

# What is Poetry?

Poetry is an expressive form of writing that is meant to be enjoyed by the reader. A poet uses beautiful, colorful language to make his subject come alive to the reader. Not all poems are about lovely, happy thoughts, but the author’s style of using words conveys his feelings and gives the reader pleasure. Poems are to be read over and over, for with each reading, new messages and pictures are brought to mind. A visual image is something we can picture in our minds; a freshly cut field of hay, a new colt on wobbly legs, or a rainy afternoon. An auditory image is an image we “hear” through the author’s writing; the hoarse cry of a crow, the waves pounding the shore or a steam engine whistle. Visual and auditory images are essential to poetry.

The first poems in history were probably associated with religious ceremonies of early people. Poetry was passed down orally through history long before man learned to write. The Iliad and The Odyssey are two epic poems written by a Greek named Homer over three thousand years ago. These poems are still read and enjoyed today.

**Read the following poem and “see and hear” the images the author writes about in a simple fashion. Number the lines of the poem on the left hand side.**

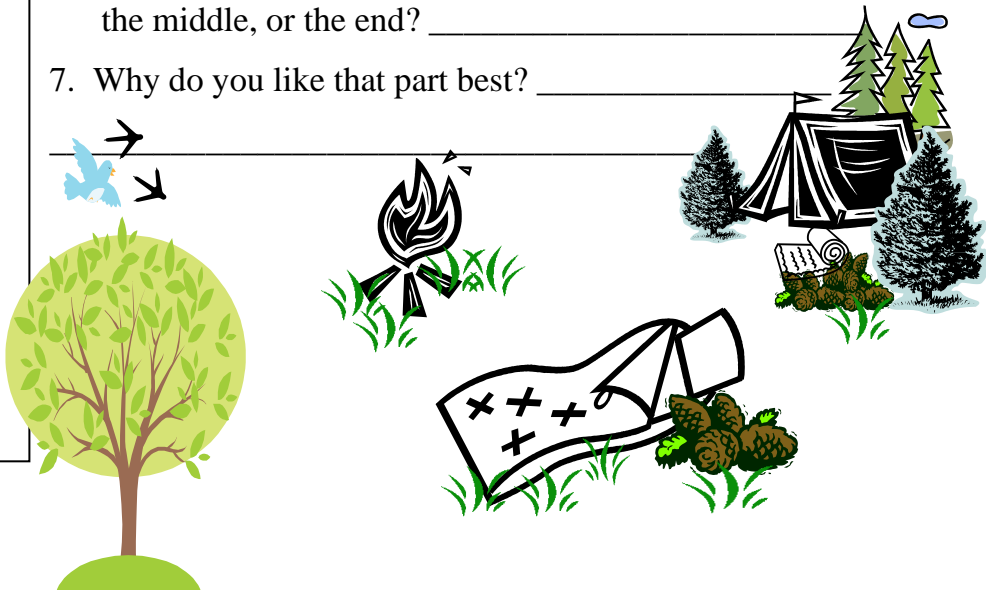
## VERY EARLY

*When I was in the early mist  
 The sun has hardly shown  
 And everything is still asleep  
 And I’m awake alone.  
 The stars are faint and flickering.  
 The sun is new and shy,  
 And all the world sleeps quietly,  
 Except the sun and I.  
 And then beginning noises start,  
 The whirrs and huffs and hums,  
 The birds peep out to find a worm,  
 The mice squeak out for crumbs,  
 The calf moos out to find the cow,  
 And taste the morning air  
 And everything is wide awake  
 And running everywhere.*

*The dew has dried  
 The fields are warm,  
 The day is loud and bright,  
 And I’m the one who woke the sun  
 And kissed the stars goodnight.*

**Karla Kuskin**

1. What time of day is it in the poem? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What do you “see” in the first four lines of the poem? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Where is the person in the poem? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What are the first auditory images you hear? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What picture do you “see” in the last five lines of the poem? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Which part of this poem do you like best? The beginning,  
the middle, or the end? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Why do you like that part best? \_\_\_\_\_



# Elements of Poetry

Most poems are written in a form called verse. This is one of the features that distinguishes poetry from prose. Prose is the type of writing used in short stories and novels; it does not have a specific form. Poetry has form, meter, and rhyme. A poet may use a variety of poetic forms, he may use one of several types of meter, and may or may not have a rhyme in his poem.

