Module for Bachelor of Education Programme (Primary and JHS)

EBS149SW: LITERATURE IN ENGLISH STUDIES IN POETRY

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UNIT 1:   INTRODUCTION TO POETRY

This unit focuses generally on poetry as one of the primary genres of literature, and as a means of expressing our daily experiences. The unit is structured to give participants an intuitive focus on the overview of poetry, what poetry as a form of art exists to do, its expressive forms, language, structure, and subsequent others. This exploration is set to sharpen our sense of appreciation of the concept of poetry as well as the many poems we will have to appreciate throughout the module.

Learning outcomes:
By the end of the unit, the participant will be able to:
1. Define poetry.
2. Appreciate the unique traits of poetry.
3. Identify the types of poetry.
4. Identify one difference between written and oral literature
5. State two functions of poetry

SESSION I: DEFINITION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF POETRY
Welcome to the first session of Unit 1. In this session, we shall attempt a definition of poetry while describing the elements that would make up a working definition of poetry. We will move on to discuss the characteristics of poetry and how to identify these characteristics of poetry in context.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of the session, the participant will be able to
1. State the elements that make up the definition of poetry.
2. Provide an appropriate definition of poetry.
3. State the characteristics of poetry.
4. Identify a particular characteristic of poetry in context.
5. State two forms of poetry.

The Concept of Poetry
What is poetry? The question sounds simple; but is it? Poetry is as universal as language and almost as ancient. Among the Greeks of the past, for instance, it was believed that a poet wrote a poem only by supernatural assistance rendered through the Muses (as nine Greek goddesses presided over arts). You can appreciate this conception of poetry looking at the invocations Homer makes of the Muse in his famous long poems, *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Among the ancient Celts, poets were regarded as magicians and priests, and whoever insulted one of them might expect to receive a curse in a rhyme potent enough to afflict him with boils and to curdle the milk of his cows. How do you see the poets in your community? Are they treated with awe? Among the Akans poetry is placed at the centre of religious activities.

When we consider poetry through time, we also get a different view of what poetry is. Poetry has experienced several eras, and for each era, people have experienced poetry differently and have defined it thereof to fit their needs as well as develop new styles, meanings and uses to poetry. For this, there exist Renaissance poetry, Elizabethan poetry, Metaphysical poetry, Cavalier poetry, Romantic Poetry, Victorian poetry, and Modern poetry as eras of poetry. The era of Metaphysical poetry, for instance, had its poets being subtle, witty, and provocative in the poems they wrote. Their poems spoke about nature, philosophy, love, and the supernatural using "far-fetched" images. They used their poems to point to the less obvious and avoided representing themselves within what they wrote. Romantic poets, in their era, saw poetry as a medium or a channel to excite thoughts

(imagination) and emotions that necessitated a serious, contemplative reflection over the interaction of humans with their environment.

The point to be highlighted from the discussion is that poetry is a concept that has existed since time in memory. Depending on the culture that experiences it, or the time (era) in which it is experienced, it has been given numerous definitions and compositions using different styles. One could fall on both time and culture to define what poetry is, but to do that would mean to grapple with the problem of finding a common ground that would include all the functioning views and thoughts of poetry. It would also mean limiting the scope of poetry to an era or a culture, and not necessarily understand it. It is however very important to have a sense of what poetry is to provide a direction for our exploration into the concept of poetry. While you keep up with attempts to find a definition for poetry, let us consider some theoretical definitions of poetry.

Theoretical definitions of poetry
As has been prompted, many scholars, critics, and poets have indulged in poetry within different settings (time and place) and approaches, and that has yielded multiple definitions. Let us take a look at four of the theoretical definitions;

i. Many a time, attempts at a definition of poetry have referenced William Wordsworth, a household name in Romantic poetry. Wordsworth defined poetry as "the spontaneous outflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origins from emotion recollected in tranquility." Critics identify the central idea within Wordsworth's theory of poetry as the turning loose of one's emotions using words.

ii. T.S Eliot perceives poetry as "not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality. But, of course, only those who have personality and emotions know what it means to want to escape from these things." Eliot's theoretical definition, as you have already deduced, stands in direct contrast to Wordsworth's definition of poetry. T. S. Eliot stands as one of the most important modernist poets.

iii. Percy Shelley has the view that "poetry turns all things to loveliness; it exalts the beauty of that which is most beautiful, and it adds beauty to that which is most deformed, strips the veil of familiarity from the world, and lays bare the naked and sleeping beauty which is the spirit of its form."

iv. Watts-Dunton defines poetry as "the artistic expression of the human mind." For him, the existence of an idea, some significance, a meaning, an attitude, or a feeling in the artistry of expression distinguishes poetry from doggerel.

