

Poetry

Poetry can seem intimidating, especially if you feel you're not as well versed as others. But the world of poetry is vast and diverse! Here are five different types of poetry and a stanza with each to give you an example of what that style looks like.

Limerick

Limericks are funny (and sometimes rude!) poems which were made popular by Edward Lear in the 19th century. They have a set rhyme scheme of AABBA, with lines one, two and five all being longer in length than lines three and four. The last line is often the punchline. Their sound is very distinctive, it's likely you've heard or read one before!

There was an Old Man with a beard,

Who said, "It is just as I feared! --

Two Owls and a Hen,

Four Larks and a Wren,

Have all built their nests in my beard."

By Edward Lear

Ode

The ode is one of the oldest forms of poetry and believed to have come from ancient Greece. The word 'ode' is derived from the Greek word 'aeidein' which means 'to sing or chant', and these poems were originally performed with a musical instrument. An ode is typically written to praise a person, event or thing (you could write an ode to your pet or favourite food!).

Spaghetti Spaghetti!

Spaghetti! Spaghetti!

you're wonderful stuff,

I love you spaghetti,

I can't get enough.

You're covered with sauce

and you're sprinkled with cheese,

spaghetti! spaghetti!

oh, give me some please.

Haiku

The haiku (or hokku) is an ancient form of Japanese poetry that has become very popular all over the world. Renowned for its small size, haikus consist of just three lines (tercet); the first and third lines have five syllables, whereas the second has seven. Haikus don't have to rhyme and are usually written to evoke a particular mood or instance. So, you can have a lot of fun with them! You may have written or will find yourself writing your own haiku at some point in school, or you can get creative and try it at home, too.

I am first with five

Then seven in the middle --

Five again to end.

Sonnet

This very old form of poetry was made famous by none other than William Shakespeare, but the sonnet actually originated in 13th century Italy where it was perfected by the poet Petrarch. The word 'sonnet' is derived from the Italian word 'sonnetto' which means 'little song'. Traditionally, sonnets are made up of 14 lines and usually deal with love. As a rule, Petrarchan (Italian) sonnets follow an ABBA ABBA CDE CDE rhyme scheme, whereas Shakespearean (English) sonnets are typically ABAB CDCD EFEF GG. Shakespeare's most famous sonnet:

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

Thou art more lovely and more temperate:

Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,

And summer's lease hath all too short a date;

Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,

And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;

And every fair from fair sometime declines,

By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;

But thy eternal summer shall not fade,

Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;

Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,

When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:

So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,

So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

Tongue-Twister

Tongue Twisters are short poems, sometimes even single sentences which are hard to say because they contain the similar consonantal initial sounds. They are made more complicated still further consonant similarities are contained in the middle of the words such as Peter Piper Picked a Peck of Pickled Peppers.

Tongue Twisters are designed to be repeated at speed, often in competition with your 'opponent' trying to catch you making a mistake.

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.

A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked.

If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,

Where's the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?