Rhyme means likeness of sounds in words. Most rhyme is found at the end of a line of poetry; a poet tries to use words that rhyme perfectly, which means the vowel sounds in the last syllable of a word must be the same. An example of a perfect rhyme is “great” and “state.” Rhyming words may have more than one syllable. An example of an imperfect rhyme is “cane” and “again.”

*Find several (at least three) words that are perfect rhymes with these words.*

stop \_\_\_\_\_

house \_\_\_\_\_

stir \_\_\_\_\_

content \_\_\_\_\_

stones \_\_\_\_\_

meadow \_\_\_\_\_

past \_\_\_\_\_

road \_\_\_\_\_

slowly \_\_\_\_\_

street \_\_\_\_\_

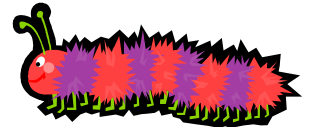
Which of these words has more than one syllable? \_\_\_\_\_

Which sound in meadow is the sound that must rhyme? \_\_\_\_\_

*Underline the rhyming words in these lines, then draw a line connecting the rhyming sounds.*

Bugs and worms come out in spring  
They wiggle, squiggle, fly, and sting.  
Some are brown and some are green  
Some so small they can't be seen.

Fuzzy, wuzzy, creepy crawly  
Caterpillar funny  
You will be a butterfly  
When the days are sunny.



Which two words look like they rhyme but have different vowel sounds?

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

*Think of rhyming words to end these lines of poetry.*

The soft white snow  
Like cotton fell  
Covering the earth  
From head to \_\_\_\_\_.

The rabbits hopped.  
The horses shied.  
While in the tree  
The robins \_\_\_\_\_  
To listen to the spring.

There is no one in the world like Pop. I laugh at him 'til I can't \_\_\_\_\_.

He's round and fat and jolly, too. There is nothing that he can not \_\_\_\_\_.

# More Elements of Poetry

Poetry should be read aloud for the fullest enjoyment of words and their sounds. Poetry is read with rhythm; the words may flow in a natural manner.

The rhythmical quality in poetry is called meter. A poetic foot is a group of two or three syllables with an accent on one of the syllables. When several feet are put together, this pattern is called meter. The most common meter used in poetry is the iambic meter. This meter has a poetic foot consisting of two syllables with the accent on the second syllable. Iambic meter is marked with a short mark  $\cup$  over the first syllable and a long mark  $\text{—}$  over the second syllable. This stanza of poetry uses iambic meter.

Mark the meter in this poem using a short mark over the first syllable and a long mark over the second syllable. The first line has been marked.

$\cup$   $\text{—}$   $\cup$   $\text{—}$   $\cup$   $\text{—}$   $\cup$   $\text{—}$   
 My father's face is brown with sun,  
 His body tall and limber.  
 His hands are gentle with beast or child  
 And strong as hardwood timber.

*Prose does not use meter.* Read these selections and identify them as poetry or prose. Mark the rhyme and the meter in the poetry only.

The butterfly flitted from tree  
 to tree in search of a place  
 to rest from the storm.

Prose or Poetry? \_\_\_\_\_

The popcorn rattled the sides  
 of the popper as the red glow  
 of the fire burned luminously  
 in the dark room.

Prose or Poetry? \_\_\_\_\_

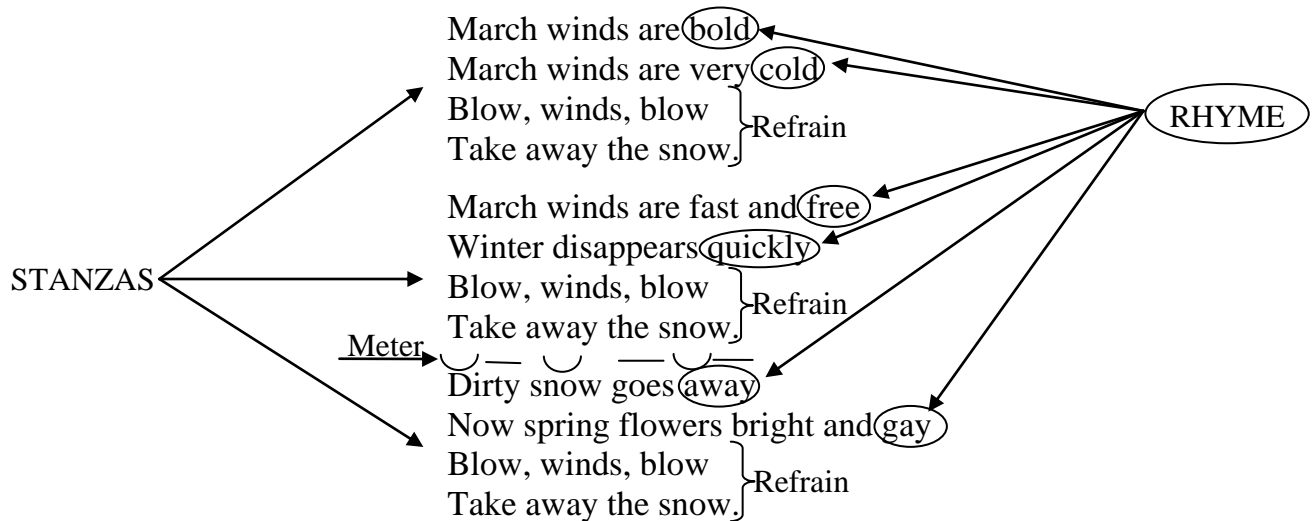
Love is a canine,  
 Warm, friendly and soft.  
 He's man's best friend  
 And will always be mine.

