drama | 25 Special Conventions: e.g. stage directions, dialogue/monologue, | 9 |
| | 26 scenes and acts | 9 |

| | | | |
|---|----|--|---|
| | 27 | Plot, character, setting, theme in a one act play or modern play | 9 |
| Novel | 28 | Narrator: 1st, 3rd limited, 3rd omniscient | 9 |
| | 29 | Plot: introduction, rising action, climax, denouement | 9 |
| | 30 | Character: central, minor (round, flat) | 9 |
| | 31 | Setting/mood | 9 |
| | 32 | Theme: central message or lesson | 9 |
| Note: Continue to build the comprehension skills presented in BAU_ENG 3.1 -3.7. | | | |

NOTE TO FACILITATORS AND LEARNERS:

1. This module presents information and exercises to accompany the objectives of IAU-ENG 3.2 : READING COMPREHENSION.
2. Facilitators are free to use any support materials appropriate to their learners' needs.
3. Additional resource materials will probably be required for those wanting more information on this topic or for those needing more practice mastering certain areas. Reading materials can be drawn from any source and should be chosen to meet the individual interests and needs of each learner.
4. Alternate support materials may be appropriate. The Internet provides a wide variety of written materials, both the printed word and literature, at many reading levels.
5. Learners should participate in daily silent reading practice.
6. Learners should be encouraged to read all types of materials so they can develop their critical faculties for deciding which are examples of good writing, which deserve to be classified as literature, and which are unacceptable.
7. The purpose of reading literature is for more than investigating plot, character, setting or theme. Literature can be an invaluable tool for providing learners with writing models which they can emulate, often without conscious effort.
8. Reading widely is the basis for acquiring the broad general knowledge so important to future learning situations. It also provides a platform for discussions of life experiences, values, morality, decision-making, and many other topics useful to adult learners.
9. It is the learner's responsibility to search out additional reading materials to supplement the practice work included in this module by consulting with his/her facilitator.
10. Do **NOT** write in this module. Please make your notes and complete the exercises in your own notebooks so that other learners may also use these booklets.

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READING COMPREHENSION: POETRY

INTRODUCTION

In order to have reached this point in your studies, you have probably completed other units which have dealt with reading comprehension. You have had practice in finding the main idea of a paragraph or longer piece of writing, and have studied written passages in order to answer comprehension questions, to make generalizations and inferences from your reading, to learn new vocabulary. In other words, you have learned how to read and how to understand what you read.

Now, finally, you can start to read for enjoyment, which has really been the goal all along. Reading should not be a chore. Granted, sometimes you have to read for research, to gather information or for some other practical reason, but the real enjoyment comes from the reading you choose to do for your own reasons.

This section of IAU English course focuses on reading literature in its various forms: newspapers and magazines, poetry, drama, novels, short stories, essays and non-fiction such as diaries and biographies. Try to think of these forms of literature (sometimes called **genres**) as different ways that writers have chosen to express their ideas, to share their ideas with you. Remember that any communication requires a sender (in this case, a writer) and a receiver (the reader - you). The writer believed in his ideas passionately enough to express them in writing, hoping that the reader would react to his/her ideas in some way. It is not necessary to agree with everything you read, but you should be able to understand what the writer is saying. It is to be hoped that your knowledge will also be broadened and your mind opened to new possibilities, no matter what you read..

Some important terminology will be introduced in each section of this unit which will be useful to you as you progress toward senior studies in English literature. It is a good idea to keep a separate notebook (or a section of your English notebook) for new terms you encounter, along with their definitions. This also applies to any new vocabulary words you encounter in your reading. You

should always have a dictionary on hand when you read, and you should develop the habit of looking up new words whose meanings aren't clear from context.

JOHNNY'S POEM

Look! I've written a poem!
Johnny says
and hands it to me
 and it's about
 his grandfather dying
 last summer, and me
 in the hospital
and I want to cry,
don't you see, because it doesn't matter
if it's not very good:
 what matters is he knows
and it was me, his father, who told him
 you write poems about what
 you feel deepest and hardest.

Alden Nowlan

POETRY

Poetry is a special form of literature: it looks different from other forms of writing, and it sounds different. Many students say that they hate poetry, probably because it takes more effort to understand poetry than **prose** (forms of writing other than poetry). Strangely enough, though, when people search for an appropriate way to express their feelings, such as in times of tragedy, they naturally turn to the poem as a means of expression. You need only to check a daily newspaper to read examples of this in the “In memoriam” classifieds, where people wish to put into words their feelings of loss and remembrance. We all have favourite songs, and what is a song but a poem set to music? We spend time in greeting card stores searching for the perfect card to reflect our wishes for a happy birthday, an anniversary, a condolence; most of these wishes are written in verse form. Sometimes a silly advertising jingle sticks in your head for the entire day. All of these instances prove that poetry is everywhere in our everyday lives. We seem to have a need for forms of expression that include rhyme and rhythm.

Here are some quotations from well-known poets which attempt to define poetry.

“ Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the best and happiest minds. “ Percy Bysshe Shelley

“ If I read a book and it makes my whole body so cold no fire can ever warm me, I know that it is poetry. If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that it is poetry. “ Emily Dickinson

“ Poetry begins in delight and ends in wisdom. “ Robert Frost

“ Poetry is language that tells us, through a more or less emotional reaction, something that cannot be said. All poetry, great or small, does this. “
Edward Arlington Robinson

Keeping in mind that the emphasis in this section of the course is on reading comprehension and enjoyment of poetry, there are still some technical terms and conventions (rules) of poetry which you must be familiar with in order to appreciate what you will be reading. There will be opportunities to write some poetry if you feel inclined, but above all relax and enjoy what you read. Don't worry about technicalities - let the general impression (the "feel" of a poem) guide you.

RHYME AND RHYTHM

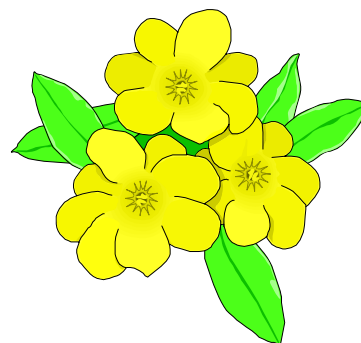
Rhyme is probably the easiest feature of a poem to identify. If the last word in the first line of poetry rhymes with the last word in the second line, or the third, you can easily identify a pattern. Rhyme does not depend upon spelling; it is a matter of sound, or pronunciation.

When you can identify a repeating pattern of similar-sounding words at the ends of the lines, then you have a **rhyme scheme**. Simply assign a letter of the alphabet (starting with A, of course) to each word at the end of a line of poetry; rhyming words are given the same letter. Sometimes a pair of words nearly rhyme ; you assign the same letter to each of these words also.

