

Types of Poems:

Occasional poetry - its purpose is to commemorate, respond to and interpret a specific historical event or occasion - not only to assert its importance but also to make us think about just what its importance is.

Ekphrastic poetry - describe specific works of art

Concrete poetry - also known as shaped verse where the poems are composed in a specific shape so that they look like physical objects. The idea that poems can be related to the visual arts is an old one. Once, the shaping of words to resemble an object was thought to have mystical power. Today they can be playful exercises that attempt to supplement or replace verbal meanings with devices from painting and sculpture.

Sonnet - one of the most persistent and familiar fixed forms that originated in the Middle Ages in Italian and French poetry. It dominated English poetry in the late 16th and early 17th centuries and then was revived several times from the early 19th century onward. The sonnet has always been fourteen lines long, and it usually is written in iambic pentameter. It is most often printed as if it were a single stanza, although it actually has formal divisions defined by its various rhyme schemes.

- The **English** or **Shakespearean sonnet** is divided into three units of four lines each (**quatrains**) and a final unit of two lines (**couplet**) and sometimes the line spacing reflects this division. Its rhyme scheme reflects the structure of abab cdcd efef gg.
- The **Italian** or **Petrarchan sonnet** has a fundamental break in between the first eight lines (called an **octave**) and the last six (called a **sestet**). It's typical rhyme scheme is abbaabba ceded with many variations in between.

Pastoral poetry - a work describing and idealizing the simple life of country folk, usually shepherds who live a painless life in a world full of beauty, music and love.

Haiku - an import into the English poetic tradition from Japanese poetry. Originally, the haiku then called **hokku**, was a short section of a longer poem (called a **renga** or **haiku**) composed by several poets who wrote segments in response to one another. Traditionally the Japanese haiku was an unrhymed poem consisting of seventeen sounds (or rather five-seven-five pattern). **Haiku** aim for compression; they leave a lot unsaid. Typically, **haiku** describe a natural object and imply a state of mind. They usually have a "seasonal" requirement, so that each poem associates itself with one season of the year in a revolving pattern of change. Haiku more generally involve descriptions of nature, reflecting the Buddhist sense of nature as orderly and benign but also contingent and transient.

Symbolic poetry - sometimes symbols - traditional or not - become so insistent in the world of a poem that the larger referential world is left almost totally behind. In such cases the symbol is everything, and the poem does not just use symbols but becomes a symbolic poem, usually a highly individualized one dependent on an internal system introduced by the individual poet. Negotiation of meanings in symbolic poems can be very difficult. Reading symbolic poems is an advanced skill that depends on knowledge of context - especially the lives and work of authors and the special literary and cultural traditions they work from. But usually the symbols you will find in poems are referential of meanings we all share, and you can readily discover these meanings by carefully studying the poems themselves.

- **Symbol** - a **symbol** is something that stands for something else. The everyday world is full of common examples; a flag, a logo, a trademark, or a skull and crossbones all suggest things beyond themselves, and everyone likely understands what their display indicates, whether or not each viewer shares a commitment to what is thus represented. In common usage a prison symbolizes confinement, constriction and loss of freedom, and in specialized traditional usage a cross may symbolize oppression, cruelty suffering, death, resurrection, triumph or an intersection of some kind. The specific symbolic significance depends on the context. In a very literal sense, words themselves are all symbols (they stand for objects, actions, or qualities, not just for letters or sounds) but symbols in poetry are those words and phrases that have a range of reference beyond their literal signification or **denotation**.
- **the traditional symbol** - Other objects and acts have a built-in significance because of past usage in literature, or tradition, or the stories a culture develops to explain itself and its beliefs. Such things have acquired an agreed-upon significance, an accepted value in our minds. They already stand for something before the poet cites them; they are **traditional symbols**. Poets assume that their readers will recognize the traditional meanings of these symbols, and the poem does not have to propose or argue a particular symbolic value. Poets may use **traditional symbols** to invoke predictable responses - in effect using shortcuts to meaning by repeating acts of signification sanctioned by time and cultural habit. But often poets examine the tradition even as they employ it and sometimes they revise or reverse meanings built into the tradition. **Symbols** do not necessarily stay the same over time, and poets often turn even the most **traditional symbols** to their own original uses. Knowing the traditions of poetry - reading a lot of poems and observing how they tend to use certain words, **metaphors** and **symbols** - can be very useful in reading new poems, but traditions evolve, and individual poems do highly individual things. Knowing the past never means being able to interpret new texts with certainty. **Symbolism** makes things happen, but individual poets and texts determine what will happen and how.

Long Poem Genres p. 1125

Poems - tell a story, comment on current events. Poetry is used to express feelings and longings; it is distinct from other forms of writing; reading poetry involves learning and playing to certain rules;

- Writing that formulates a concentrated imaginative awareness of experience in language chosen and arranged to create a specific emotional response through meaning, sound and rhythm.
- Expression of feelings and ideas is given intensity by the use of distinctive style and rhythm
- Patterned arrangement of language to generate rhythm and thereby both express / evoke specific emotions or feelings in a concentrated way or with intensity
- a conflict between emotion and reason
- most poems explore conflict
- involves **metonymy** which is the use of the name of one thing for another closely associated thing there and **personification** which is the representation of an object or an abstraction
- Poetry invites use to pay attention to something we wouldn't notice otherwise
- Includes discreet lines, more blank space and more silence with pauses versus prose.
- May be classified into **subgenera** based on various characteristics, including their length, appearance, and formal patterns (of rhyme and rhythm) they depict; involves type of situation and setting.

