



B.O.D. (): Overview of Poetry

We know that the lines of a poem are numbered by 5's. Also, each new line of a poem is named after letters of the alphabet; the first line being 'a' while the next line is named 'b' and so on. Every line that rhymes with a previous line is also named after that alphabet.

Poetry has aspects in which it is organized. Understanding these aspects aids you in order to interpret poetry.

1. Rhyme: the rhyme is organized in patterns called rhyme schemes. The rhyme scheme of the above poem is **abba**.
2. Internal rhyme: this is the rhyming of words within one line of poetry as in **Jack Sprat** could eat no **fat**.
3. Masculine & Feminine Rhymes: if the rhyme sound of the very last syllable of the line (rebound, sound), the rhyme is called masculine. If the accented syllable is followed by an unaccented syllable (rebounding, sounding), the rhyme is called feminine.
4. Eye Rhyme: these are words used as rhymes that look alike but actually sound different such as alone and done, or love and remove.
5. Slant or Off-Rhymes: these are similar to eye rhymes in that the words are close in **rhyme sound**, but are not exact. A poet usually attempts to make these work for the smooth continuity or flow of the poem.
6. End Rhymes: when a line of poetry ends neatly within the line, so that each line ends with a strong mark of punctuation.
7. Enjambment: straddling or run on lines. These occur when the sense of flow over the end of lines – punctuation is loosely included in poem.
8. Meter: this is the rhythm or “pattern of accented*/stressed () and unaccented/unstressed () syllables” in the lines of poems.

A foot is one unit of meter. There are 5 basic feet:

Iambic (Iamb) – an unaccented syllable followed by an accented one (**re peat**); a metrical foot consisting of two syllables, a short one followed by a long one

- (a) Anapestic (Anapest) - **two** unaccented syllables followed by an accented one (**in ter rupt**)
- (b) Trochaic (Trochee) – an accented syllable followed by an unaccented one (**old er**)
- (c) Dactylic (Dactyl) – an accented syllable followed by two unaccented ones (**o pen ly**)
- (d) Spondaic (Spondee) – two accented syllables (**heart break**)

*stressed may be used to substitute for accented

For example:

Whose woods these are I think I know. **a**
 His house is in the village though; **a**
 He will not see me stopping here **b**
 To watch his woods fill up with snow. **a**

Types of Meter

Type	Adjective Form	Syllabic Pattern
Iamb	Iambic	U I
Trochee	Trochaic	I U
Anapest	Anapestic	UUI
Dactyl	Dactylic	I IU
Spondee	Spondaic	II

For example:

Whose woods | these are | I think | I know.
 His house | is in | the vil | lage though;
(4 Iambes per line – unstressed/stressed)

9. Blank Verse: Unrhymed iambic poetry with meter—usually with a pentameter. Most of Shakespeare's plays are written in this form.
10. Free Verse: Poetry that does not require meter, a rhyme scheme, or form.
11. Verse: is the name of a line of traditional poetry written in meter. It is named after the feet and the number of patterns repeated. Some types of verse are:

Monometer	...one foot	Pentameter	...five feet
Dimeter	...two feet	Hexameter	...six feet
Trimeter	...three feet	Heptameter	...seven feet
Tetrameter	...four feet	Octometer	...eight feet

12. Poems are broken into **Stanzas** which are divisions of the poem that are named according to the number of lines it contains, and are clumped together to state a complete idea/sentence. Some stanzas are:

13. **Punctuation** needs to be paid attention to, as well. As poets try to show readers how to read their work aloud to give meaning and add rhythm to the works.
14. Literary Devices and Figurative Language: These are techniques used to accentuate ideas, characters, or a work in general. They help bring clarity to the poet's work. To fully understand a poem, one must understand a writer's use of these devices.
15. Caesura: a strong, usually visible, pause within a line of poetry.
16. Diction: Is vital in poetry. This is the writer's choice of words. Diction also includes both vocabulary (individual words) and syntax (order or arrangement of words). This includes forms of sentences such as periodic and loose sentences.
17. Style: Is the particular way in which a piece of literature is written. Style is not what is, but **how** it is said. It is the writer's uniquely individual way of communicating ideas. **Many elements contribute to style, including word choice, sentence length, tone, figurative language, use or lack of dialogue, and point of view.**
18. One thing to **remember about poetry** is that, for the most, it is relaying someone's feelings, opinions, or experiences. Usually a study of the poet's life or comprehension issues of the time, and attempting to understanding where a poet is coming from gives insight into the poem and its meaning.

Do you have to know everything, every word and line of a poem? No, just get the gist! Most poems make sense once you completely read them minimally twice.

For example:

When I | see birch | es bend | to left | and right.
Across | the line | of straight | er dark | er trees

Couplet – 2 lines
Tercet -- 3 lines
Quatrain – 4 lines
Cinquain – 5 lines
Sestet – 6 lines
Septet – 7 lines
Octave – 8 lines

** Note: some poems are restricted by their number of lines.

Examples of literary devices and figurative language:

Alliteration, simile, metaphor, synecdoche, litotes, anaphora, chiasmus, imagery, and many more.

Use techniques and tactics you've been given and developed. The more you read, the better poetry analyses becomes.