Example:

Hepaticas¹

| | |
|--|---|
| The trees to their innermost <u>marrow</u> | A |
| Are touched by the <u>sun</u> ; | B |
| The robin is here and the <u>sparrow</u> : | A |
| Spring is <u>begun</u> . | B |
| The sleep and the silence are <u>over</u> : | C |
| The petals that <u>rise</u> | D |
| Are the eyelids of earth that <u>uncover</u> | C |
| Her numberless <u>eyes</u> . | D |



Archibald Lampman

¹ A spring plant with delicate flowers, similar to the buttercup.

This poem has a rhyme scheme of ABAB CDCD.

Rhythm (or meter) is a slightly more difficult aspect of poetry for some students. There is a natural rise and fall in our language: we stress certain syllables and words more than others in order to emphasize meaning. In poetry, these patterns of stressed and unstressed syllables or words form a rhythm or meter. There is a name for each of the common patterns. At this stage in your study of poetry, it is not necessary to memorize and agonize over these lists of terms. They are presented here merely for your information and as a starting point in understanding the rhythm of poetry. The four main meters are listed below. Note that a \cup signifies an unstressed syllable and a / shows a stressed syllable.

| NAME OF RHYTHM | PATTERN OF STRESS |
|----------------|-------------------|
| iambic | $\cup /$ |
| trochaic | $/ \cup$ |
| anapestic | $\cup \cup /$ |
| dactylic | $/ \cup \cup$ |

Iambic is the most common meter in poetry. Look at another poem “ The Man He Killed” by Thomas Hardy, which follows. One way to approach the poem in order to identify rhythm is to read it at least three times, out loud if possible. Do not try to force the syllables and words into an unnatural pattern. Read the poem naturally, and allow the meter to become apparent to you. Remember that you are identifying stressed and unstressed **syllables**. If a word has two syllables, there will be two “sound bites” to chart as accented or unaccented. If there are three syllables, there will be three “sound bites”, etc.

The Man He Killed

U / U / U /
 “Had he and I but met
 U / U / U /
 By some old ancient inn,
 U / U / U / U /
 We should have sat us down to wet
 U / U / U U /
 Right many a nipperkin²!

U / U / U U /
 “But ranged as infantry,
 U / U / U /
 And staring face to face,
 U / U / U / U /
 I shot at him as he at me,
 U / U / U U /
 And killed him in his place.

U / U / U /
 “I shot him dead because --
 U / U / U /
 Because he was my foe,
 U / U / U / U /
 Just so: my foe of course he was;
 U / U / U /
 That’s clear enough; although

² nipperkin....a half a pint (of beer)

U / U / U /
 “He thought he’d ‘list³, perhaps,
 U / U / U /
 Off-hand-like--just as I--
 U / U / U /
 Was out of work--had sold his traps⁴--
 U / U / U /
 No other reason why.

/ / U / U / U
 “Yes, quaint and curious war is!
 U / U / U /
 You shoot a fellow down
 / U / U / U / U
 You’d treat, if met where any bar is,
 U / U / U /
 Or help to half-a-crown⁵.”

The pattern is not perfectly iambic. Notice that there are a few anapestic and trochaic rhythms thrown in. This is a good mixture that saves the poem from becoming too mechanical and forces the reader to slow down and pay more attention to the lines that show the poet’s thoughts on war.

³ ‘list....enlist in the army

⁴ traps....his belongings

⁵ half-a-crown....an English coin, enough to buy a beer or two

Each grouping of unstressed and stressed syllables is called a **foot**. Each foot contains one stressed syllable. There are names for the number of feet in a line of poetry.

| NAME | NUMBER OF FEET IN LINE |
|------------|------------------------|
| monometer | 1 |
| dimeter | 2 |
| trimeter | 3 |
| tetrameter | 4 |
| pentameter | 5 |
| hexameter | 6 |

In “The Man He Kill”, most lines have three feet. Therefore, we say that the first line, for example, is written in iambic trimeter (three feet of iambic meter), and the second last line of the poem is trochaic tetrameter (four feet of trochaic meter). Read the first verse again as printed below. The straight lines (|) divide the line into feet.

“Had he | and I | but met |
 By some | old an |cient inn |
 We should | have sat | us down | to wet |
 Right man | y

Exercise I

1. Identify the rhyme schemes in the following nursery rhymes.

2. Chart the rhythms with stressed (/) and unstressed (∪) marks.

(It is probably a good idea to re-write the poems if the copy you are working with does not belong to you. Use a pencil, as you may change your mind after re- reading .) Do not worry about finding neat patterns of rhythm. Mark the stresses where you feel they naturally fall. Occasionally you will find two stressed syllables side by side. Mark these as //.

- A. Jack and Jill went up the hill
To fetch a pail of water.
Jack fell down and broke his crown
And Jill came tumbling after.
- B. Mary had a little lamb.
Its fleece was white as snow.
And everywhere that Mary went
The lamb was sure to go.
- C. To London, to London,
To buy a fat pig.
Home again, home again,
Jiggity - jig.

Exercise 2

Follow the directions in Exercise I with some lines from more serious poems.

A. **He Who Binds to Himself**

He who binds to himself a Joy
Doth the winged life destroy;
But he who kisses Joy as it flies
Lives in Eternity's sunrise.

William Blake



B. **How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix**

I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris, and he:
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three.

Robert Browning

C. **The Tyger**

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

William Blake

- D. Because I could not stop for Death - -
He kindly stopped for me - -
The Carriage held but just Ourselves - -
And Immortality.

Emily Dickinson

TRADITIONAL POETRY

In the past, there were rules about writing poems. Poets arranged lines (also called **verses**) into groups called **stanzas**. Usually the poems were quite neat and evenly shaped - the lines were roughly the same length, the stanzas all contained a pre-determined number of lines. The rhyme schemes were regular, and the rhythm was identifiable. Imagine the skill involved in writing a poem following all these rules or conventions and still expressing some of the finest thoughts and feelings in a way that touches readers hundreds of years later.

The Plowman

I heard the plowman sing in the wind,
 And sing right merrily,
 As down in the cold of the sunless mould
 The grasses buried he.

And now the grasses sing in the wind,
 Merrily do they sing;
 While down in the cold of the sunless mould
 Is the plowman slumbering.

Ethelwyn Wetherald

MODERN POETRY

However, many modern poets break all of these rules because they feel that their poetry will be stilted and artificial if they cannot write freely, hence the term **free verse**. At first glance it appears that all of the conventions of poetry have been thrown away when you read such poetry, but in many ways free verse is more difficult to write. The poet creates his or her own form, although the poem must still sound like a poem; otherwise, it is prose. The poet is free to choose whether or not to use rhyme or a natural rhythm which does not follow a set pattern.