Ballad - a narrative poem usually simple sometimes archaic language to relate a well-known story; feature ordinary socially lowly characters and extraordinary action, often involving supernatural occurrences, tragic, love and and / or semihistorical legendary subjects;

- Usually consists of short stanzas with a simple rhyme and meter, makes use of dialogue, repetition, rhyme and meter, makes use of dialogue, repetition (often a refrain), simple syntax and stock imagery. p. 1125
- are rooted in actual events
- **Ballad Stanza** - alternating three-beat and four-beat lines
- **Folk Ballad** - not very long; oral ballads are short versus written long ballads; one of the oldest poetic forms in the English language tradition
- one of the oldest poetic forms in English language tradition
- popular form and of the common people, traditionally composed and disseminated orally

Dramatic monologue - a hybrid form of a kind of lyric and a kind of closet drama (dramatic lyrics, dramatic in principle and lyric in expression); a single person (not the poet) utters the entire poem in a specific situation at a critical moment; this person addresses and interacts with one or more people but we know of the auditor's presence p. 1126

Elegy - a lyric in which the speaker laments the death of a particular person, praises that person, expresses his / her personal grief and often that of the community and seeks to both find and offer consolation. Sorrowful mood.

Epic - long narrative poem in elevated language that celebrates the achievements of one or more heroic personages of history or legend; the epic hero possess high social rank and high office with extraordinary, even superhuman qualities and skills. A poem about death.

- **Epic plots** - involve extraordinary events of major significance to an entire society; a spatially and temporally vast, vaguely defined setting that is usually much earlier than the time in which the poem was first written and read.
- **Epic conventions** - the opening states the poem's major subject, its **argument**; contains an invocation of the Muse or other source of inspiration; addressed directly in the second person ("thou" or "you") and asks to help the poet in his work; begins to recount the action **in medias res**, requiring the use of flashbacks later in poem
- **Epic plots** - are lengthy catalogs or lists
- **epic similes** are long and complex comparisons
- Epic plots involve a scene describing the arming of the hero for battle; at least one battle requiring extraordinary feats of derring, described vividly and at great length
- a journey, often to a literal or figurative underworld requiring further extraordinary feats of derring-do. originated as an oral form.

Mock Epic - a poem that uses epic language and conventions to depict subject matter - settings, characters, action - that usually wouldn't make it into traditional epics. The overall goal or effect is typically to "mock" or ridicule the particular social milieu represented in the poem and the values or worldview of that milieu; mock the grandeur and heroism of the epic itself and the values of worldview associated with it.

Pastoral Elegy - specific type of elegy that uses conventions associated with pastoral literature

Verse Novel - a narrative poem that is like a novel but written in verse. Tend to have more contemporary, familiar and often vividly described settings and to focus on more ordinary characters and actions

Verse Drama - a play or play written entirely or mainly in verse, whether designed for performance or as a closet drama to be read.

Three Sub-genres - include the following based on their **mode of presentation** (the borders between the genres are fuzzy, contestable and shifting):

- **Narrative Poetry** - tells a story with a plot related by narrator and based on actual versus made-up events. a poem that has a plot and narrator.
- **Dramatic Poetry** - Poem with plot but no narrator
- **Lyric Poetry** - lack of plots; Poem with plot but no narrator

Dramatic Play - plays written mainly in verse; considered a subgenre of poetry

Dramatic Poetry - consists of dialogue among characters; immediate by a narrator and narration is kept to a bare minimum.

- reads like a scene from a play
- depends on techniques of formal organization
- patterning unique to poetry
- use the same questions as in reading drama
- plot is less relevant versus character and conflict as well as setting, tone, language, symbol and theme pp. 856-857

Lyric Poetry - short poem changed or sung by a single singer / presenter (in the past accompanied by a stringed instrument, the lyre);

- denote the words of any song
- related to brevity ,musicality and mourning
- single speaker with the expression of intense feeling
- **Ode** is a lyric poem characterized by a serious topic and formal tone but without a prescribed formal pattern in which the speaker talks about and often to a revered person / thing.
- **Elegy** is a formal lament of the dead of a particular person, but focusing mainly on the speakers efforts to come to terms with his or her grief; death is the primary subject.
- few lyrics are not intended to be sung at all
- focus primarily on the feelings, impressions and thoughts.
- subjective inward experience of a single speaker
- **Descriptive / Observational Lyrics** - reflect speaker's point of view and focus on what they describe versus the subjective, internal experience or feelings of the speaker doing the describing p. 860

Dramatic Monologue - a subgenre between a lyric and dramatic poetry; "dramatic in principle", "lyric in expression".

- a single speaker who discusses him / herself
- poem's primary focus is characterization
- often unintentional revelation of personality, outlook and values
- offer us a window into a complex psychology
- narrator is an "unreliable narrator"

- the speaker addresses one or more **silent auditors** whose identity we can only infer from the speaker's words to them.
- there is a gap between our perception of the speaker and the speaker's own self-representation p. 861
- invented in the 19th century