Which of these definitions appeal to you?
These theoretical definitions do give us an idea of what poetry is. They also show us the difficulty in telling what poetry is. Take, for instance, Wordsworth's and Eliot's definition of poetry. While both could appreciate some profound part of poetry, they both exclude each other. While Eliot's definition gives focus to poets who write to remove themselves from their day-to-day emotions, and as such, you could hardly associate the subject they write about with their personalities, Wordsworth's definition gives credence to the poet's emotions towards the expressed subject matter.

All in all, theoretical definitions that have been provided through time do give us a sense of what poetry is, except that they carry the challenge that associates with attempts at defining poetry. They

are either too broad to include other concepts that are not poetry or too narrow that it excludes some parts of the concept of poetry.

Elements of Poetry

While we accept that the concept of poetry may be too broad to capture in a single definition, it is important to stress that all poems or forms of poetry, regardless of the time and culture they existed or the theoretical approach one takes to construct it, share some elements and basic traits that allow us to classify all of them as poetry. The elements of poetry help provide descriptions that can help one define poetry. Let us consider them:

> **Extract A:** I am personally baffled by the decision to pursue this cathedral project… It is reckless because, in the palpable presence of poverty all over the country, he has decided to dedicate time and effort to the pursuit of a highly misplaced project. (Eric Karikari, 2019)

> **Extract B:** "…A huge senseless cathedral of doom" (*The cathedral* by Kofi Awoonor)

a. Language

Consider the extracts above. Consider the sentences in extract A. They are informative and accurately convey the person's disposition or feeling. However, it cannot be helped but said that if you want to know what poetry is not, you have only to look at those sentences in extract A. Despite the metaphor expressed in "palpable presence", the language is not exciting. Now, consider extract B. it has an interesting paradoxical tune to it. "Huge" has that sense of magnificence, grandeur, while "senseless" fetches a form of desperation without cause, a lack of reason. A "cathedral of doom" fetches a kind of a mystical image; a cathedral is a place where people are presumably guided towards salvation and it is usually of beauty and wonder. A "cathedral of doom" would, therefore, force an image of the most horrifying place that leads people towards their destruction; or perhaps it spells out the use of the cathedral as a cover to inhumane acts. When words are combined by the poet, they must not only make good sense, but they must also make, an almost, a physical thing that a reader could feel or imagine as he/she reads the poem aloud or silently. Language is the raw material to poetry and the poet's worth is measured by how he/she uses the language to construct the world around them.

b. Artistry

This element of poetry is expressed as the skillful use of language—using language with a form of precision. It is the precise use of language that distinguishes poetry from other forms of art that use language. Reconsider extracts A and B. Which of the extracts has an exciting language? It is B and the reason is simple.

While the language in extract A is made to focus on communicating the feeling of the person making the utterance, that of extract B is constructed to look odd, different, and prominent. The language in extract B does not just give focus to the idea it communicates, it also gives focus to itself, the selected words as well as the clever combination of the words. Critics identify such phenomenon as the aesthetic effect of language use (the beautiful use of language so that it draws the attention of a reader onto the language first, and then to the idea behind those words).

Poetry places a premium on the artistic use of language in the effort to communicate ideas so that the language is capable of sending chills or emotions along the spine of readers, and that becomes the source of artistic delight on readers. It is through such

delight that we will be learning how to appreciate the language of poetry as a specialized form of language that holds an intrinsic value.

c. Imagination

Another element of poetry deemed very important is imagination. Imagination stands central to the creation of meaning behind words in poetry and literature as a whole. Imagination is considered as the faculty that generates images that are associated with emotional states such as feelings, passions, desires, aversions and many others in poetry. They can also be regarded as the consciousness of a poet, playwright, or novelist that is conveyed through the artistic use of language. Let us look at extract B once more.

It is easy to tell that the persona in the poem feels disgusted by the situation he so describes. But how are we able to appreciate the emotional state he invests in the poem? We do so by imagining the meaning and images behind his choice of words. Within the act of imagining, we combine all those meanings and images to construct a single meaning which becomes the reality expressed by the words.

Consider the words in extract B: "senseless" has a meaning that expresses a negative attitude towards a situation. "Huge", "cathedral" and "doom", however, gives us images or pictures we can perceive using our senses (touch, sight, taste, auditory, movement, smell). Most importantly, whereas the image of the "cathedral" gives us a picture of salvation and good virtues, that of "doom" gives a picture of destruction. In our everyday life and language as well as what we refer to as reality, we would say that the two images ("cathedral" and "doom") are contrastive and antonymous. It would be impossible to have a "cathedral of doom" because the images behind the two words would not select themselves; they are opposed to each other.