Prose or Poetry? \_\_\_\_\_

My best friends live on the shelf.  
 We visit when I am by myself.

Prose or Poetry? \_\_\_\_\_

This poem illustrates the elements of poetry you have learned and points out characteristics of the poem.



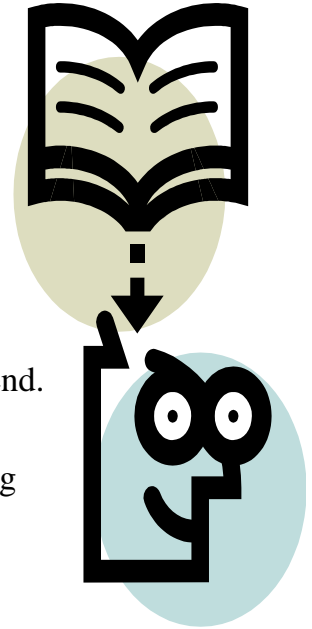
# How to Write a “Series of Lies” Poem

A “Series of Lies” poem is fun exaggeration of you – a characteristic or something you are known for having. Using the formula below, create your own “Series of Lies” poem.

- The formula:
- Step One** – Create a wild exaggeration about yourself.
  - Step Two** – Write at least four statements which help support your exaggeration.
  - Step Three** – End your poem with an “if... then...” statement that relates to your exaggeration.

Example:

- (step one) I wish I were not so extremely brilliant.
- (step two) My incredible mind overflows with ideas...  
weighing me down with knowledge.  
I am so smart; I wrote volumes four, eight and sixteen  
of the Encyclopedia Britannica.  
I’ve read every book in the public library  
and for fun  
I casually decipher Mayan hieroglyphics on the weekend.
- (step three) If I were to spontaneously explode,  
The skies would be filled with brilliant stars of learning  
And bits of knowledge would sparkle in the street  
Like the morning sun.



## Write your own

(step one) \_\_\_\_\_

(step two) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(step three) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Emotion Poetry – a Five Senses Poem

## CREATING YOUR SENSES EMOTION POEM:

1. Choose any emotion – maybe it is how you feel today, in general or one you really like.

*Example: Jubilance*

2. Choose a color to represent the emotion you selected.

Be specific – instead of using *blue*, use “sapphire” or “aqua” in your poem.

If you don’t know the name of your color, write a phrase to help you think of it later – the color of the ocean in a storm, or the yellow of a new Corvette, or the brown of a baby cow.

*Example: Chartreuse*

3. Create a simile comparing your emotion to your color.

*Example: Jubilance is as bright as chartreuse.*

4. List several sounds your emotion creates or makes. Think of all the ways it is in the world.

*Example: pings, popping, cheers, screams of delight*

5. Your emotion has a taste, what does it taste like? Think of the things that make one taste the emotion you have chosen.

*Example: fresh limes, sour honey dew melon, wintergreen mints*

6. List several smells of your emotion – what things smell like your emotion?

*Example: Freshly mown lawns and grasses, cotton candy, the wind from a roller coaster, birthday cakes, a hot dryer full of clothes*

7. What visually represents your emotion? Come up with several ways your emotion looks.

*Example: white clouds on a blue sky, white twinkle lights (non-blinking), a 3 year old birthday party, white daisies with yellow centers*

8. How does your emotion make you feel when you are feeling that way?

*Example: invincible, content, loved, joyous*

Write the poem. Using the brainstorming information from the other side, create your poem using the formula below.

