CHAPTER I

WHAT IS POETRY AND WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

Poetry is the kind of thing poets write. A poet is limited in the materials he can use in creating his works: all he has are words to express his ideas and feelings. These words need to be precisely right on several levels at once:

- They must *sound* right to the listener even as they delight his ear.
- They must have a *meaning* which might have been unanticipated, but seems to be the perfectly right one.
- They must be *arranged* in a relationship and placed on the page in ways that are at once easy to follow and assist the reader in understanding.
- They must probe the depths of human thought, emotion, and empathy, while appearing simple, self-contained, and unpretentious.

The English language contains a wide range of words from which to choose for almost every thought, and there are also numerous plans or methods of arrangement of these words, called *poetic devices*, which can assist the writer in developing cogent expressions pleasing to his readers.

Studying poetry is different from other literary branches because poetry is a kind of language that says more and says it more intensely than does ordinary language. Poetry is an expression of beautiful or elevated thought, imagination or feeling in appropriate language and usually in metrical forms. Poetry is a form of literary art that uses a beautiful unique language. Dealing with poetry, some people know about poem. A poem is one piece of poet's literary works in verse form. A poem expresses deep feeling or noble thought in beautiful language, composed with the desire to communicate an expression.

The readers may have found from their reading of poetry in their own language that they can often enjoy a poem without fully understanding its meaning. It is possible to pay more attention to the way

a poet says something rather than to what he actually has to say. Enjoyment, however, must not be confused with appreciation. It is one thing to gain pleasure from a poem and quite another to be able to say why the readers liked it. Before the readers can say why they like a poem, it is first necessary to understand its meaning well. This is not always easy, as a simple experiment in class will show.

To understand a poem the readers must read it carefully and should observe three importand rules:

- Do not read lazily so that you misread the poem altogether.
- Always look for a simple explanation and do not be afraid to express it.
- As far as the readers can, avoid putting their ideas and feelings into the poems. Examine closely what the poet has actually written.

Let's see how these rules apply to the following poem:

Break, Break, Break

Alfred Lord Tennyson

Break, break, break,
On thy cold grey stones, O Sea!
And **I would** that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at paly!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the **stately** ships go on;
To their **haven** under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanishe'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy **crags**, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

Vocabulary

I would (line 3): I wish
O well (line 5): i.e., it is well
Stately (line 9): dignified
Haven (line10): harbour
Crags (line 14): steep rocks

1. If this poem was read carelessly it might be taken to be simply about the sea.
2. But the lines

   And I would that my tongue could utter
   The thoughts that arise in me.

   show us that the poet is pensive. The lines

   But O for the touch of a vanishe'd hand,
   And the sound of a voice that is still!

   tell us why he is sad. In other words, the poet is unhappy because he has lost someone he loves, whereas the sea, the people near it (the fisherman's boy and the sailor lad) and the 'stately ships' are unaware and untroubled. This is the simple explanation of the poem.
3. If we try to put our own ideas into the poem, we might be led to assume that the poet is sad because someone he loves has been drowned. As this idea is not expressed or implied it cannot be true.

FINDING THE MEANING

After a careful reading of a poem we should be in a position to give its general meaning, its detailed meaning, and to say something about the intentions of the writer.

General Meaning. This should be expressed simply in one, at the most two sentences. It should be based on a reading of the whole poem. Very often, but not always, a poem's title will give you some indication of its general meaning.

Detailed Meaning. This should be given stanza by stanza, but you should not paraphrase the poem or worry about the meaning of individual words. The detailed meaning may be written as a continuous paragraph, but you must take every care to be accurate and to express yourself in simple sentences. Do not express yourself clumsily or write a list each sentence of which begins with "In the first stanza . . . . . ", "In the second stanza . . . . . " etc. you should show how the poet begins, how he develops his theme and then how he concludes it. If a poem is not divided into stanzas, you should make some rough attempt in your reading to divide the lines into fairly self-contained groups.

Intention. Every poem conveys an experience or attempts to arouse certain feelings in the reader. When you have read a poem and given its general and detailed meaning, you should try to decide what feelings the poet is trying to arouse in you. A poem may affect different people in a great variety of ways and it is often impossible to define a poet's 'true' intentions. It is most important to explain what you have understood a poet's purpose to be. Just as it is impossible to give the meaning of a poem if you have not read it carefully, it is impossible to appreciate the poem if you are unable to define the poet's intensions.