Such constructions are however possible in poetry due to imagination. That is, poetic imagination allows a poet to combine contradictory things in a form of an abrupt synthesis (a forceful yoking of ideas) that generates and produces new things (it could be a new idea, image, or emotion). Recognize so far that we have referred to imagination relating to poetry as a poetic imagination. It means that there are other forms of imagination such as prosaic imagination, pictorial imagination, and others. "Poetic imagination is a power within the poet which is nourished by reality and moves towards a renewed reality" (Arezou Zalipour, 2011, p. 490). It is dense.

A good poem must make us see life anew; it must remove "the film of familiarity" that clouds our thoughts and perceptions, Coleridge resolves. An imaginative poem awakens the mind's attention from what has been custom-made as normal, directing it to wonder of the world around us. Imagination stands at the center of the artistic use of language in poetry, and its importance cannot be overemphasized

d. Economy of words

One mark of every great poetry is poetic intensity, which is usually achieved through the economy of words. The metaphor of economy of words reflects how we use currency in our day-to-day activities. In our everyday lives, although money may not be a problem for some people, we all try to spend money in ways that yield our utmost satisfaction within a limited space of time. The same concept applies to the use of words in poetry. That is, in poetry, a poet faces an important challenge in poetic composition—the need to communicate within a small textual space rather than time in general. In other words, in poetry, the poet is faced with the challenge to say so much in so little space.

Consequently, one of the strongly held tenets of poetic composition is to compress the language so that the poet can say so much in so little a space.

As has been prompted, words in poetry are sensuous and concrete: They are chosen because of the meaning or image they carry and the imagination they can set. It is important to note that words in poems are to be approached bearing in mind that the poet does not have space and luxury to be wasteful in his/her choice of words. In other words, poetry facilitates the economization of words, so that the poet is pushed to invest his/her entire consciousness, emotional state, or communicative meaning in few words to maximize the little space he is challenged with. This makes the words in poetry dense, concrete, and intense.

e. **Figurative language**
A figurative language is a form of language that employs devices or tools involving the alteration of the normal meaning of an expression. It is a kind of language which employs various figures of speech in a way to deliver meaning other than the literal meaning of words. It could involve just a word, a phrase, or an image in a bit to create an artistic effect. Let us go back extract B again;

The expression, "A huge senseless cathedral of doom", is a phrase constructed using a paradox. As has been appreciated earlier, there lies underneath, contradictory images that the poet takes advantage of to present a new image or idea to his readers. Consequently, we can say that the language, the artistry in the language use, imagination, and economy of use of words all help establish figurative language as core to poetry. In essence, figurative language in poetry;

- It helps create images that produce artistic effects.
- Holds elements of concealment of the meaning of the poem.
- Reveals the artistic nature of the poem.
- It helps to defamiliarize that which is familiar.
- It helps writers to intensify normal human feelings into extraordinary emotions.
- Help construct comparisons that make the understanding of the text easier for readers.

It is important to understand that the central purpose of the use of figurative language in poetry is met when the language is made capable of drawing the interest of the reader, and further directing the reader towards a possible interpretation of the poem at hand. Figurative language lends emphasis. It would include figures of speech such as metaphor, irony, hyperbole, allegory, litotes, pun, personification, simile, metonymy, synecdoche among others

The operational definition of poetry
Now that we have learned to appreciate the difficulty in defining poetry, some theoretical definitions of poetry, as well as some elements of poetry, let us now turn our eyes to providing some operational definitions of poetry that would help us better appreciate poems we will encounter in the course of our study. Write down your personal definition of poetry. Let's compare.
From the discussions so far, we can say that:

- poetry is an imaginative, artistic creation or a literary composition that is characterized by imagination, emotion, significant meaning, sense-impression, and concrete language that invites attention to its physical features such as sound and appearance (when written).

- Poetry could also be considered a piece of literature written by a poet in meter or verse, expressing various emotions through the use of techniques such as metaphors, similes, and certain sound devices (such as assonance, alliteration, consonance) that emphasizes the aesthetics of language use as well as imagery.

- Poetry is an artistic verbal composition that reflects artistic beauty and is rendered in a language that evoke sense of appreciation to affect emotions of the reader and elicit appropriate response in the reader.