- First line:*           What color is the emotion?
- Second line:*       What does the emotion sound like?
- Third line:*         What does the emotion taste like?
- Fourth line:*        What does the emotion smell like?
- Fifth line:*         What does the emotion look like?
- Sixth line:*         How does the emotion make you feel?

**Example:**

*Jubilance*

*Jubilance is as bright and crisp as chartreuse.  
It is the sound of firecrackers and screams of delight.  
Wintergreen mint engulfs my mouth with jubilance,  
And it smells like limes picked fresh from the tree.  
Jubilance looks like a fluffy white cloud on a clear blue day.  
I feel content when jubilance is around.*

Joyfulness

Joyfulness is bright as the noonday sun.  
It sounds like children laughing on a playground.  
It has the taste of cold ice cream on a hot summer day,  
And it smells like freshly mown grasses floating on the wind.  
Joyfulness looks like a million balloons at a pool party.  
It makes me feel super-human with delight.

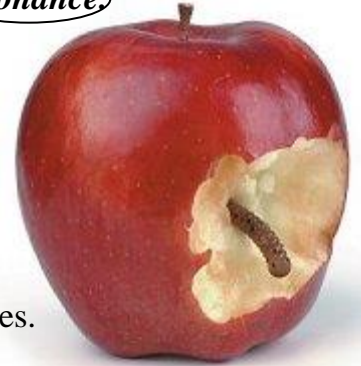
# Alliteration, Assonance, and Onomatopoeia

Alliteration and onomatopoeia are called poetic devices. Both are methods of using words and sounds for effect in a poem.

Alliteration is the repetition of a beginning consonant sound for effect. These may be vowel or consonant sounds. Brown bears burrow below boulders.

Assonance is the repetition of an initial vowel sound. The alligator ate only apples and avocados. *Neatly underline the alliteration in these sentences, and circle the assonance.*

1. The warm wind wafted across the window from the orchard.
2. I accidentally ate an awful apple.
3. Slipping and sliding, I stumbled in the snow and slush.
4. Beth borrowed Barry's books before biology.
5. The gallant goat gobbled garbage greedily and gnawed gala apples.



*Finish these sentences with alliterations of your own.*

1. Red roses \_\_\_\_\_
2. Swiftly swimming \_\_\_\_\_
3. While wandering \_\_\_\_\_
4. The tired traveler \_\_\_\_\_
5. The ribbon of road \_\_\_\_\_

Onomatopoeia is a poetic device that produces an auditory image to the reader. It is the imitation of natural sounds. For example: The steam hissed from the open valve.

*Underline the words you "hear" in these sentences.*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. The train rumbled down the track.   | 4. The hard-hit tennis ball whistled by my ear.         |
| 2. The truck's brakes screeched today. | 5. The old floor creaked as we walked slowly across it. |
| 3. The rain beat on the barn roof.     | 6. Her heels tapped lightly over the stage.             |

*Complete the following sentences using onomatopoeia of your own.*

- |                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. The angry dog _____.     | 4. Her floppy shoes _____. |
| 2. My rusty gate _____.     | 5. Mike's bicycle _____.   |
| 3. The tree branches _____. | 6. His arrow _____.        |



# Cinquain Poems

One other type of poetry that is fun to write is the cinquain. Like the haiku, this poetic form follows a pattern, but it does not rhyme. The cinquain is always five lines long (the word *cinq* means “five” in French).

Cinquains always the following pattern:

- The first line is a noun or the subject of the poem.
- The second line consists of two words that describe the first line (adjectives)
- The third line is three action words (-ing verbs)
- The fourth line contains two words describing the first line
- The fifth line is a single word that refers back to the original word or subject.

Read this example of a cinquain. Write your own cinquain next to it with the words given for you.

*Clouds*  
*Fluffy, Puffy*  
*Billowing, gliding, creeping*  
*Soft pillows of rain*  
*Thunderheads.*

*Pudding*  
*Delicious, \_\_\_\_\_*  
*Quivering, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_*  
*Favorite \_\_\_\_\_*  
*Dessert.*

Write a cinquain of your own.

Step One: Write a one-word subject followed by a comma.

Line One: \_\_\_\_\_

Step Two: Write down two words to describe this subject. Separate them with a comma.

Line Two: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Step Three: Write down three action (-ing) verbs done by the subject. Separate them with a comma.

Line Three: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Step Four: Write down a short phrase showing how you feel or ideas about the subject.

Line Four: \_\_\_\_\_

Step Five: Write a synonym for the subject of the poem (your first word you wrote).

Line Five: \_\_\_\_\_

FORMATTING NOTE: A cinquain should be centered on the page when written or typed.

