Types of Poetry Forms

ABC

A poem that has five lines and creates a mood, picture, or feeling. Lines 1 through 4 are made up of words, phrases or clauses while the first word of each line is in alphabetical order. Line 5 is one sentence long and begins with any letter.

Acrostic

Poetry that certain letters, usually the first in each line form a word or message when read in a sequence. Example: Edgar Allan Poe's "A Valentine".

Ballad

A poem that tells a story similar to a folk tale or legend which often has a repeated refrain. Read more about ballads.

Ballade

Poetry which has three stanzas of seven, eight or ten lines and a shorter final stanza of four or five. All stanzas end with the same one line refrain.

Blank verse

A poem written in unrhymed iambic pentameter and is often unobtrusive. The iambic pentameter form often resembles the rhythms of speech. Example: Alfred Tennyson's "Ulysses".

Bio

A poem written about one self's life, personality traits, and ambitions. Example: Jean Ingelow's "One Morning, Oh! So Early".

Burlesque

Poetry that treats a serious subject as humor. Example: E. E. Cummings "O Distinct".

Canzone

Medieval Italian lyric style poetry with five or six stanzas and a shorter ending stanza.

Carpe diem

Latin expression that means 'seize the day.' Carpe diem poems have a theme of living for today.

www.englishwithshoaib.com

CamScanner

Cinquain

Poetry with five lines. Line 1 has one word (the title). Line 2 has two words that describe the title. Line 3 has three words that tell the action. Line 4 has four words that express the feeling, and line 5 has one word which recalls the title. Read more about cinquain poetry.

Classicism

Poetry which holds the principles and ideals of beauty that are chara
Greek and Roman art, architecture, and literature.

Concrete

Also known as "size poetry". Concrete poetry uses typographical arrangements to display an element of the poem. This can either be through re-arrangement of letters of a word or by arranging the words as a shape. Read more about concrete poetry.

Couplet

This type of poem is two lines which may be rhymed or unrhymed. Example: Walt Whitman's "To You".

Dramatic monologue

A type of poem which is spoken to a listener. The speaker addresses a specific topic while the listener unwittingly reveals details about him/herself.

Elegy

A sad and thoughtful poem about the death of an individual. Example: Gary R. Hess's "1983".

Epic

An extensive, serious poem that tells the story about a heroic figure.

Epigram

A very short, ironic and witty poem usually written as a brief couplet or quatrain. The term is derived from the Greek epigramma meaning inscription.

Epitaph

A commemorative inscription on a tomb or mortuary monument written to praise the deceased. Example: Ben Jonson's "On My First Sonne".

Epithalamium (Epithalamion)

A poem written in honor of the bride and groom.

Free verse (vers libre)

Poetry written in either rhyme or unrhymed lines that have no set fixed metrical pattern.

www.englishwithshoaib.com

CamScanner

Found

Poetry created by taking words, phrases, and passages from other sources and re-framing them by adding spaces, lines, or by altering the text with additions or subtractions.

Ghazal

A short lyrical poem that arose in Urdu. It is between 5 and 15 couplets long. Each couplet contains its own poetic thought but is linked in rhyme that is established in the first couplet and continued in the second line of each pair. The lines of each couplet are equal in length. Themes are usually connected to love and romance. The closing signature often includes the poet's name or allusion to it.

Haiku

A Japanese poem composed of three unrhymed lines of five, seven, and five morae, usually containing a season word. Read more about haiku poetry.

Horatian ode

Short lyric poem written in two or four-line stanzas, each with its the same metrical pattern, often addressed to a friend and deal with friendship, love and the practice of poetry. It is named after its creator, Horace.

Iambic pentameter

One short syllable followed by one long one five sets in a row. Example: la-LAH la-LAH la-LAH la-LAH la-LAH. Used extensively in sonnets.

Idyll (Idyl)

Poetry that either depicts a peaceful, idealized country scene or a long poem telling a story about heroes of a bye gone age.