Read carefully the poem below:

CARGOES

John Masefield

Quinquireme of Nineveh from distant Ophir
Rowing home to haven in Sunny Palestine,
With a cargo of ivory,
And apes and peacocks,
Sandalwood, cedarwood, and sweet white wine.

Stately Spanish **galleon** coming from the Isthmus,
Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-green shores,
With a cargo of diamonds,
Emeralds, amethysts,
Topazes, and **cinnamon**, and gold **miodores**.

Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked **smoke-stack**
Butting through the Channel in the mad March days,
With a cargo of Tyne coal,
Road-rail, **pig-lead**,
Firewood, iron-ware, and cheap tin-trays.

Vocabulary

Quinquireme	: ancient ship with five rows of oars.
Galleon	: an old type of warship or trading ship.
Emeralds, amethysts, topazes	: precious stones.
Cinnamon	: a sweet-smelling spice.
Moidores	: gold coins.
Smoke-stack	: funnel.
Butting	: pushing with the head in the way a goat does.
Pig-lead	: blocks of lead.

General meaning, detailed meaning and intention. In this poem, Masefield describes the various cargoes that have been carried by ships in three different ages.

The poet begins by describing two of the biggest and most beautiful ships of the past. The earlier of the two ships is a quinquireme; later a 'stately Spanish galleon'. Both are pictured in bright sunshine carrying goods which, though different in kind, were rare and precious. The quinquireme comes laden with ivory, strange animals and fine wood; the galleon with precious stones. The ship which is described in the last stanza is quiet different. It belongs to modern times and is small (a 'coaster') and dirty. It is on a short journey across the English Channel in bad weather with its cheap but useful cargo of coal, metal and firewood.

The poet does not simply set out to describe cargoes but to make us consider how the present differs from the past. In the past, the goods that were highly prized were beautiful, rare, and comparatively useless; in the present, the goods are ugly, common and useful. From the way the poet describes these three different ships, we can see that he implies that modern times are less beautiful than former times.

Exercise on Finding the Meaning

Answer the questions on the poem that follow. When doing so, bear in mind the example you have just read.

The Ancient Mariner

S.T. Coleridge

(The lines that follow are taken from a long poem, "The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner" in which one of the sailors shoots an albatross and thus brings a curse on the ship. These lines occur shortly after the sailor kills the bird as the ship enters the Pacific Ocean)

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The **furrow** followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day.
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere
Nor any drop to drink.

Vocabulary

Furrow : deep line made in the earth by plough. Here, of course, the word refers to the water behind the moving ship.

'Twas : i.e., it was

Questions

1. Quote the lines that tell us that no other ship had ever sailed in this sea.
2. Which line tells us that the wind suddenly stopped blowing?
3. Explain these lines as fully as you can:

   As idle as a painted ship
   Upon a painted ocean.

4. Write the general and detailed meaning of the poem and what you consider to be the poet's intention.

CHAPTER II

RHYTHM AND METRICS

Rhythm in Poetry

Rhythm in poetry is created by the pattern of repeated sounds, in terms of both duration and quality as well as ideas. We will begin our investigation of versification with a discussion of **accent**. When stress is placed on a word, accent results. However, before we do this, the reader should try to feel the accent as it creates rhythm. The following quotation on "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" by Colleridge show us the poetic rhythm:

The sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right,
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher everyday
Till over the mast at noon—
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced the hall,
Red as rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes,
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding Guest he beat his breasts,
Yet he cannot choose but hear,
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

The patterns of sound have an enchanting effect. The accent and the final sound of the second line in the third stanza, "Red as a rose is she" echoes the second line in the first stanza, "Out of the sea came he". The general proliferation of 'ee' sound and the repetition of the words 'wedding guest' and 'breast' contribute equally to the flowing sound of the poem and the chanting effect of internal rhyme. The point is that rhythm is accent which establishes in our minds a collection of associations of sounds and

meaning. Colleridge's poems have seven parts and throughout, the rhythm gains momentum. We have a strong emotional response to the poem because we are almost literally swept up in its even, chant like flow. The pattern is established in the repetition of lines having the same number of syllables, as well as by the steady use of accent in the same way. And this leads us to our first major consideration.