Motorcycles  
Loud, Fierce  
Circling, swerving, clustering  
They swarm like black bees  
Harley



# Narrative Poetry

A narrative poem tells a story about something. The following poem tells a story about a place that is special to the author. Number the stanzas in the poem and then answer the following questions.

## Old Log House

On a little green knoll  
At the edge of the wood  
My great great grandmother's  
First house stood.

The house was of logs  
My grandmother said  
With one big room  
And a lean-to-shed.

The logs were cut  
And the house was raised  
By pioneer men  
In the olden days.

I like to hear  
My grandmother tell  
How they built the fireplace  
And dug the well.

They split the shingles;  
They filled each chink;  
It's a house of which  
I like to think.

Forever and ever  
I wish I could  
Live in a house  
At the edge of a wood.

James S. Tippett

1. Find four alliterative words in the first stanza. What are they?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Who told the author about this special place?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you think the author has ever seen the place he is writing about?      YES      NO  
Why? Or why not?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Which lines rhyme in this poem? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Circle the words that rhyme.

6. Where is this house located? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Who does "they" refer to in the fourth and fifth stanza?

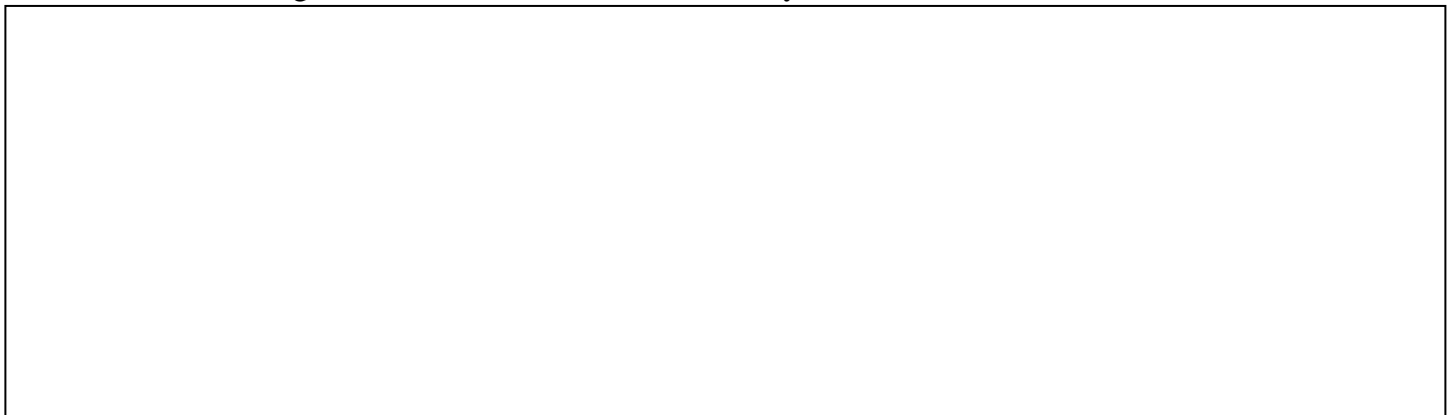
\_\_\_\_\_

8. What is a "chink"?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. What are "olden days"? \_\_\_\_\_

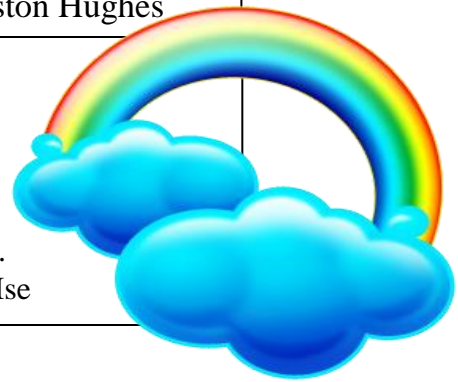
10. Draw and color a picture below of this old log house and its surroundings. Remember to include a chimney.



# Comparing Poems

Each poet has his own distinctive method of writing and expressing his thoughts. The author's way of expressing himself is his style. Some authors and poets use long, descriptive phrases, while others use short, terse phrases to convey the same thought. Some poets have a humorous style of writing while others have a more serious style. Each of the poems below is about the same topic. The difference in these poems is the author's style or the poetic form. Read these poems together and then answer the questions that follow.