Characteristics, Form and Structure of Poetry

Characteristics of poetry
The characteristics of poetry are what separate it as a medium of writing from other forms of writing. Specifically, by looking at the characteristics of poetry, we engage a discussion on the parts of the form and structure of poetry that distinguish poetry from other types of creativity and expression. We try to define it as a unique medium of composition that specializes in a unique form of creativity. Poetry tends to have characteristics that set it apart from other forms of literature. This would include the use of rhyme, lines or verses, and stanzas. It is important to note that some of the characteristics are exclusive to poetry. However, the pervasive use and prominence given to all the characteristics identified in poetic compositions merit them our attention as characteristics of poetry.

a. **Rhyme**

Rhyme is one of the most recognizable part of poetry. Although much of modern poetry is unrhymed, especially free verse poetry, rhyme is one means that set poetry apart from the ordinary conversation and in so doing, bring poetry closer to music. A rhyme, described most narrowly, occurs when two or more words or phrases contain identical or similar sounds. That is, rhyme depends on the use of sounds in poetry, rather than letters. We could also look at rhyme as a form of repetition of any identical or similar sound in a defined order. It means that sound devices such as alliteration and assonance can count as forms of rhyme (initial rhyme) in poetry. Poetry allows the use of rhyme in many different ways. We could have:

- End rhyme—the most frequently used and consciously sought repetition in poetry. It would usually have the repeated sound pattern occurring at the end of the lines of a poem. The reason behind its frequent use can be attributed to the emphasis the rhyme pattern gains when they are put at the end of lines: It receives emphasis as a musical effect, and that, except rhythm and meter, contributes more to the musical effect and structure of poetry than any other musical resources. We usually see the immediate effect of end rhyme in the formation of the rhyming scheme.

- Internal rhyme—a rhyme is referred to as internal rhyme when the rhyming word(s) occur within the line of a poem. It usually has a direct influence on the metrical pattern as well as the rhythm of a poem. In effect, it draws in the anticipation of a reader to the use of stress and accent in poetry.

- Initial rhyme – this is evident in most poems where a specific sound syllable is successively repeated at initial of lines of the poem in a specific order. This is called anaphora and it si mostly considered as an element of repetition.

There are other variations of rhyme in poetry. However, it is important to note that rhyme has a musical effect of harmonizing sounds. Again, it influences the attitude audience towards the subject or themes of the poem. The rhyme, in addition, determine the structure (internal and external) of the poem. The tone, mood and atmosphere of the poem are determined by the rhymes. It also gives a distinct emphasis to words, and third, it tends to couple together the rhyming lines (which are increased by the prominence of the rhymes and by their proximity to each other). It also helps in memorization. The second characteristic of poetry is the use of stanza.

b. Lines or verse
Compared with prose, poetry depends less on the linguistic units of sentences and paragraphs, and are more on purely poetic units of the organization. That is, unlike prose which is written from margin to margin, poetry is made up of individual lines. A poetic line begins and ends at where the poet chooses. A poet chooses to stop a line of a poem according to his or her sense of rhythm and meter. It is that sense of rhythm and meter that allows us to define the lines of poetry as verse. While some lines may have collective meaning, there others that make individual meanings.

A line or verse serves as a unit through which poetry is composed. It is usually measured in meter and appreciated for its sense of rhythm. Let us look at rhythm and meter more closely.

c. Rhythm
Poetry often requires a regular beat, an appropriate speed and an expressiveness of delivery just like we see in music. Poetry requires rhythm. Like in music, rhythm does help poets convey the meanings of their words. It is a means that poets explore to guide readers towards a set of complex ideas, coupled with various emotions within a set poem. Rhythm is created through patterns of repeated sounds (in terms of both duration and quality) and ideas. It is a combination of vocal speeds, rises and falls, starts and stops, vigor and slackness, and relaxation and tension. Rhythm is significant because it helps set the tone of a poem. It also means that a poet can use rhythm to express his or her mood, the contextual atmosphere surrounding the poem, as well as attitudes. It is important to note that it is very possible to have a poem whose rhythm is so inconsistent and unpatterned that it becomes difficult to feel the impact of the rhythm. It is also possible to have a poem that has rhythm so obtrusive that we may be tempted to tap our foot to it.

d. Meter
Meter is a kind of rhythm; it is simply the rhythmic pattern of stresses in verse. When looking at the meter of a line in poetry, two things come to mind: stress and syllables. In our everyday use of the English language, we use some degree of force or energy to produce the syllables of words. It is that force that we refer to as stress. Stress in relation to the meter would, therefore, be the relatively greater force we put in producing one syllable over another. When a word is made up of two or more syllables like [sense.less] or [ca.the.dral], one of the syllables will be produced with the most force, and the other(s) with the least force. The syllable with the least stress becomes an unstressed syllable while the one with the most force becomes stressed syllable.