Accent

All poetry is written in some particular *meter*, that is, poems are made from a collection of lines which have a certain number of syllables, some of which are *accented* (receive a stress) and some of which are not (receive no stress). We *scan* a line of poetry when we mark over each word whether or not it should be accented; a slanted dash (/) indicated that a syllable is to be stressed while one that is not to be stressed as marked (✓). Thus the following line of poetry, for example, scans like this:

✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ /
How vainly men themselves amaze

Poetic Feet

Most readers will have noticed that the line seems to be divided into a number of repeated units combining the same number of accented and unaccented has a certain number of *poetic feet*. As the pattern of one foot is repeated or varied in the text, a pattern of the entire line and then for the poem is established. Fewer contain different numbers of syllables, accented and unaccented have different names. The following are the most common.

Iambic: the *iambic foot* is composed of one unstressed syllable followed by one stressed syllable. The following line has four iambic feet

✓ / ✓ / ✓ / ✓ /
How vainly men themselves amaze

Trochaic: the *trochaic foot* is the reverse of an iambic foot. The trochaic foot, in other words, is made up of two syllables, the first one stressed and the second one unstressed. The following line has four trochaic feet.

/ ✓ / ✓/ ✓ / ✓
Cast him out upon the waters

Dactylic: Not all poetic feet have two syllables. The dactylic foot is composed of one stressed syllable followed by two unstressed syllables. The following line has two dactylic feet.

/ ✓✓ / ✓✓
Carry her carefully

Anapestic: the reserve of the dactylic foot is an *anapestic foot*; in other words, it is composed of two unstressed syllables followed by one stressed syllable. The following line has three anapestic feet.

✓ ✓/ ✓ ✓ / ✓✓/
There is nothing as big as a man

Spondaic: a fifth kind of foot has two stressed and no unstressed syllables; the emphasis, in other words, is on one plane. This is called *spondaic foot*, as it is seen in the following example.

/ / / /
Jump, run, hide, shout

Metrical Lines

We have been examining lines containing different number of poetic feet. The number of feet contained in any given line determines its name. A line having only one foot is referred to as *monometer*. A line of two feet is called *dimeter*, three feet *trimester*. The following is the list meter:

Number of Feet in Line	Name of Line
1	Monometer
2	Dimeter
3	Trimeter
4	Tetrameter
5	Pentameter
6	Hexameter
7	Heptameter
8	Octameter

Knowing the names of the poetic feet and the names of lines that have a certain number of feet, we can name a line properly referring to both the kind of foot and the number of feet. For example, in the line of "how vainly men themselves amaze"; has five feet in iambic measure and so it is called ***iambic tetrameter*** and the line: "there is nothing as big as a man" has three feet of anapestic feet, so it is called ***anapestic trimester***.

Exercise on Metrical Foot and Line

Name the following lines properly referring to both: Metrical Foot and Line:

1. Love again, song again, nest again, young again.
2. Double, double, toil and trouble.
3. The Goddess with a discontented air.
4. From you I have been absent in the spring.
5. This is the forest primeval; but where are the hearts that beneath it.
6. Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary.
7. Away, away, Oh far away

CHAPTER III

HOW IT IS DONE

It is hard to define exactly what a poem is and to state why it gives us pleasure. The subject-matter of a poem is not necessarily the most important thing about it. Any poem sets out to convey a great deal more than an idea and it is this that distinguishes it from prose. The delight we get when reading poetry often comes from its musical qualities, or from the striking way a poet uses words. But this can only be a partial explanation, for poetry does not follow hard and fast rules: every poem is unique and has special qualities of its own. Some of these, however, are propreties common to all poetry. If we are to appreciate poetry, it is necessary to learn how to recognize these 'special qualities'. They are called *devices* and can be found when we analyze a poem. For the sake of convenience, devices may be divided into three groups: sound, structural and sense. When writing an appreciation of poetry, it is not enough to be able to point out devices.

SOUND DEVICES

Alliteration, onomatopoeia, rhyme, assonance, consonance, refrain.

These have difficult names but they are not as hard as they look. All of them add considerably to the musical quality a poem has when it is read aloud.