Irregular (Pseudo-Pindaric or Cowleyan) ode

Neither the three part form of the pindaric ode nor the two or four-line stanza of the Horatian ode. It is characterized by irregularity of verse and structure and lack of correspondence between the parts.

Italian sonnet

A sonnet consisting of an octave with the rhyme pattern abbaabba followed by six lines with a rhyme pattern of cdecde or cdcdcd. Read more about Italian sonnets.

Lay

A long narrative poem, especially one that was sung by medieval minstrels.

www.englishwithhoaib.com

CamScanner

Limerick

A short sometimes vulgar, humorous poem consisting of five anapestic lines. Lines 1, 2, and 5 have seven to ten syllables, rhyme and have the same verbal rhythm. The 3rd and 4th lines have five to seven syllables, rhyme and have the same rhythm.

List

A poem that is made up of a list of items or events. It can be any length and rhymed or unrhymed.

Lyric

A poem that expresses the thoughts and feelings of the poet. Many songs are written using this type of writing. Read more about lyric poetry.

Memoriam stanza

A quatrain in iambic tetrameter with a rhyme scheme of abba -- named after the pattern used by Lord Tennyson.

Name

Poetry that tells about the word. It uses the letters of the word for the first letter of each line.

Narrative

A poem that tells a story. Read more about narrative poetry.

Ode

A lengthy lyric poem typically of a serious or meditative nature and having an elevated style and formal stanza structure. Example: Sappho's "Ode to a Loved One".

Pastoral

A poem that depicts rural life in a peaceful, romanticized way.

Petrarchan

A 14-line sonnet consisting of an octave rhyming abbaabba followed by a sestet of cddcee or cdecde

Pindaric ode

A ceremonious poem consisting of a strophe (two or more lines repeated as a unit) followed by a an antistrophe with the same metrical pattern and concluding with a summary line (an epode) in a different meter. Named after Pindar, a Greek professional lyrist of the 5th century B.C.

Quatrain

A stanza or poem consisting of four lines. Lines 2 and 4 must rhyme while having a similar number of syllables.

www.englishwithshoaib.com

CamScanner

Rhyme

A rhyming poem has the repetition of the same or similar sounds of two or more words, often at the end of the line. Read more about rhyme usage.

Rhyme royal

A type of poetry consisting of stanzas having seven lines in iambic pentameter.

Romanticism

A poem about nature and love while having emphasis on the personal experience.

Rondeau

A lyrical poem of French origin having 10 or 13 lines with two rhymes and with the opening phrase repeated twice as the refrain.

Senryu

A short Japanese style poem, similar to haiku in structure that treats human beings rather than nature: Often in a humorous or satiric way.

Sestina

A poem consisting of six six-line stanzas and a three-line envoy. The end words of the first stanza are repeated in varied order as end words in the other stanzas and also recur in the envoy.

Shakespearean

A 14-line sonnet consisting of three quatrains of abab cdcd efef followed by a couplet, gg. Shakespearean sonnets generally use iambic pentameter. Example: Shakespeare's "Sonnet 2".

Shape

Poetry written in the shape or form of an object. This is a type of concrete poetry.

Sonnet

A lyric poem that consists of 14 lines which usually have one or more conventional rhyme schemes. Read more about sonnets.

Sound

Intended primarily for performance, sound poetry is sometimes referred to as "verse without words". This form is seen as the bridging between literary and musical composition in which the phonetics of human speech are used to create a poem.

Tanka

A Japanese poem of five lines, the first and third composed of five syllables and the other seven.

www.englishwithshoaib.com

CamScanner

Terza Rima

A type of poetry consisting of 10 or 11 syllable lines arranged in three-line tercets.

Verse

A single metrical line of poetry.

Villanelle

A 19-line poem consisting of five tercets and a final quatrain on two rhymes. The first and third lines of the first tercet repeat alternately as a refrain closing the succeeding stanzas and joined as the final couplet of the quatrain.

Visual

The visual arrangement of text, images, and symbols to help convey the meaning of the work. Visual poetry is sometimes referred to as a type of concrete poetry.

www.englishwithshoaib.com

CamScanner