In general, any regular single group of unstressed and stressed syllables is referred to as a foot (and feet if they are more than a single group). In each normal foot of English poetry, we find one stressed, and one or two unstressed syllables. Depending on the positioning of the stressed and unstressed syllable, we may have the following forms of the foot:
- The Iambus: A foot with an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable.

- The Trochee: A foot with a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable.
- The Anapest: A foot with an unstressed syllable immediately followed by an unstressed syllable and then a stressed syllable.
- The Dactyl: A foot with a stressed syllable that is followed by two unstressed syllables.

A verse as the line of poetry is usually made up of several feet. Of course, it is possible to have a verse that is made up of just a foot (monometer). Depending on the number of the foot in the verse, we may have verse forms that are in a dimeter (two feet), a trimester (three feet), a tetrameter (four feet), a pentameter (five feet), or a hexameter (six feet). In essence, a poem that has five feet (a pentameter) within a single line, and each foot of the five has the pattern of iambus (unstressed-stressed syllabus) will be called iambic pentameter (a usual trait of lines of sonnets).

e. **Stanza**

Stanza remains the most conspicuous trait of poetry, and rightly so, it stands at the center of the physical realization of poetry. It is also the most complex. Stanzas are born out of the successive use of rhymes and lines. A stanza can be defined as a group of lines taken as a unit of measure and generally bound together by some scheme of rhymes. Stanzas are particular to poetry as a means of separating different ideas or sessions within a poem. A stanza lets the reader know that a specific set of images or lines are connected and that those lines or images should be read together to make meaning from the text.

Stanzas are usually set off from one another through a simple act of leaving a line space in between themselves. When we distinguish one stanza from another using a line space, we give the poem an external as well as an internal structure where each stanza is made physically visible and expresses ideas different from one another. There are instances where the arrangements of lines or use of line spacing are not so much depended on to structure the stanzas of a poem.

Sonnets, for instance, makes use of fourteen lines which are structurally presented together as a single stanza (the external structure). Ideally, such external arrangements would mean that the sonnet possesses a single unit of an expressed idea. However, depending on the type of sonnet, as we will come to see later in this course, the rhymes in the poem restructures the poem in a way that we can perceive four stanzas (if a Shakespearean sonnet) within the fourteen lines stanza poem. Rhyme has a binding character; it ties together the lines that have similar sound patterns and then helps separate them from the following lines as a distinct unit of a stanza. The nearer the rhymes are to each other, the easier we identify the rhyming sounds, the easier we see the rhymes creating a scheme and internal stanzas within a single stanza (as we usually find in sonnets). It is, therefore, possible to have a stanza (the external structure of the poem) that has stanzas embedded in them (the internal structure of a poem—typical are sonnets). Based on the number of lines that make up a stanza, we can have the following forms of stanzas:
- A couplet (2 lines)
- A tercet (3 lines)
- A quatrain (4 lines)
- A cinquain (5 lines)
- A sestet (6 lines)
- A septet (7 lines)
- An octave (8 lines)

The Shakespearean sonnet is a one stanza poem, but internally made up of three quatrains and a couplet.

Form and structure
The form and structure of poetry can be considered as two sides of a coin. It works hand in hand to allow us classify and describe poems. Though it may be relatively difficult to establish a clear-cut difference between structure and form, we can still attempt it:

- The form of poetry is usually defined by patterns of the rhyme, and rhythm and meter (defines a line as a verse) while that of the structure is usually seen through the construction of stanzas.
- The form of poetry can either be closed (following a well-set pattern) or opened (following no pattern especially with pauses within the poem) whereas the structure of poetry can be classified as either external or internal.
- The content of a poem determines the form of a poem whereas the form gives birth to the structure of the poem.
- Whereas form tells us what the poem is, that of the structure tells us where things are in the poem.

For instance, the form of a lyric poem would have lines with a strong sense of rhythm, and an established pattern of lines and rhymes which usually are in iambic pentameter and an end rhyme respectively—they provide the musical tone that characterizes lyric poems. The structure of the lyric poem would, however, shift our focus to how those patterns of lines and rhymes are arranged so that they communicate the emotions and ideas of the poet as well as set the needed rhythm. So, if we find a poet who arranges 14 metrical verses (lines) with end rhymes in a way that the lines are structured to be in one stanza, we may say he has constructed a fourteen-line lyric poem. If he further structures the lines so that the rhymes are placed at the end of each line to create a scheme that further divides the stanza into four different parts expressive of different ideas, we say the poet has created a Shakespearean sonnet. So indeed, we may look at the form and structure of poetry as two different sides; however, they are synonymous.