Alliteration. This is the repetition of the same sound at frequent intervals. One of the most obvious examples from the poems you have read occurs in "The Ancient Mariner":

> The **f**air **b**reeze **b**lew, the white **f**oam **f**lew,
> The **f**urrow **f**ollowed **f**ree.

The repeated 'b' and 'f' here make the lines run quickly and give the impression of a ship travelling at high speed.

> **D**ay after **d**ay, **d**ay after **d**ay

with its repeated 'd' sound suggests both monotony and immobility.

Onomatopoeia occurs in words which imitate sounds and thus suggests the object described: words like cuckoo, hum, buzz, swish, crash, jangle, etc.

Rhyme. This usually occurs at line endings in poetry and consists of words which have the same sound; the letters preceding the vowel, must, however, be unlike in sound. For instances: 'night' and 'sight' are true rhymes; 'night' and 'knight' or 'sight' and 'site' are not.

Kinds of Rhyme: based on the number of syllables presenting a similarity of sound.

1.**Masculine Rhyme** (1 syllable of a word rhymes with another word)

2. **Feminine Rhyme** (the last 2 syllables rhyme with another word)

Types of Rhyme

The poet who wishes to write a rhyming poem has several different sorts of rhyme from which to choose. Some are strong, some more subtle, and all can be employed as the poet sees fit. The following are some of the main types :

1. **End Rhymes**

   Rhyming of the final words of lines in a poem. The following, for example, is from Seamus Heaney's "Digging" :

   Under my window, a clean rasping sound
   When the spade sinks into gravelly ground

2. **Internal Rhymes**

   Rhyming of two words within the same line of poetry. The following, for example, is from Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven" :

   Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
   Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,

3. **Slant Rhymes** (sometimes called imperfect, partial, near, oblique, off etc.) Rhyme in which two words share just a vowel sound (assonance – e.g. "heart" and "star") or in which they share just a consonant sound (consonance – e.g. "milk" and "walk"). Slant rhyme is a technique perhaps more in tune with the uncertainties of the modern age than strong rhyme. The following example is also from Seamus Heaney's "Digging" :

   Between my finger and my thumb
   The squat pen rests; snug as a gun

4. Rich Rhymes

Rhyme using two different words that happen to sound the same (i.e. homonyms) – for example "raise" and "raze". The following example – a triple rich rhyme – is from Thomas Hood's" A First Attempt in Rhyme" :

Partake the fire divine that burns,
In Milton, Pope, and Scottish Burns,
Who sang his native braes and burns.

5. Eye Rhymes

Rhyme on words that look the same but which are actually pronounced differently – for example "bough" and "rough". The opening four lines of Shakespeare's Sonnet 18, for example, go :

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:

Here, "temperate" and "date" look as though they rhyme, but few readers would pronounce "temperate" so that they did. Beware that pronunciations can drift over time and that rhymes can end up as eye rhymes when they were originally full (and vice versa).

Note:

An eye **rhyme**, also called a visual **rhyme** or a **sight rhyme**, is a **rhyme** in which two words are spelled similarly but pronounced differently.

6. Identical Rhymes

Simply using the same word twice. An example is in (some versions of) Emily Dickinson's "Because I Could not Stop for Death" :

We paused before a House that seemed
A Swelling of the Ground—
The Roof was scarcely visible—
The Cornice—in the Ground—

Rhyme Scheme: the pattern in which the rhyme occurs.

e.g. SOFT SNOW (William Blake)

I walked abroad in a snowy day, **a**
I asked the soft snow with me to play; **a**
She played and she melted in all her prime, **b**
And the winter called it a dreadful crime. **b**

Assonance. The similarity or repetition of a vowel sound in two or more words in a line. It doesn't simply occur by having the same vowel spelling, such as ***lost*** and ***most***.

Consonance is the repetition of consonant sounds, but not vowel ones. It begins with a consonant and it governs consonants.

e.g. when fu**rn**aces bu**rn**

Refrain is a line or part of a line that comes back in the same or similar form several times in a poem. In many songs and songlike poems, the **refrain** is the last line of each stanza.

Exercise on Sound Devices

Read the poem carefully, then find out some sound devices.