<p><i>How gray the rain And gray the world And gray the rain clouds overhead, When suddenly Some cloud is furled And there is gleaming sun instead!</i></p> <p><i>The raindrops drip Prismatic light And trees and meadows burn in green, And arched in air Serene and bright The rainbow all at once is seen.</i></p>	<p><i>APRIL RAIN SONG</i> <i>Let the rain kiss you. Let the rain beat upon your head with silver liquid drops. Let the rain sing you a lullaby.</i></p> <p><i>The rain makes still pools on the sidewalk. The rain makes running pools in the gutter. The rain plays a little sleep-song on our roof at night – And I love the rain.</i></p> <p>~Langston Hughes</p>
<p><i>Serene and bright That was not anywhere before, And so may joy Fill empty hands When someone enters through a door.</i></p> <p>~Elizabeth Coatsworth</p>	<p><i>THE RAINS OF SPRING</i> <i>The rains of spring Which hang to the branches Of the green willow, Look like pearls upon a string.</i></p> <p>~Lady Ise</p>



1. Which poem begins as dismally as the rain? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Which poem describes the sounds of the rain? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What colors are mentioned in these poems? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Of the three poems, which gives the strongest visual image? \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Which poem has the strongest auditory image? \_\_\_\_\_

Write a line from the poem that illustrates (shows) auditory imagery. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Do all of these poems rhyme? \_\_\_\_\_

# Acrostic Poems

Another type of poetry that is fun to write is the acrostic. Like the haiku, this poetic form follows a pattern, but it does not rhyme.

Acrostics are poems whose first letter of each line spells a word vertically. There is not a set number of lines with an acrostic. An acrostic may be about any subject. Read this example of an acrostic, then write your own with the word given.

Starting in September.	V	_____
Children gather to learn	A	_____
Hours of learning and play	C	_____
Open books and desks	A	_____
Outside fun for all	T	_____
Lasting knowledge.	I	_____
	O	_____
	N	_____



## Examples of Acrostics:

**O**nly sailors take the risk  
**C**rashing through the waves  
**E**vening brings no calm  
**A**lone the sailor fights  
**N**ever will he win for long.

**W**atching silently  
**A**s they swallow up shells  
**V**ictims of the hands of water  
**E**ven the sand can't escape  
**S**lowly, the shoreline changes

Now create your own. Your word **MUST** be at least seven (7) letters in length which is seven lines.

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# Comparing Poems

Comparing poems are contrasting poems. The two below are about cats. Each author has described a cat in a different manner. Read the poems and then

answer the questions.

## CATS

*Cats sleep  
Anywhere,  
Any table,  
Any chair,  
Top of piano,  
Window-ledge,  
In the middle,  
On the edge,  
Open drawer,  
Empty shoe,  
Anybody's  
Lap will do,  
Fitted in a  
Cardboard box,  
In the cupboard  
With your frocks  
Anywhere!  
They don't care!  
Cats sleep  
Anywhere.*

~Eleanor Farjeon



## CAT

*The black cat yawns,  
Opens her jaws,  
Stretches her legs,  
And shows her claws.*

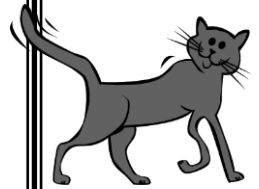
*Then she gets up  
And stands on four  
Long stiff legs  
And yawns some more*

*She shows her sharp teeth,  
She stretches her lip,  
Her slice of a tongue  
Turns up at the tip.*

*Lifting herself  
On her delicate toes,  
She arches her back  
As high as it goes.*

*She lets herself down  
With particular care,  
And pads away  
With her tail in the air.*

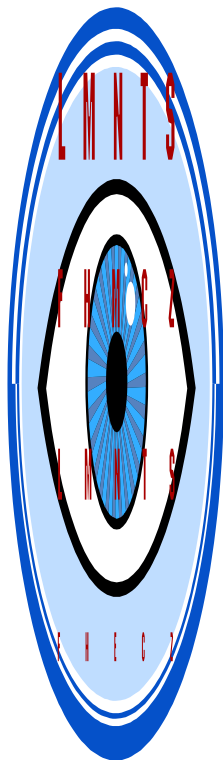
~Mary Britton Miller



- Does each poem have stanzas? YES NO -- Which one does? \_\_\_\_\_
- List three phrases that describe how graceful cats can be. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Which of these poems has a clear visual image? \_\_\_\_\_
- What is the rhyme pattern in the first poem? \_\_\_\_\_
- Which of these poems do you like best? \_\_\_\_\_ WHY? \_\_\_\_\_
- Write one stanza about a favorite animal or pet, have two lines rhyme.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Creating Poetry on your own

Part of becoming a better writer is being able to use words to your advantage in creative ways. For the following, create three poems based on the types of poetry given. Use elements of poetry and poetic devices to create your word works.