Let us note that if a writer uses a form of a verse, it is not that the form selected is the best form to write poems in general, but it is simply because it is better adapted to help him or her express his ideas and emotions exactly as he conceives of it. This is also true of how he handles his verse. If his lines are regular, it is because he aims at a particular effect. Of course, it is not the case that every effect we find in a poem was intended by the poet. It is just the case that we always tend to make some observations when appreciating a poem

Key ideas

- Poetry is an imaginative, artistic creation or a literary composition that is characterized by imagination, emotion, significant meaning, sense-impression, and concrete language that invites attention to its physical features such as sound and appearance (when written).
- Poetry could also be considered a piece of literature written by a poet in meter or verse, expressing various emotions through the use of literary techniques that emphasize the aesthetics of language use.
- The form of poetry is usually defined by patterns of the rhyme, and rhythm and meter (defines a line as a verse) while that of the structure is usually seen through the construction of stanzas.
- The content of a poem determines the form of a poem whereas the form gives birth to the structure of the poem.

- How would I define poetry from other forms of works?
- What are some of the characteristics of poetry you have learnt so far?
- How do I distinguish the form from the structure of a poem after my learning experience?

Discussion
- How is the language of poetry unique from other works like prose?
- How has this session equipped me with the characteristics of poetry?
- How can you help someone appreciate the difference between the form and structure of a poem?

SESSION 2:   TYPES, GENRES AND FUNCTIONS OF POETRY, AND IMAGERY

Welcome to the second session of Unit 1. In this session, we are going to look at the forms or types of poetry. Here, we will consider the narrative, lyrical and dramatic forms or types of poetry. We will look at their forms and basic features. We will then consider the oral and written genres of poetry, as well as the functions of poetry. Finally, we will look at the concept of imagery and its importance in poetry.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of the session, the participant will be able to:

1. mention the three types of poetry.
2. explain the types of poetry and give an example each.
3. mention the genres of poetry.
4. explain the features of each.
5. state the general functions of poetry.
6. discuss the social function of any given poem.
7. explain the importance of imagery in any given poem.

FORMS/TYPES OF POETRY

We must first hint that in this session, we are getting introduced to the types briefly since the details will be discussed in subsequent units. Knowledge is a built-up process.

The types of poetry we are talking about here are reflections of our modes of communication. We basically narrate, sing or dramatize depending on our intent of the communication and the relationship between us and the recipient. In prose, we will title this session "perspectives of presentation. Hope you have heard this in Prose Fiction. This is what we describe as transfer of knowledge.

There are basically three forms of poetry which are the narrative, the lyric and dramatic poetry. Each form of poetry allows a unique form of interaction between a poet and readers. Of these three forms, the first is purely subjective to the poet, the second is objective while the third is objective to the poet but subjective to the characters. The three forms also deal with time differently. Lyric poetry is always expressed in the present time since it presents what the poet feels as he writes, narrative poetry deals with the past since it tells of what has already occurred while dramatic poetry unites the past with the present since it presents that which has already occurred as occurring now. Let us consider each of the forms of poetry in detail.

a. Narrative poetry

In narrative poetry, the poet describes or narrates an event or a story, pushing to the background the poet's emotions and reflections. Most of us are so used to reading stories as prose and watching movies that it becomes difficult to associate storytelling with poetry. But in fact, in time past, the narrative was the best medium to tell stories in poetic language; some of the world's great stories have been told in poetry. Typical examples are the Greek epics, the *Iliad* (about the Trojan War) and the *Odyssey* (about Odysseus' ten years of wandering), the medieval tales of King Arthur, and the great tales of Beowulf. Most of the African and Native-American tales of the creation of the world and the sublime deeds of heroes are also capture in poetic forms. Appellation of Akan kings are mostly narrated by traditional griots. Do you know of any narrative poetic performance in your community? In non-literate societies, people got their stories from storytellers who relied on memory rather than on the written word; the memorized stories were often poems, partly because they were easy to keep in memory. It is those forms of poetry we now treat as narrative poetry.

b. Lyric poetry

Originally, as its Greek name suggests, a *lyric* was a poem sung to the sound of a lyre. This earlier meaning—a poem made for singing—is still current today, when we use *lyrics* to mean the words of a popular song. But the kind of poems we now refer to as *lyric* has a little twist to it. Lyric poetry allows the poet to present his emotions or reflections. It is the kind of poem where emotion is prominent than the story. Such poems are usually sung. In effect, lyric poems were made to have more songlike expressions or words, and more thoughts as well as emotions. Lyric poetry is a form of poetry whose typical objective is set to express the personal emotions of the writer.