Kodak Moments

There they are, the photographs of me
 At three, and then again at ten,
 A pretty child whose heart is free
 And unafraid, whose eyes are wide
 Above an open grin,
 Life's impressions just entering in.

At fifteen or so, the child is gone
 And in its place

A haughty look and blue-eyed stare
Above a sensuous smiling mouth,
Reality's still a stranger in this face.

There I am again at twenty-one.
The eyes still smile,
But caution rides within,
For life's astride my shoulders now
And starting to press down.
The world makes frequent visits here..

By thirty-six, furrows crease the brow,
Lines parenthesize the eyes,
And sadness shapes the lips.
It's clear for all who care to look
That time has signed its lease--
And plans to stay awhile.

More recent snaps reveal crags and valleys
Etched on every aspect of the face.
The lips are thin; the eyes look in,
And laps of skin fold neatly underneath the chin.
Life's settled in.

Can this be me?
What's happened here?
Is this fair?
Does anybody care?

The answers make it absolutely clear;
Life has tried to wear me out;
It's time to make repairs -
To heart and soul and mind.

The face, of course, is mine, to keep.

Blank verse is a form of poetry which is actually very old. Shakespeare wrote many of his plays, especially the tragedies, using blank verse. The meter is iambic pentameter, but there is no rhyme scheme. This meter allows for natural flow of the English language (the majority of poetry being written in iambic meter), but there is no artificial restriction of rhyme at the end of each line. Usually the subject matter of poetry written in blank verse is fairly serious; on the other hand, humourous poetry tends to use light, quick rhythms and shorter lines or verses.

These lines from the poem “Ulysses” by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, illustrate the iambic pentameter of blank verse.

Old age hath yet his honor and his toil.
 Death closes all; but something ere the end
 Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
 Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.

TYPES OF POETRY

Although there are countless forms of poetry, this unit will introduce only a few: the ballad, the narrative poem, the sonnet, the limerick, the haiku, and concrete poetry.

Ballads are actually songs that tell stories. Many were passed down orally and anonymously from one generation to another, and have undergone many changes over the years. Traditional ballads had such bloodthirsty themes as murder, battle and revenge, along with a healthy portion of jealousy, unrequited love, and adventure. Ballads were often full of magic and folklore. Since the true ballad was originally a song, many actually look like songs: they have verses and repeated choruses, called **refrains**. The most common ballad stanza is two or four lines long, written in iambic meter, with a rhyme scheme of AABB.

The Two Ravens

As I was walking all alone
 I heard two ravens making a moan;
 The one unto the other did say,
 “Where shall we go and dine today?”

“In behind yon old turf dike
 I know there lies a new-slain knight;
 And nobody know that he lies there
 But his hawk, his hound, and his lady fair.

“His hound is to the hunting gone,
 His hawk to fetch the wild-fowl home,
 His lady’s taken another mate,
 So we may make our dinner sweet.

“You’ll sit on his white neck-bone,
 And I’ll pick out his bonny blue eyes;
 With one lock of his golden hair
 We’ll thatch our nest when it grows bare.

“Many a one for him makes moan,
 But none shall know where he is gone;
 O’er his white bones, when they are bare,
 The wind shall blow forevermore.”

Anonymous

Notice the characteristics of the ballad: the four-line stanza, the theme of an unfaithful lover, murder and deceit, the AABB rhyme scheme. Since this version of the ballad “The Two Ravens” has been translated from the original Scottish dialect (entitled “The Twa Corbies”), it does not rhyme perfectly.

Other traditional folk ballads which you may be interested in reading are “Lord Randal”, “The Griesly Wife”, and “Edward”. Canadian folk ballads include songs such as “The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald” by Gordon Lightfoot. Robert Service wrote poetry based on tales and ballads of the North, including “The Shooting of Dan McGrew” and “The Cremation of Sam McGee”.

The **narrative** poem tells a story; therefore, the plot of the poem may be more important than other aspects. The ballad is actually a type of narrative poem, as is the **epic**, which is much longer and more elaborate than the ballad. The epic has as its theme heroic feats of great achievement which shape our tradition and our history. The Greek poet Homer, who lived about 2,800 years ago wrote two long epic poems, the Illiad and the Odyssey, about a ten year war between the Greeks and Trojans.

Exercise III

Following is a list of interesting narrative poems. Try to find a copy of at least one to read and discuss the story with your instructor. (See the list of Sources at the end of the unit for suggestions on how to find poems.)

“ The Legend of the Qu’Appelle Valley “ by E. Pauline Johnson

“ Evangeline: A Tale of Acadia “ by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

“ The Bull Moose “ by Alden Nowlan

“ The Forsaken “ by Duncan Campbell Scott

“ David “ by Earle Birney

“ At the Cedars “ by Duncan Campbell Scott

“ The Lady of Shallott “ by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

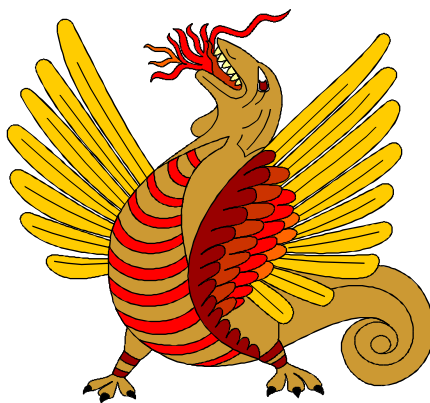
“ ‘ Out, Out’ “ by Robert Frost

“ The Rime of the Ancient Mariner “ by Samuel Taylor Coleridge

“ The Highwayman “ by Alfred Noyes

The **sonnet** was once a popular form of poetry, and is still written today, often with some slight variations. The traditional sonnet originated in Italy and followed **very** exact rules. It consists of fourteen lines of iambic pentameter, with divisions of eight lines (called the **octave**) and six lines (the **sestet**). These stanzas have rigid rhyme schemes of ABBAABBA and CDECDE, CDCDCD, or CDEDCE. The octave presents a problem, a question, or a dilemma, and the sestet offers an answer or solution. The subjects of sonnets are usually serious: love, death, religion, or reflection on life in general. The Italian poet Petrarch perfected this form of poetry, called the Italian or Petrarchan sonnet.

Later, the sonnet form was adopted by English poets, and it underwent some changes and became the very popular English or Elizabethan sonnet (also called the Shakespearean sonnet). It consists of three quatrains (four-line stanzas) which each have a rhyme scheme, and a rhyming couplet (two lines) at the end. Each quatrain elaborates the theme, with the rhyming couplet providing the conclusion. A typical rhyme scheme is ABAB CDCD EFEF GG. As in the Italian sonnet, the rhythm is most often iambic pentameter.