Visual Poetry Creation Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Make your creation at least five lines.

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Auditory Poetry Creation Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Make your creation at least five lines.

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# Understanding Personification

Each of the following sentences uses a personification. An object or thing is talked about as if it were a real person. Draw a line under the word that names the object or thing. Then decide which of the three statements below the sentence gives the real meaning of the sentence. Write and X in the blank before the correct statement.

**Example:** - With a nasty persistence, Maud's alarm clock nagged her out of a deep sleep.



- The alarm clock refused to stop ringing.  
 The alarm clock went off at the wrong hour.  
 The alarm clock rang and rang until it roused Maud.

1. With a despairing groan, the antique high-chair collapsed under the weight of the hefty baby.

- The chair was in a great deal of pain.  
 The chair made a breaking noise before it fell to pieces.  
 The chair was basically sturdy.

2. The abandoned refrigerator stood forlornly on the back porch, ready to be collected by the junk man.

- The refrigerator felt neglected and ignored by its owners.  
 The refrigerator was working well.  
 The refrigerator was old and useless.

3. The awful news struck Tom a stunning blow from which he never recovered.

- The news reached out and hit Tom.  
 The news affected Tom seriously.  
 The news wasn't so bad after all.

4. As the breeze stirred through the forest, a group of pines nodded and whispered secretly to each other.

- The trees rustled in the wind.  
 The trees were bending over from the force of the wind  
 The trees were having a conversation about secret matters.

5. Jealousy drove a knife into Pete's heart when he saw Penelope dancing with the handsome stranger.

- Somebody crept up behind Pete and stabbed him with a knife.  
 Pete was thrilled to see Penelope enjoying herself with a stranger.  
 Pete felt acutely envious.

6. The shiny fifty-cent piece winked enticingly from the muddy gutter, so I put down my Packages and picked it up.

- The coin gleamed in the sunlight.  
 The coin wasn't worth stopping for.  
 The coin tried to draw attention to itself.

7. Karen's stomach growled plaintively as she stood in the long cafeteria line.

- Karen's stomach was angry.  
 Karen hated the sight of food.  
 Karen was extremely hungry.

8. A dark cloud took possession of the sun and refused to give it up for the rest of the afternoon.

- The cloud behaved very stubbornly.  
 The cloud blocked the sun for several hours.  
 The cloud drifted past the sun in a matter of minutes.

# Understanding Personification

Each of the following sentences uses a personification. An object or thing is talked about as if it were a real person. Draw one line under the words that name the object or thing. Then decide which of the three statements below the sentence gives the real meaning of the sentence. Write an X in the blank before the correct statement.

**Example:** The office building shuddered during the earthquake.

- The office building was afraid.  
 The earthquake made the building move back and forth slightly.  
 The earthquake destroyed the building.



1. The weather was so cold yesterday morning that our poor, old car coughed for several miles.

- The car wouldn't start.  
 The engine didn't run smoothly.  
 The car had caught a cold.

2. The fortune teller's earrings danced each time she nodded her head.

- The earrings swung rapidly.  
 The fortune teller was wearing a pair of magic earrings.  
 The earrings obeyed her nods.

3. The battered, rusty bike complained loudly as Jay rode it to the bike shop.

- The bike didn't want Jay to ride on it..  
 The bike wanted to stay put.  
 The bike made noises because it was not in good condition.

4. The typewriter keys chattered happily as Pam typed the last page of her report.

- The typewriter keys moved quickly.  
 The typewriter talked a lot.  
 The typewriter was glad the report was nearly finished.

5. Although its engine had been damaged in the crash, the train managed to limp into the station.

- Most of the wheels on the train were missing.  
 The train had to be pushed into the station.  
 The train moved slowly into the station.

6. On the first day of spring, the skies wept all morning.

- The skies were sad because spring had arrived.  
 The sun shone brightly all day in celebration of spring.  
 It rained all morning.

7. The forest fire threatened the houses in the valley.

- The forest fire told the houses to do what it said, or else.  
 The forest fire was coming closer to the houses in the valley.  
 The houses were on fire.

8. During the storm, the winds furiously whipped the waves into towers of foam and water.

- The winds were extremely angry.  
 The winds made the waves higher than usual during the storm.  
 In their fury, the winds hit the waves with a whip.