c. Dramatic

The third form of poetry is dramatic poetry. In this type of poetry, the poet sets before us characters speaking and acting. It is presented in a form that carries the voice of an imaginary character (or characters) speaking directly, without any additional narration by the author. A dramatic poem, according to T. S. Eliot, does not consist of "what the poet would say in his own person, but only what he can say within the limits of one imaginary character addressing another imaginary character." Strictly speaking, the term *dramatic poetry* describes any poetic form that is performed on the stage. Up until a few centuries ago, most playwrights like Shakespeare and Moliere wrote their plays mainly in verse.

Convergence with other forms of poetry

From the ongoing discussions on the forms of poetry, it would seem that we have been able to set clear boundaries between the various forms of poetry. What we must bear in mind is that all the forms of poetry have a converging point that we consider classifying all of them as poetry. It can be seen in the form (rhyme, rhythm, and lines) they take, the structure in which they are presented; the basic elements to poetry such as artistry associated with language use, images and words being dense, and many others. In effect, when we consider a poem as narrative, for instance, it doesn't mean the poem is devoid of features such as a rhyme scheme, a strong rhythm and metrical pattern which are the primary features of lyric poetry; it certainly does not also mean that the poem cannot have a dialogue or be tragic. It rather means that the poem, as a narrative, gives prominence to certain features that identify with narrative poetry over other features that would be prioritized by the other forms of poetry. So, while every poem would present action or event with emotions invested in a song-like manner, lyric poetry would have the emotions and song-like qualities dominate the telling or staging of the action or event; narrative poetry would have the telling of the

story dominate emotions, song-like qualities, and the staging of the action; dramatic poetry would have staging the action dominating emotions and the telling of the action.

GENRES OF POETRY

Whereas the form and structure of poetry tell us how poetry arranges sounds, rhymes, lines (verse) to construct stanzas, rhyme schemes and others, the genre of poetry draws our attention to the styles poetry takes on as a result of the mode of communication that characterizes its composition. In such regard, we can look at the genres of poetry as traditional oral poetry and written poetry.

Oral poetry

Within our current era of science and technological advancements, oral poetry, as with oral literature in general, has had little recognition compared to writing which has been central to the advancement of science and modernism. Ruth Finnegan points to the difficulty critics find when they attempt to fit oral poetic forms into familiar categories. They are harder to record and present, and easier to ignore compared to the written forms of poetry.

Compared to written poetry, some critics have described oral poetry as crude and artistically undeveloped. Some critics also have advanced the view that oral poetry carried only mysterious ideas while others have argued that it is not advanced enough to carry complex and complicated ideas. Of course, these prejudices are unfounded. Bear in mind, whether oral or written poetry, what matters is that the poet is able to fully communicate his/her ideas, emotional states or actions. Most importantly, no one was born writing; poetry started as oral. Oral poetry would include all forms of poetry that were consciously transmitted from one generation to another by word of mouth. It must be added that oral poetry has been the antecedent of written poetry and most modern poets have drawn their inspiration from the traditional poets/griots.

a. **Description**

Oral poetry is simply that literary verse technically set to be delivered by word of mouth or verbally before an audience. What differentiates oral poetry from written poetry?
  i. The mode of transmission is, of course, by word of mouth.
  ii. They usually identify with a community as owners since it is impossible to trace individual authorship.
  iii. They tend to usually employ a spokesman technique. It is a technique mostly accomplished through dialogue and monologue where characters are employed to own ideas within the poem. They usually employ this technique because oral poetry tends to be impersonal (as seen with traditional popular ballads).
  iv. They do not have a date of composition.
  v. They are composed to be performed.
  vi. They usually have a priot or a performer and a constructed audience.
  vii. There is audience participation in some instances.
  viii. They are composed to be memorized as well as enhance imagination.
  ix. There is verbal variability in oral poetry. There are usually differences in the presentation of oral poetic forms (within different time intervals) by different people since they are (were) usually or technically stored in memory.
  x. The form, structure, and content of oral poetry are fixed depending on the context or situation of performance since oral poetic forms traditionally existed to be performed to serve peculiar functions within established situations in society. One could not perform, for instance, a dirge during a naming ceremony.

b. **Characteristics**

From the description provided of oral literature, oral poems would possess the following features:

i. The language is quite colloquial; composed in the spirit and letter of the indigenous language.

