

Selected Poetic Analysis Terms

Allegory: objects/persons/actions are equated with meanings that lie outside the narrative itself

Alliteration: repetition of initial consonant or vowel sounds

Allusion: a reference to a famous historical/literary figure or event

Ambiguity: ability to mean more than one thing

Assonance: similar vowel sounds repeated in successive words containing different consonants

Conceit: fanciful intellectual idea; a striking parallel between two dissimilar things

Concrete (visual) poetry: related to the visual look of a poem on the page

Connotation: what is suggested by a word, apart from what it denotes (the American flag: patriotism, honor, veterans, American values)

Consonance: ending verse words in which the consonant sounds agree but the vowels that proceed them differ (add-read, bill-ball, begun-afternoon)

Denotation: the direct and specific meaning of a word (the American flag: denotes a piece of colored cloth in a particular pattern)

Free verse: no regular meter and no end rhyme, although possible repetitive patterns

Metaphor: an implied analogy between two things

Internal Structures

descriptive: requirements of describing used

dramatic: consisting of a scene or series of scenes, vivid with detail

narrative: straightforward chronological framework

reflective (meditative): pondering a subject or theme, playing with it in the mind

Onomatopoeia: use of words which in their pronunciation suggests their meaning (hiss, slam, buzz)

Oxymoron: rhetorical antithesis, bringing together two contradictory terms

Personification: treating an abstraction/nonhuman as if it were a person, with human qualities

Rhyme: identical repetition between two different words

Rhymed verse: end rhyme and generally regular meter

Simile: a comparison directly expressed using "like" or "as"

Symbol: often something physical which stands for or represents something larger or more abstract

Syntax: the formal arrangement of words in a sentence