Exercise IV

Answer the questions which follow the sonnet.

WINTER UPLANDS

The frost that stings like fire upon my cheek,
 The loneliness of this forsaken ground,
 The long white shaft upon whose powdered peak
 I sit in the great silence as one bound;
 The rippled sheet of snow where the wind blew
 Across the open fields for miles ahead;
 The far-off city towered and roofed in blue
 A tender line upon the western red;
 The stars that singly, then in flocks appear,
 Like jets of silver from the violet dome,
 So wonderful, so many and so near,
 And then the golden moon to light me home;
 The crunching snowshoes and the stinging air,
 And silence, frost and beauty everywhere.

Archibald Lampman

- A. What is the rhyme scheme of this English sonnet?
- B. What is the meter of the poem?
- C. In an English sonnet, the natural divisions in thought or theme come at the end of the fourth line, the eighth line, and the twelfth line, with a rhyming couplet at the end. Does this sonnet follow that pattern? Explain how the point of view of the speaker changes.

The next three poetic forms are less serious in nature. If you are tempted to write your own poetry, a haiku, limerick or shape poem is a good starting point.

The **limerick** is a light-hearted and humorous, often silly, five-line poem which uses mainly anapestic (galloping) rhythm. Limericks certainly can't be considered the finest examples of poetry, but they are entertaining and easy to write.

There was a young lady of Niger
 Who smiled as she rode on a tiger
 They came back from the ride
 With the tiger inside,
 And the smile on the face of the tiger.

Anonymous

There was an old man with a beard,
 Who said, "It is just as I feared! --
 Two Owls and a Hen
 Four Larks and a Wren
 Have all built their nests in my beard. Edward Lear

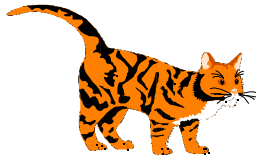
Try marking the rhythm of these lines. You will find that they are mainly anapestic.

Haikus were originated in Japan. They are unrhymed, three-line poems with five syllables in the first line, seven syllables in the second line, and five syllables in the third line. Aspects of nature are dominant in haikus. These short pieces usually present simple visual images; there is no room for complicated themes in a three-line poem. Keep in mind that if you are reading a translation of a haiku which was originally written in Japanese, the number of syllables may vary from the 5-7-5 rule.

Haiku

Russet leaves lie still
 on grass, and autumn's final
 flower looks sunward.

Anonymous



Cats doze and linger
 With patience near the garden wall.
 Then pounce: mouse for lunch.

Concrete poetry (also called shaped verse, emblem poetry, form poems, or picture poems) is simply poetry which is written in the shape of the subject of the poem. For example, the words in a poem about a butterfly would be arranged in the shape of a butterfly. Obviously, rhyme and rhythm are not important features in such poems; the shape and subject are.

A Christmas Tree

Angel
 You have topped
 Our Christmas tree and
 Seen three generations pass
 Beneath your outstretched wings.
 Protect
 Us
 Again this year.



The following is a shape poem by an anonymous poet based on a Bible verse (Proverbs xxiii 29-30).

The Wine Glass

Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who
hath contentions? Who hath wounds
without cause? Who hath redness
of eyes? They that tarry long
at the wine! They that
go to seek mixed wine!
Look not upon the
wine when it is red,
when it giveth
its odors
in the
cup
when it
moveth itself
aright
at
the last it
biteth like a serpent
and stingeth like an adder.

Kite

I
 wish
 I were a
 kite on high
 I could fly up to the sky
 Up to the blue sky
 High as a cloud
 I wish I were
 A kite
 Up
 Up
 Up
 Up
 +
 +
 +
 +
 +
 +

Anonymous

Exercise V

Try your hand at writing at least one limerick, one haiku, and one concrete poem. Submit these to your instructor for evaluation.

LITERARY DEVICES (Figures of Speech)

We all use figurative language in our everyday speech, although we may be unaware we are doing so. For example, on a really cold day in winter we may try to express our shock at walking out the door into the freezing air: “ It was so cold that my breath burned in my lungs! “ or “ The snow glistened like a thousand diamonds in the sun. “ Figures of speech such as these seem to communicate our impressions more effectively than ordinary language. They appeal to the senses: sight, sound, touch, smell and taste.

Poetry, even more so than the other genres of literature, employs figurative language to the best effect. Poets use literary devices as tools to create images, vivid word pictures, for the reader. Figures of speech require fewer words to express these images, and this “compact” feature lends itself especially well to poetry, where there is usually a limit to the length of a verse (line).

The following are just a few of the more common literary devices.

SIMILE A simile is a comparison between two things which do not seem to be alike, but upon closer examination there is a basis for comparison. The words “like” or “as” are most frequently used to state the comparison, although other words such as “seems”, “than”, or “appears” can signal a simile.

Examples: I wandered lonely as a cloud. William Wordsworth

My love is like a red, red rose. Robert Burns

Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee. Mohammed Ali

Some similes have become so popular that everyone is familiar with them and they become clichés - a bit worn and no longer effective in writing, although acceptable in spoken conversations.

Examples as blind as a bat as pale as a ghost as flat as a pancake

METAPHOR A metaphor is essentially the same as a simile, with an important difference: the comparison is implied rather than stated outright. Therefore, there are no words such as “like” or “as” to indicate that a comparison is being made.

Examples Memory is the diary that we all carry around with us. (Note that a simile would have stated that “Memory is like a diary.....”)

His eyes were gun barrels.

I lean against a tree, my eyes are knots
In its bark, my skin the wrinkles in its sides.

(Notice that it is often necessary to read more than one line of poetry at a time to get the meaning. Use the punctuation, or lack of it, to show you where ideas begins and end. *my eyes are knots / in its bark,*)

PERSONIFICATION When a writer endows⁶ an inanimate object, something which is not alive, with life-like qualities, we call that device personification. This applies to abstract concepts also; for example, love or truth or honour may be represented as living, breathing creatures.

Examples Earth wears a green velvet dress.

England expects every man to do his duty. Lord Nelson

Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the big shoulders. Carl Sandburg

⁶ Endows....”gives” . Often used when referring to gifts given in a will. Carries the meaning of supporting something so it will grow and flourish.

ALLITERATION Alliteration is often called a “ sound device “ because it has more to do with the sound of words and letters than with actual mental images. Tongue-twisters are good examples of alliteration, which is the repetition of identical beginning sounds (usually consonant sounds) of words in a series. It is important to emphasize that it is the sounds that are repeated, not letters, because different letters, such as a soft “c” and an “s”, can make the same sounds.

Examples The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free.