"Winter"

William Shakespeare

When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood in nipp'd, and ways be foul
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-who;
Tu-whit, to-who – a merry note
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parsons's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-who;
Tu-whit, to-who – a merry note
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

STRUCTURAL DEVICES

***Contrast, repetition, illustration*:** these indicates the way a whole poem has been built and become apparent as soon as the meaning of the poem has been found.

Contrast. This is one of the most common of all structural devices. It occurs when we find two or more completely opposite pictures side by side. Sometimes the contrast is immediately obvious and sometimes

implied. Contrast of the most direct kind can be found in the poem "Cargoes", where a direct comparison is made between ancient and modern times: the last ship differs greatly from the first two.

Repetition. Poets often repeat single lines or whole stanzas at intervals to emphasize a particular idea. Repetition is to be found in poetry which is aiming at special musical effects or when a poet wants us to pay very close attention to something. Note the repetition of the word 'water' in these lines from "the Ancient Mariner":

Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere
Nor any drop to drink.

The poet makes us feel how vast the ocean is by repeating the word 'water' over and over again. At the same time he helps us to understand how thirsty the sailors are. For them, water is something that is everywhere and at the same moment nowhere.

Illustration. This is an example which usually takes the form of a vivid picture by which a poet may make an idea clear. Pictures of this sort occur in all the poems you have studied. For example, the poem entitled "Cargoes" consists of three such pictures each of which represents the poet's view of different ages. The poet means to show that bygone times were refined and gracious and that modern times are squalid: the quinquireme is 'rowing home to haven', the galleon 'dipping through the tropics' while the 'dirty British coaster' is 'butting through the channel'. Illustration is used after you have revealed the contrast and repetition (optional). You have to illustrate the contrast and repetition (optional) by giving such description of them generally.

Exercise on Structural Devices

Read the poem carefully, then find out some structural devices.

Ozymandias

Percy Bysshe Shelley

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert … Near them, on the sand,

Half-sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed:
And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

SENSE DEVICES

Imagery, Symbol, Figures of Speech.

Imagery is image, picture or sensory content which we find in a poem. Images are fanciful or imaginative description of people or objects stated in terms of our senses. Much of poetry is made up of experiences we can grasp and understand through our senses. These appeals to our senses make poetry concrete—they give us things we can see, hear, taste, or feel. The concreteness is created by the poet's use of images. We look in the mirror and see an 'image' of ourselves, something we can identify because we see it. The poet uses similar images. Imagery may also be defined as the representation through language of sense experience. Poetry appeals directly to our senses through its musical and rhythmical expression which we hear when it is read aloud.

Poetry appeals our senses through imagery, the representation to the imagination of our sense imagination. There are several kinds of imagery:

Visual imagery: it is imagery that suggests a mental picture, that is something seen in the "mind's eyes".

Auditory imagery: it is imagery that represents sound.

Olfactory imagery: it is imagery that represents smell.

Gustatory imagery: it is imagery that represents taste.

Tactile imagery: it is an image that represents touch, such as hardness, softness, wetness, heat or coldness.

Kinaesthetic imagery: it is an image that represents movement, or tensions in the muscles or joints.

Organic imagery: imagery that represents an internal sensation, such as hunger, thirst, fatigue.

Exercise on Imagery

Find out kinds of imagery in the following poem.

Meeting at Night

Robert Browning

The gray sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed I'the slushy sand

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And the blue spurt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, through its joys and fears,
Than the two hearts beating each to each!

A **symbol** is a literal object or thing that suggests another level of meaning; a symbol may suggest a person, an abstraction, or an idea. A symbol may be roughly defined as something that means more than what it is. All of us are familiar with many symbols. When an object or living thing comes to stand in our mind for an idea or feeling, we call it a symbol. For instance, a rose has often been used as a symbol of love. A symbol has a larger meaning beyond itself.

When we look at the world around us, we often find there a mirror of our thoughts and feelings. A storm makes us think of anger or rage. A century-old oak makes us think of lasting strength. When we make natural object stand for an idea like rage or strength, we are using it as a symbol.

Exercise on Symbol

Find out the symbols in the following poem and try to find out what the words symbolize.

Fire and Ice

Robert Frost

Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice,
From what I've tasted of desire
I hold with those who favour fire.
But if I had to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate
To say that for destruction ice
Is so great
And would suffice.

