

Poetic Terms

Verse / Stanza

A **verse** has traditionally been one line of a poem. More recently, it is used as an alternative to **stanza** to name a grouping of lines.

But vainly the fierce frost
Interns poor fish, tanks trees in an armed host,
Hangs daggers from house-eaves
And on the window ferny ambush weaves;
In the long war grown warmer
The sun will strike him dead and strip his armour.

Extract taken from 'Hard Frost' by Andrew Young

Rhyme

A **rhyme** is where two words sound the same. Often used at the end of lines.

Half-Rhyme

A **half-rhyme** is where two words nearly sound the same.

Rhyming Couplet

Where two consecutive lines of poetry rhyme.

While the plowman near at **hand**,
Whistles o'er the furrowed **land**,
Extract taken from 'L'Allegro' by John Milton

Internal Rhyme

Found in the middle of a line.

Ah, distinctly I **remember** it was in the bleak **December**;
And each separate dying **ember** wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Extract taken from 'The Raven' by Edgar Allen Poe

Free Verse

Poetry that has no rhyme or rhythm.

1 The 2 frog 3 half- 4 fear 5 ful
6 jumps 7 ac 8 ross 9 the 10 path

Extract taken from 'Summer Evening' by John Clare

Blank Verse

Poetry written in lines of ten syllables in iambic pentameter, without rhyme.

Quatrain

A four-line poem or stanza.

ABAB Rhyming Pattern

Tell me not, in mournful **numbers**,
Life is but an empty **dream!**—
For the soul is dead that **slumbers**,
And things are not what they **seem**.

Extract taken from 'A Psalm Of Life' by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

The first and third lines rhyme.
The second and fourth lines rhyme.

AABB Rhyming Pattern

A mighty creature is the **germ**
Though smaller than the **pachyderm**
His customary dwelling **place**
Is deep within the human **race**

Extract taken from 'The Germ' by Ogden Nash

The first and second lines rhyme.
The third and fourth lines rhyme.

Metre

A pattern of **stressed** and **unstressed** syllables in a line of poetry. The rhythmic structure of a verse or line of poetry.

di dum di di dum di di dum
di dum di di dum di di dum
di dum di di dum
di dum di di dum
di dum di di dum di di dum



Rhythm

Gives a poem a metrical pattern, flow or movement of a line: fast or slow, calm or turbulent.

Enjambment

The practice of running lines of poetry from one to the next without using any kind of punctuation to indicate a stop.

Pass into nothingness but it will keep
A bower quiet for us, and asleep

Extract taken from 'Endymion' by John Keats

Stanza 01

Refrain

Stanza 02

Refrain

Stanza 03

Refrain

Repeated lines or sets of lines within a poem.