The rolling rumble of rocks

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers

ONOMATOPOEIA This sound device is sometimes called imitative harmony. It is the use of words which actually mimic the sound they recreate: tick-tock for the sound of a clock, ding-dong for a bell. If these words are well-chosen, we can actually hear the sound as we read them aloud.

Examples Snow crunching underfoot

The scratch of a match

Sizzling bacon

Hiss of a snake

There are literally dozens of literary devices, but for the purposes of this unit, reading and enjoying poetry, the above-mentioned are a good introduction.

Exercise VI

A. Look again at the poem “ Winter Uplands “. How many literary devices can you find in the poem? Make a list of similes, metaphors, personification, alliteration and onomatopoeia.

WINTER UPLANDS

The frost that stings like fire upon my cheek,
 The loneliness of this forsaken ground,
 The long white shaft upon whose powdered peak
 I sit in the great silence as one bound;
 The rippled sheet of snow where the wind blew
 Across the open fields for miles ahead;
 The far-off city towered and roofed in blue
 A tender line upon the western red;
 The stars that singly, then in flocks appear,
 Like jets of silver from the violet dome,
 So wonderful, so many and so near,
 And then the golden moon to light me home;
 The crunching snowshoes and the stinging air,
 And silence, frost and beauty everywhere.

Archibald Lampman

B. Find literary devices in the following poem.

Last Week in October

The trees are undressing, and fling in many places --
 On the gray road, the roof, the window-sill --
 Their radiant robes and ribbons and yellow laces;
 A leaf each second so is flung at will,
 Here, there, another and another, still and still.

A spider's web has caught one while downcoming,
 That stays there dangling when the rest pass on;

Like a suspended criminal hangs he, mumming
 In golden garb, while one yet green, high yon,
 Trembles, as fearing such a fate for himself anon.

Thomas Hardy

GENERAL NOTES ON READING POETRY

The best way to read a poem is aloud, if it's possible. Read it at least three times at first. Read it to others, and have others read it to you. Do all of this before you even start to think about the meaning of the poem.

After you feel you have mastered the reading, you are ready to start asking yourself some basic questions about the meaning of the poem.

WHO?

Who is speaking in the poem? Is it the poet, or is it a character (a persona) that the poet has adopted to speak through? Sometimes the answer will be obvious, and sometimes you will have to dig carefully to discover it.

Whom is the poet speaking to? Is it you (the reader), or is it to a character he has created, or is the poem addressed directly to another person, perhaps a friend or a lover? Poems have also been written as tributes in which the poet speaks directly to things: seasons of the year, flowers, even Grecian urns.

WHY?

Why do you think the writer created this particular poem? Was there a momentous occasion in his or her life - a tragedy or a loss, a love affair, an historic event - that prompted this person to put pen to paper?

WHAT?

What is the poem about? What is the theme? Is there an important message for the reader, or did the poet merely wish to share an experience, a sight, an emotion, or an idea?

Exercise VII

Read the following poem by Bliss Carman, a New Brunswick-born poet, and then ask yourself the questions about who, why, and what.

A Vagabond Song

There is something in the autumn that is native to my blood,
 Touch of manner, hint of mood;
 And my heart is like a rhyme,
 With the yellow and the purple and the crimson keeping time.

The scarlet of the maples can shake me like a cry
 Of bugles going by.
 And my lonely spirit thrills
 To see the frosty asters like a smoke upon the hills.

There is something in October sets the gypsy blood astir;
 We must rise and follow her,
 When from every hill of flame
 She calls and calls each vagabond by name.

You may wish to write a **paraphrase** of the poem, that is, to re-write it, in your own words, in prose. Sometimes the meaning becomes clearer if you do this. In a paraphrase, you do not try to interpret the meaning of the poem or express your opinion about it; you merely re-write it in a straightforward style. You may have noticed that poetic language has a few peculiarities.

1. Sometimes there is little or no punctuation or capitalization.
2. Words are omitted deliberately and the reader must fill them in mentally.
3. The syntax is different from prose. Syntax is the order in which words are put together. Poetic syntax occasionally seems totally backwards. E.g. “ Like a suspended criminal hangs he, “.

In your paraphrase, you should fill in missing punctuation and capital letters and words that have been omitted. Straighten out the syntax; that is, put the words in their natural order.

4. There may be some archaic words. These are words which were once in common use in the English language. A good dictionary will give you the meaning, and you can substitute a modern word in your paraphrase. Read again the poem "Last Week in October" in Exercise VI and notice the words "yon" and "anon". Look up their meanings.
5. To obtain an even rhythm, poets contract words. For example, "ever" becomes "ere" and "it is" becomes "'tis". Simply convert these words to their original forms when you paraphrase.
6. Use the punctuation marks provided by the poet to help you understand the meaning. Almost all poetry is written in grammatical sentences, but the syntax or word order may have been altered to fit a specific rhythm or to emphasize one part of the sentence. Periods (and semi-colons) still mark the end of complete thoughts; commas often surround phrases and clauses that are less important. Look first for the subject and verb to get the main idea. Then add in the extra details found in clauses and phrases.

Exercise VIII

Paraphrase the following poem.

The Frosted Pane

One night came Winter noiselessly, and leaned
 Against my window pane.
 In the deep stillness of his heart convened
 The ghosts of all his slain.

Leaves, ephemera, and stars of earth,
 And fugitives of grass,--

White spirits loosed from bonds of mortal birth,
He drew them on the grass.

Charles G. D. Roberts

Exercise IX

Read and enjoy these poems. Write a paraphrase for each. What message(main idea) do you think the poet was trying to send?

The Apprentice Priestling

A boy not ten years old
they are giving to the temple!
Oh, it's cold!

Masaoka Shiki

Translated by H. G. Henderson

Richard Cory

Whenever Richard Cory went down town,
We people on the pavement looked at him:
He was a gentleman from sole to crown,
Clean favoured, and imperially slim.

And he was always quietly arrayed,
And he was always human when he talked;
But still he fluttered pulses when he said,
'Good-morning,' and he glittered when he walked.

And he was rich -- yes, richer than a king --
And admirably schooled in every grace;
In fine, we thought that he was everything
To make us wish that we were in his place.

So on we worked, and waited for the light,

And went without the meat, and cursed the bread;
 And Richard Cory, one calm night,
 Went home and put a bullet through his head.

Edwin Arlington Robinson

Apparently with No Surprise

Apparently with no surprise
 To any happy flower,
 The frost beheads it at its play
 In accidental power.

The blond assassin passes on,
 The sun proceeds unmoved
 To measure off another day
 For an approving God.