Figurative language is language using figures of speech that is language that cannot be taken literally only. **Figure of speech** is an expression in which the words are used in a non literal sense to present a figure, picture or image. In short, figure of speech is a way of saying one thing and meaning another. There are several kinds of figures of speech (figurative language).

1. **Simile.** The easiest kind of figurative language to understand is the *simile*. A simile is a comparison using the word *like* or *as*. It says outright that something is like something else. We use similes all the time in our conversation. When we say that the fog is like pea soup, we are using a simile. We mean that the fog is like pea soup because we cannot see through it, just as we cannot see through pea soup.
2. **Metaphor**. The kind of figurative language that calls something by a different name is a metaphor. A metaphor does not say something is like something else; a metaphor says something is something else. If we say, "He was a perfect target for their jokes" or "She was a fortress to her people," we are creating a metaphor. By calling someone a "target" or a "fortress," we give a clear picture of the person without

using many words. When a poet uses metaphors, he transfers the qualities and association of one object to another in order to make the latter more vivid in our mind. The metaphor, in other words, establishes an analogy between objects without actually saying that it is establishing this contrast.

3. **Personification**. It consists in giving the attributes of a human being to an animal, an object, or a concept. It is a subtype of metaphor, an implied comparison in which the figurative term of the comparison is always human being. Attributing personal form to such non human objects and ideas is a standard rethorical device in poetry. Thus we frequently find poets addressing the moon as a lady, referring to her beauty. For example, The days crept by slowly, sorrowly.
4. **Apostrophe**. It consists in addressing someone absent or dead or something non human as if that person or thing were present and alive, could reply to what is being said, e.g. O captain! My Captain! Our fearful trip is done.
5. **Allusion.** A writer makes an allusion by briefly mentioning something that makes us remember an event, a person, or a historical place. It makes us remember a story. The story may be similar to something we are reading about. For instance, when you have just taken a tough exam, you may walk out of class saying, "That was my Waterloo." It reminds us of European history, they will know that Napoleon met his downfall at the Battle of Waterloo. It means that the exam was not only a hard one, but that it felt like a final defeat.
6. **Irony**. Sometimes the writer will make a point by saying the opposite of what is meant. This is called *irony*. Another kind of irony is an *ironic situation*. A situation is ironic when it is the reverse or opposite of what is expected or intended. When you experience an ironic situation in real life, you may feel tricked by fate.

   e.g. The Convergence at the Twain (Thomas Hardy)

In a solitude of the sea
Deep from human vanity,
And the Pride of Life that planned her, stilly couches
she.

Steel chambers, late the pyres
Of her salamandrine fires,
Cold currents third, and turn to rhythmic tidal lyres.
(the ship that was the pride of modern technology, considered unsinkable, lies at the bottom of the ocean).

7. **Paradox/Oxymoron**. A paradox is a statement that at first does not make sense. It strikes us as puzzling or contradictory. In many traditional poems, the poet calls a loved person a "sweet enemy" or a "wicked angel." We accept the truth of these paradoxes when we understand that the happiness of love can mixed with disappointment and suffering. In many of most beautiful poems through the ages, love is paradoxically "bittersweet."

Other figures of speech are: **HYPERBOLE**: extreme exaggeration for effect, **METONYMY**: a person, place or thing is referred to by something closely associated with it. **ANTITHESIS**: words and phrases with opposite meanings are balance against each other. **SYNECDOCHE**: mentioning a part of something to represent the whole. **LITOTES**: saying the opposite of what one means.

Exercise on Figures of Speech

1. Explain the **literal** meaning of the following images and **figurative** expressions.
2. Label each expression with one or more of the following poetic terms: **metaphor, simile, personification.**
   a. Like a fish out of water
   b. Climbing the ladder of success
   c. A blanket of snow
   d. Sturdy as an oak
   e. The smile of fortune
   f. Quick as a wink
   g. Love's thorns
   h. Autumn's bright apparel

3. Read the poem and answer the questions that follow.

The Eagle

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

He clasps the crag with crooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

a. Describe what the following images make you see:

- crooked hands
- close to the sun
- lonely lands
- ring'd with the azure world
- wrinkled sea
- crawls
- like a thunderbolt

b. From these images, find an example of **metaphor**; **simile**; **personification**.