# Understanding Metaphors

In each numbered sentence below, a metaphor is used. Draw a line under the words that name the two things being compared. **Accept any minor variation in the underlining, particularly in the case of adjectives.** Below each sentence are listed three possible interpretations or meanings for the metaphor. Read each one, then put an “X” in the blank next to the meaning that fits best in the sentence. An example has been done for you.

**Example:** “Every evening I spend with you is always a circus!” said Sam’s babysitter in exasperation.



- Being around Chester is generally boring  
 The babysitter usually takes Chester to the circus.  
 Evenings with Chester are active and hectic.

- Marjorie paced around the house dejectedly. It was a prison, confining her indoors on that lovely, sunny day.  
 The house had bars on the windows.  
 Marjorie had no choice but to stay inside.  
 The house was dark and dirty.
- “If that little mosquito bugs me one more time,” said Jack, pointing at his sister, “I’ll be tempted to swat her!”  
 Jack’s sister is being a bothersome pest.  
 Jack’s sister is humming softly.  
 Jack and his sister are bothered by insects.
- Have you ever seen Hilda run in the annual relay race? She is a bullet, streaking past the spectators toward her target: the finish line.  
 Hilda runs extremely fast.  
 Hilda is dangerous to the other runners.  
 Hilda is skilled at target shooting.
- “This entire day has been one long nightmare,” sighed Mr. Frimp as he locked the office door. “Thank goodness it is done!”  
 Mr. Frimp has been working late today.  
 Mr. Frimp has been daydreaming.  
 Mr. Frimp has had a bad day at work.
- Minnie Mae was dynamite in the class talent show last week. The audience made her come back and sing two encores.  
 Minnie Mae sang too loudly.  
 Minnie Mae exploded with rage.  
 Minnie Mae gave a great performance.
- When things get tense at work, Woody is the only ray of sunshine. He never loses his sense of humor.  
 Woody makes fun of other people.  
 Woody is the only one who is cheerful.  
 Woody likes sunny weather best of all.
- “How can Tim be such an ox?” cried Mrs. Robertson in despair. “Every single time he comes into this house, he crashes into something and breaks it!”  
 Tim likes to destroy things.  
 Tim is clumsy and awkward.  
 Tim brings animals into the house.
- The mayor was a complete jellyfish at the meeting last night; he wouldn’t take a stand on any issue.  
 The mayor was wishy-washy manner.  
 The mayor talked entirely too much.  
 The mayor was too weak to concentrate.



# Understanding Similes

In each numbered sentence below, a figure of speech (simile) is used. Draw a line under the words that name the two things being compared. **Accept any minor variation in the underlining, particularly in the case of adjectives.** Below each sentence are listed three possible meanings for the figure of speech. In the blank beside each sentence number, write the letter of the meaning that fits best in the sentence. An example has been done for you.

**Example:**  C  The bus progressed down the crowded city street as quickly as an aging elephant.

- a. breaking the speed limit
- b. swaying back and forth
- c. moving very slowly



1. \_\_\_\_\_ Far in the distance, we saw the city shimmering like a jewel in the hot night.
  - a. looking as if it might freeze
  - b. shining brightly
  - c. looking ugly and dirty
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Janet came back from the party as forlorn as a lost puppy.
  - a. looking miserable
  - b. jumping around happily
  - c. in a bad temper
3. \_\_\_\_\_ That child has eyes like a hawk's; she never misses anything.
  - a. small and ugly eyes
  - b. practically blind eyes
  - c. sharp and observant eyes
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Standing in the tiny kitchen, Al looked like a giant in a doll's house.
  - a. He seemed to enjoy cooking.
  - b. He was looking at a doll.
  - c. He was too tall for the room.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ The song was as mournful as a small child's cry.
  - a. fast-moving
  - b. sad and wistful
  - c. unbearable harsh
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Long after the rest of the family had gone to bed, Dad prowled around the house like a restless lion.
  - a. fast-moving
  - b. sad and wistful
  - c. unbearable harsh
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Ray's angry voice sounded like a whip traveling through the air.
  - a. fast-moving
  - b. sad and wistful
  - c. unbearable harsh
8. \_\_\_\_\_ The old man's eyes were as lifeless as a plastic doll's.
  - a. bright and alert
  - b. lacking any expression
  - c. made out of plastic
9. \_\_\_\_\_ The pompous waiter strutted around the room like a puffed-up, old goose.
  - a. seemed cute and fluffy
  - b. was self-important and vain
  - c. waddled awkwardly
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Thomas behaved as if he were a time bomb about to explode.
  - a. He seemed calm.
  - b. He kept falling asleep.
  - c. He was nervous and fidgety.