Emily Dickinson

High Flight

O, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth
 And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings.
 Sunward I've climbed and joined the tumbling mirth
 Of sun-split clouds--and done a hundred things
 You have not dreamed of--wheeled and soared and swung
 High in the sunlit silence. Hovering there,
 I've chased the shouting wind along and flung
 My eager craft through footless halls of air.
 Up, up the long delirious, burning blue
 I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
 Where never lark, or even eagle flew,
 And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
 The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
 Put out my hand and touched the face of God

John Gillespie Magee

Birds, Bags, Bears, and Buns

The common cormorant or shag
 Lays eggs inside a paper bag.
 The reason you will see no doubt,
 It is to keep the lightning out,
 But what these unobservant birds
 Have never noticed is that herds
 Of wandering bears may come with buns
 And steal the bags to hold the crumbs.

Anonymous

Eight O'Clock

He stood, and heard the steeple
 Sprinkle the quarters on the morning town.
 One, two, three, four, to market-place and people
 It tossed them down.

Strapped, noosed, nighing his hour,
 He stood and counted them and cursed his luck;
 And then the clock collected in the tower
 Its strength, and struck.

A.E. Housman

Using any anthology of poems, find three that you like. Write a short essay for each one that explains what each means and why you like it. Here are some poets to look for: Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, E.J. Pratt, e.e. cummings, Milton Acorn, W. H. Auden, Earle Birney, Bliss Carman, Alden Nowlan, Leonard Cohen, Walter de la Mare, Henry Austin Dobson, Thomas Hardy, A. E. Housman, Langston Hughes, A. M. Klein, Irving Layton, D. H. Lawrence, Archibald Lampman, Edward Lear, A. A. Milne, Ogden Nash, Sir Charles G. D. Roberts, Carl Sandburg, Raymond Souster, Edwin Arlington Robinson, William Carlos William.

Answer Key to Exercises

Exercise I

/ / / /
 A. Jack and / Jill went / up the / hill
 / / / /
 To fetch / a pail / of wa / ter.
 / / / /
 Jack fell / down and / broke his / crown
 / / / /
 And Jill / came tum / bling af / ter.

/ / / /
 B. Mary / had a / little / lamb.
 / / / /
 Its fleece / was white / as snow
 / / / /
 And ev/erywhere / that Ma/ry went
 / / / /
 The lamb / was sure / to go.

 / / /
 C. To Lon/don, to / London
 / / /
 To buy / a fat pig
 / / /
 Home again, / home again
 / / /
 Jiggity-/jig

Exercise II

A. He Who Binds to Himself

/ u / u / u u /
 He who binds to himself a Joy A
 / u / u / u
 Doth the winged life destroy; A
 u / u / u / u u /
 But he who kisses the Joy as it flies B
 / u / u / u u /
 Lives in Eternity's sunrise. B

William Blake

Lines 1, 3, and 4 are tetrameter (four feet) with both trochaic and anapestic rhythms. Line 3 is a trimeter (three feet) with iambic and anapestic rhythms.

u / u u / u u / u u /
 B. I sprang / to the stir / rup and Jor / is and he A
 u / u u / u u / u u /
 I gal / loped, Dirck gal / loped, we gal / loped all three. A

These lines are mainly anapestic, with one iambic foot at the beginning of each. Since the lines are about horseback riding, it makes sense to use the anapestic meter, which is often called a galloping rhythm.

/ u / u / u /
 C Tyger! / Tyger! / Burning / bright A
 / u / u / u /
 In the / forests / of the / night A
 / u / u / u /
 What im / mortal / hand or / eye B
 u / u / u / u /
 Could frame / thy fear / ful sym / metry? B

A mixture of trochaic and iambic rhythm.

U / U / U / U /

D. Because / I could / not stop / for Death - - A

U / U / U /

He kind / ly stopped / for me - - B

U / U / U / U /

The Car / riage held / but just / Ourselves - - C

U / U / U /

And Im / mortal / ity. B

Perfectly iambic - lines 1 and 3 are tetrameter

- lines 2 and 4 are trimeter

If you read more of Emily Dickinson's poetry, you will notice that she favours this rhythm, along with four line stanzas and symmetrical lines.

Exercise III

Instructor will evaluate.

Exercise IV

A. Rhyme scheme ABABCDCDEFEGG

B. Iambic pentameter

U / U / U / U / U /

The frost / that stings / like fire / upon / my cheek,

U / U / U / U / U /

The lone / liness / of this / forsa / ken ground,

C. First quatrain (lines 1 - 4) The speaker in the poem (probably the poet himself) is sitting alone on a snow-covered mountain peak experiencing the cold and the silence. In these lines he is gazing upon his immediate surroundings.

Second quatrain (lines 5 - 8) The poet shifts his point of view to look further, across the fields to a distant city which sits on the horizon.

Third quatrain (lines 9 - 12) The point of view shifts even further, to the sky, to the stars and the moon in the purple night.

Couplet (ll. 13 -14) The speaker is brought back to earth and his journey home, back to his senses and impressions of stinging cold, silence and beauty.

Throughout these changes in point of view we maintain the impression that the poet loves nature and enjoys the experience of being out in winter. The beauty of the things he sees and feels is evident; there is an awe and a reverence in the **tone** of the poem (the attitude the poet has towards the subject).

Exercise V

Instructor will evaluate.

Exercise VI

Similes: The frost that stings like fire upon my cheek

I sit in the great silence as one bound (Paraphrase: I sit in the great silence like {as} a person who is bound or literally tied in place, motionless.)

The stars that . . . appear,
Like jets of silver.

Metaphors: The long white shaft upon whose powdered peak
I sit.... (snow being compared to powder)

The rippled sheet of snow where the wind blew
 (snow in flat, rippled areas looks like sheets)

The stars that singly, then in flocks appear,
 (stars compared to animals appearing in flocks, like sheep)

violet dome (the sky)

Personification: the golden moon to light me home (The moon is personified almost
 as a person who is providing a lantern to guide the path of the
 poet.)

The far-off city towered and roofed in blue
 A tender line upon the western red;
 (The city has the characteristic of tenderness - a human quality.)

Alliteration: frost that stings like fire
 powdered peak
 sheet of snow where the wind blew
 stars that singly
 fields for miles

Onomatopoeia: crunching snowshoes

Notice that although the poem is about winter and snow, there is more colour present than white: the blue rooves of the city, the red on the horizon, silver stars, violet sky, and the golden moon. This colour imagery appeals to your sense of sight.

B. Simile : Like a suspended criminal hangs he (a leaf)

. . . while one yet green, high yon,
 Trembles, as fearing such a fate for himself anon.

Metaphor: The trees fling “their radiant robes and ribbons and yellow laces.”

The leaf hangs “in golden garb.”