CHAPTER IV
TYPES OF POETRY

There are common types of poetry. They are **descriptive, reflective, narrative, the lyric** and **the sonnet.** The ability to distinguish these types, though not indispensable for appreciation, is important as it will help you to understand more readily what a poet's intentions are.

Descriptive. It is a poem which describes people or experiences, scenes or objects.

Winter

William Shakespeare

When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipp'd, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-who;
Tu-whit, to-who—a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-who;
Tu-whit, tu-who—a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

Vocabulary

Blows his nail (L.2): warms the ends of his fingers by breathing on them

Nipp'd (L.5): sharply bitten (by the cold)

Keel (L.9): stir and skim

Saw (L.11): sermon

Crabs (L.14): wild apples

Questions:

1. Give the general and detailed meaning of the poem and what you consider to be the poet's intention.
2. What illustrations does Shakespeare use to make us feel that the weather is cold? How does he contrast cold and warmth?
3. What is the effect of the repetition at the end of each stanza?
4. What sort of device is to be found in these words: "tu-who" and "hiss"

Reflective. Thoughtful poem often contains a great deal of description which the poet comments on or from which he draws conclusions. Sometimes these conclusions are directly stated; at other times implied.

Mild the Mist upon the Hill

Emily Bronte

Mild the most upon the hill,
Telling not of storms tomorrow;
No; the day has wept its fill,
Spent its store of silent sorrow.

Oh, I'm gone back to the days of youth,
I am a child once more,
And 'neath my father's sheltering roof,
And near the old hall door.

I watch this cloudy evening fall,
After a day of rain:
Blue mists, sweet mists of summer pall
The horizon's mountain-chain.

The damp stands in the long, green grass
As thick as morning's tears;
And dreamy scents of fragrance pass
That breathe of other years.

Vocabulary

'neath (L.7): beneath

Pall (L.11): a pall is a black or purple cloth which is spread over coffin. Here the word is used as a verb in the sense 'cover' or 'hide'.

Questions:

1. Give the general and detailed meaning of the poem and what you consider to be the poet's intention.
2. Why is the poet's reminded of the past?
3. Name the poetic devices contained in the following lines: '. . . the day has wept its fill, /Spent its store of silent sorrow' (L. 3-4); 'As thick as morning's tears' (L.14); '. . . dreamy scents of fragrance pass/ That breathe of other years" (L.15-16). How do they help to convey the poet's mood?

Narrative. It is a poem that tells a story. The poems tend to be longer than other types of poetry but it is comparatively easy to recognize the poet's intention. **The Lyric.** It is usually a short poem like a song which is usually the expression of a mood or feeling of the poet. **The Sonnet**. It is a poem of fourteen lines which follows a very strict rhyme pattern. It is usually divided into two parts: the 'octave' (the first eight lines), and the 'sestet' (the last six lines). The octave and sestet are separated by a break in thought: a general statement made in the octave is illustrated or amplified in the sestet. Sonnets tend to be difficult because a great deal of meaning is often conveyed in a few lines. There are three main types of sonnet: the *Petrarchan*, the *Shakespearean* and the *Miltonic*.

1. The Petrarchan Sonnet: this is the strictest of the three types since only two rhymes are permitted in the octave and not more than three in the sestet. The octave is rhymed a-b-b-a-a-b-b-a and the sestet c-d-e-c-d-e (if three rhymes are used) and c-d-c-d-c-d (if two rhymes are used).

2. The Shakespearean Sonnet: though this type of sonnet is also divided into octave and sestet, it has a much simpler rhyme pattern. It is really a poem consisting of three stanzas each of four lines in length (there are called 'quatrains'). The sonnet ends with two rhyming lines, called 'a rhyming couplet'. The pattern is as follows: a-b-a-b-c-d-c-d-e-f-e-f-g-g.

3. The Miltonic Sonnet: this has the same rhyme scheme as the Petrarchan sonnet but differs in one important respect: there is no break in thought between the octave and sestet.

Stanzaic form: stanza based on form are marked by their rhyme scheme and are known by the number of lines they contain.

Kinds of stanza:

Couplet:	2-line stanza
Triplet:	3-line stanza
Quatrain:	4-line stanza
Quintet:	5-line stanza
Sestet:	6-line stanza
Septet:	7-line stanza
Octave:	8-line stanza

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