Personification: The trees are undressing, and fling....their radiant robes

Like a suspended criminal hangs he, mumming
In golden garb

one yet green . . .
Trembles, as fearing such a fate.

Alliteration: radiant robes and ribbons

golden garb

fearing such a fate

each second so is flung

Exercise VII

Who? Who is speaking in this poem? It is probably safe to assume that the poet and speaker are the same person in this poem. He is not speaking directly to anyone or anything. The poem is a tribute to the fall of the year.

Why? There is no momentous single occasion which prompts the writing of the poem. The poet is moved by the season of autumn every year, and is expressing the emotions he feels each time the season comes.

What? The poem is about Carman’s love of nature and of autumn. He wishes to share that experience and explain how the sight of the colours moves him to feelings of loneliness and wanderlust (the desire to follow the call of adventure). He wants to be a gypsy or a vagabond, roaming free.

Exercise VIII

The following is an example of a paraphrase of “ The Frosted Pane “. Check yours with your instructor.

On a cold, still winter’s night, frost formed on the window pane. It noiselessly created patterns that looked like all the natural things, like leaves and grass, that it has so recently killed.

POETRY PRE-TEST

1. Mark the rhythm in each of the following passages from poems. Use / for a stressed syllable and U for an unstressed syllable.
 - a.

About, about, in reel and rout
 The death-fires danced at night.
 The water, like a witches oils
 Burnt green and blue and white.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge
 from “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner”
 - b.

A bunch of the boys were whooping it up in the Malamute saloon;
 The kid that handles the music-box was hitting a jag-time tune;
 Back of the bar, in a solo game, sat Dangerous Dan McGrew,
 And watching his luck was his light-o’-love, the lady that’s known as Lou.

Robert Service
 from “The Shooting of Dan McGrew”
 - c.

Rescue my castle before the hot day
 Brightens to blue from its silvery grey.

Robert Browning
 from “Boot and Saddle”
 - d.

Then the little Hiawatha
 Learned of every bird its language,
 Learned their names and all their secrets;
 How they built their nests in Summer,
 Where they hid themselves in Winter.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
 from “Hiawatha’s Childhood”

2. Find examples of literary devices (figures of speech) in the following poem.

a. **Skaters**

Black swallows swooping or gliding
 In a flurry of entangled loops and curves;
 The skaters skim over the frozen river.
 And the grinding click of their skates
 as they impinge upon the surface,
 Is like the brushing together of thin
 wing tips of silver.

John Gould Fletcher

- b. My room's a square and candle-lighted boat,
 In the surrounding depths of night afloat,
 My windows are the portholes, and the seas
 The sound of rain on the dark apple trees.

Sea-monster-like beneath an old horse blows
 A snort of darkness from his sleeping nose,
 Below among drowned daisies. Far off, hark!
 Far off, one owl amidst the waves of dark.

Frances Cornford

3. What is the rhyme scheme of each of the poems in question # 2?
4. Read the following poem and answer the questions.

In An Old Barn by Charles G. D. Roberts (1860-1943)

- 1 Tons upon tons the brown-green fragrant hay
 2 O'er brims the mows beyond the time-warped eaves,
 3 Up to the rafters where the spider weaves,

4 Though few flies wander his secluded way.
 5 Through a high chink one lonely golden ray,
 6 Wherein the dust is dancing, slant unstirred.
 7 In the dry hush some rustlings light are heard,
 8 Of winter-hidden mice at furtive play.

9 Far down, the cattle in their shadowed stalls,
 10 Nose-deep in clover fodder's meadowy scent,
 11 Forget the snows that whelm their pasture streams,
 12 The frost that bites the world beyond their walls.
 13 Warm housed, they dream of summer, well content
 14 In day-long contemplation of their dreams.

Vocabulary

line 1 mows..... part of the barn where fodder is stored, usually
 at the top of the barn

line 10 fodder.....food for livestock

line 11 whelm.....to cover with water, submerge

1. Write a paraphrase of the poem. (Suggested length: one paragraph per stanza)
2. What is the theme of the poem? What do you think inspired the poet to write it?
3. Find examples of literary devices in the poem. Name each example you find.
4. What type of poem is this? Explain how the poem follows the conventions (rules) for this type of poetry, including rhyme, rhythm, stanza form.
5. Do you notice differences in the language of the poem from everyday English? If so, give examples.

ASSIGNMENT FOR EXTRA EVALUATION

If you wish to complete an extra project for evaluation, and your instructor agrees, you may wish to try one of the following.

1. Find a poem you like; prepare copies to share with your instructor or fellow students.
 - * Read the poem aloud.
 - * Paraphrase the poem.
 - * Explain what the poem means (theme) to you.
 - * What is your response to the poem? Why did you choose it?
 - * Talk about the literary devices you found in the poem and how they work to increase the effectiveness of the message, if applicable.

2. Collect several poems by the same poet. Do you notice common themes in his/her poetry? Do you like this poet's work? Why? Find out about the poet's life (biography) and prepare a brief summary of it. How can you relate (connect) the poet's life to the poetry?

3. Collect several poems on the same theme. Some popular themes in poetry are love, death, war, nature, religion. Compare the way that different poets approach the same theme. Which ones do you prefer? Why?

4. Collect several poems by modern Canadian poets. Write a brief commentary on each one (one or two paragraphs). Do you think that the poets have anything special to say about the Canadian way of life? What details (theme, language, images, etc.) do the poems include which are specifically Canadian?

PRE-TEST: ANSWER KEY

1. a
- U / U / U / U /
 About, / about, / in reel / and rout
 U / U / U /
 The death - / fires danced / at night.
 U / U / U / U /
 The wa / ter, like / a witch / es oils
 U / U / U /
 Burnt green / and blue / and white.
- b.
- U / U U / U / U U / U U /
 A bunch / of the boys / were whoop / ing it up / in the Mal /
 U / U /
 amute / saloon;
- c.
- U / U / U U / U / U / U U /
 The kid / that hand / les the mus / ic-box / was hit / ting a jag /
 U /
 -time tune;
- / U U / U U / U / U / U U /
 Back / of the bar, / in a so / lo game, / sat Dan / gerous Dan /
 U /
 McGrew,
- U / U U / U U / U / U / U U
 And watch / ing his luck / was his light- / o'-love, the lad / y that's
 / U /
 known / as Lou.
- d.
- / U U / U U / U U /
 Rescue my / castle be / fore the hot day
 / U U / U U / U U /
 Brightens to / blue from its / silvery grey.

e.

/ U /U /U / U
 Then the / little / Hiawatha
 / U / U / U / U
 Learned of / every / bird its / language,
 / U / U / U / U
 Learned their / names and / all their / secrets;
 / U / U / U / U
 How they / built their / nests in / Summer,
 / U / U / U / U
 Where they / hid them / selves in / Winter.

| | |
|----------------|--|
| 2. a) Metaphor | Black swallows swooping and gliding (the skaters) wing tips of silver |
| of silver. | Simile And the grinding click of their skates Is like the brushing together of their wing tips |
| | Alliteration skaters skim Swallows swooping |
| | Onomatopoeia grinding click of their skates |
| b. | Metaphor My room's a square and candle-lighted boat My windows are portholes the seas / (are) the sound of rain the waves of dark |
| | Simile Sea-monster-like beneath an old horse blows |
| | Personification drowned daisies |
| | Onomatopoeia snort |

(Note: students may find other literary devices. Check your answers with your instructor.)

- 3.a) ABCDEFG (actually no rhyme scheme) Free verse
 b) AABB CCDD (sometimes called "rhyming couplets")

4. a) Paraphrase
 The sweet-smelling hay in the barn is piled so high in the mows that it overflows past above the age worn eaves. The hay reaches all the way into the rafters where the spider makes his web, so far up that only a few flies wander into the spider's path. A ray of sunlight shines through a crack in the wall; you can see the dust moving in

the light, but nothing else disturbs the ray. Mice are moving in the hay; you can hear the rustling sound but can't see them

Below the hay mow, the cattle in their stalls have their noses buried in the fragrant clover they are eating. Because they are inside a warm barn, they can forget about the snow outside that is causing the stream in the pasture to swell and the frost that is covering the world. They have nothing to do all day but happily dream of summer.

- b. Have your instructor check your answer to this question. There are many possible answers that could be acceptable. Unless a poet specifically says (somewhere in his own writing) what his theme is in a particular poem, readers cannot possibly know exactly what the poet was thinking as he wrote. Any discussion about theme is, in fact, usually speculation on the reader's part. Sometimes themes are obvious and unarguable; in other poems, the theme is less clear and open to interpretation. For these reasons, it is important to understand that there is no single right answer to some literature questions. Broad interpretations are allowed, as long as proof of the reader's perception is supported by logical arguments and supports from the work itself.

Sample answer: This poem seems to present an appreciation of the simple things in life, of a country life, of silence and contemplation. The inspiration was the sight and the sound of a barn in winter, silent except for a few mice and the munching cattle. The barn is a quiet haven from winter.

- c. Literary devices
- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <u>Personification</u> | |
| dust is dancing | mice at furtive play |
| lonely golden ray | cattle.....forget the snows |
| the frost that bites | they (cattle) dream of summer |
| the spider weaves | |
| <u>Alliteration</u> | |
| few flies | shadowed stalls |
| dust is dancing | world beyond their walls |

- d. This is a sonnet. It has 14 lines, divided into two stanzas of eight lines (octave) and six lines (sestet). The rhythm is mainly iambic pentameter. There are five feet in each line.

Example: Forget the snows that whelm their pasture streams,

The frost that bites the world beyond their walls.

There is a shift in viewpoint between the stanzas. Notice that the octave is focussed on the haymow high in the barn. The sestet shifts the point of view downwards to the main floor of the barn where the cattle are in their stalls. In the sestet there is also mention of the world outside the barn.

- e. “O’erbrims” is a poetic word for “overbrims”. The shortened version keeps the meter even. “Whelms” is an archaic word. There are hyphenated words created for the pome, such as “winter-hidden”, “nose-deep”, and “time-warped”and words which almost sound like they should be hyphenated, like “warm housed” and “well content”.

BIBLIOGRAPHY - SOURCES

It is a good idea for instructors to have a few anthologies of poetry available for students. If this is not possible because of budget restraint, do not overlook the local library as a good source of material. Also, some local public school districts may have storerooms of books which are not being used or are even slated to be thrown away. Some anthologies contain not only poetry but also short stories, plays, essays, etc., all of which are material for 3.2 Reading Comprehension. Be on the lookout for used book sales, yard sales and garage sales.

If you are searching for an individual poem or poems by a particular poet, the Internet is a good place to look. If you don't have a computer in the classroom, even the smallest communities usually have an access center.

The following list of sources is a place to start if you want to build a file of available material. Any suggestions and additions to the list will be welcome.

Poetry Texts

Sound and Sense Laurence Perrine, Thomas R. Arp
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
1992 (eighth edition)
ISBN 0 - 15 - 582610 - 7

Poetic Insight D.W.S. Ryan, T.P. Rossiter
Jespersion Press
1987
ISBN 9 - 920502 - 63 - 6

Inside Poetry Glen Kirkland, Richard Davies
Harcourt Brace Canada
1987
ISBN 0 - 7747 - 1224 - 4

These books are not merely anthologies of poetry; they offer instruction, background information, comprehension questions, and, in some cases, opportunities for creative writing.

Anthologies of Literature

Some of these are out of print but may still be available in public schools in multiple copies. It's worth a try.

Our Literary Heritage Desmond Pacey
 McGraw-Hill Ryerson
 1982
 ISBN 0 - 07 - 548493 - 5

Literary Modes D.W.S. Ryan, T.P. Rossiter
 Jesperson Press
 1983
 ISBN 0 - 920502 - 11 - 3

Selections from Major Canadian Writers Desmond Pacey
 McGraw-Hill Ryerson
 1974
 ISBN 0 - 07 - 077662 - 8

Points of View: Themes explored through stories and poems Books 1 and 2

Bryan Newton
 Ward Lock Educational
 1980
 ISBN 0 7062 3857 5

Old but still useful Our Heritage

The Golden Caravan

Argosy to Adventure

Internet

Representative Poetry Online

Site Address: <http://instruct1.cit.cornell.edu/courses/engl203/1997/poetrylinks.html>

This site contains over 2,000 poems by 310 well known poets, as well as criticism on poetry. It is edited by members of the Department of English at the University of Toronto. There is no copyright problem in using these poems for non-commercial purposes.

This is only one example of what is available on the Internet. You can search for a particular poem if you know the title; just type in the title and the poet (if known) and click on Search. If you want to read poems by a particular poet, type in his or her name and search. Once you have accessed one poetry site, there are usually links to others.

FEEDBACK PROCESS

For feedback, please forward your comments to:

New Brunswick Community College - Woodstock
100 Broadway Street
Woodstock, NB
E7M 5C5
Attention: Kay Curtis
Tel.: 506-325-4866 Fax.: 506-328-8426

- * In case of errors due to typing, spelling, punctuation or any proofreading errors, please use the enclosed page to make the proposed correction using red ink and send it to us.

- * For feedback regarding the following items, please use the form below:
 - insufficient explanations;
 - insufficient examples;
 - ambiguity or wordiness of text;
 - relevancy of the provided examples;
 - others...

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