ii. They mostly reflect the belief and worldview of the performers.

iii. They would usually have a lot of repetition; it could be the repetition of words, phrases, or lines. The repetition serves to sometimes give beauty to the form of the poem; lay emphasis on some emotional states; maintain the rhythm of the poem; and create refrains to segment the poem into relevant parts.

iv. They make extensive use of ideophone where ideas are heavily represented in sounds rather than just in words, lines or stanzas. They add to the expressive power of the poet. Onomatopoeia is a typical instance of the use of ideophone.

v. They tend to use digressions. A typical instance is found with primitive epic where the storyteller digresses from the story to invoke the muse. The digression may come in the form of a comment on events in the poem.

vi. There is extensive use of parallelism. It serves as a device that the poet uses to provide affinity between parts of the poem deemed different but related. It may be used to contrast ideas too. It is common in lyrical forms poetry than in narratives.

vii. They are closely linked to traditional religious and social performances.

Typical forms of oral poetry are panegyric poetry and elegiac poetry (a dirge or elegy). We can consider traditional ballad and primitive epic as examples too.

Written Poetry

Written poetry is very common within this era of science and technology as writing has become the mode through which literacy and education have come to be defined. Part of the popularity of written poetry stems from the fact that they are difficult to ignore but easy to record and classify into familiar categories.

Compared to oral poetry, critics have often considered written poetry as an embodiment of true sophisticated artistry that allows a poet to communicate multiple ideas, emotional states, and events. Most importantly, having been secondary but a progression of oral poetry, written poetry usually has its poets adopting some properties of oral literature. In fact, in some poetic forms (especially those of lyric), it becomes difficult to tell the difference between oral poems and written poems. Written poetry would, however, include all forms of poetry consciously composed to be stored and appreciated through writing.

a. **Description**

Written poetry is simply that literary verse consciously composed to be delivered through writing to a reader rather than an audience.

i. The mode of transmission is, of course, through writing and read.

ii. They identify with a unique individual as the author.

iii. Their date of composition can be traced.

iv. They are composed to be appreciated for their artistry.

v. They make use of a very complex personalized style.

vi. They assume a fixed form in terms of content, structure, and word of choice.

Bear in mind that written poetry maintains some descriptive elements of oral poetry.

b. Characteristics
    i. Typically, the language is polished and usually devoid of simplicity.
    ii. They usually invest a lot in imagery and make good use of very complex figures of speech.
    iii. They possess very elaborate metrical patterns, rhyme, and stanzas.
    iv. Other basic poetic techniques that are found with oral poetry are maintained but executed with a level of mastery.

Sonnets, villanelle and literary ballads are typical examples of written poetry.

FUNCTIONS OF POETRY
The functions of poetry can be broadly categorized into two: generic and instrumental.

Generic functions
The generic functions of poetry reflect the basic functions of literature: it entertains, educates and informs. By extension, the generic functions of poetry would include the following;

a. Poetry helps preserve the equilibrium of the human mind. It offers closure and decision to victims or society in moments of loss or crisis. It thus serves as a vehicle for medication, mental coordination and emotional reassurance especially for those who would find affiliation to some peculiar emotional states expressed in a poem. It would manifest in a feeling like, "so I'm not the only one who has endured sleepless nights because of love".

b. It has served and continuously acted as a historical land-marker and repository for societies and civilizations. Poetry serves as a medium through which historical events are preserved for communal response and knowledge. Can you mention any poem that has this property?

c. Poems serve as a tool for social and political satire. It provides an avenue for us to express certain emotions, ideas or thoughts in us which, ordinarily, we could not have expressed in society (as we see with Awoonor's "The Cathedral"). This was common to the poems from the 18th century to now.

d. Poetry carries and spreads the dos and don'ts of people or society. It also helps develop the imagination of its audience or readers.

e. Poetry edifies society.

f. It keeps society happy. Ancient Greeks, for instance, would have people write poetry and have them enter a competition.

g. It gives room for it to be appreciated as a unique form of communication and language use. There have been people who have specialized in poetic language.

It is worth mentioning that a poem can serve all the three generic functions.

Instrumental functions of poetry
Aside these traditional functions, poetry has instrumental functions as well. This function reflects the relevance of a poem to a specific situation. This function implies an agent, a means and an object relationship. The poet is the agent, the poem, the means, and the object is the reader on whom the poem acts. Every poem must have an intention (message) that the poem must convey to the reader who is disposed to receive it. This message of a poem reflects its instrumental function. It encompasses what the poet seeks to do with his or her poem. The instrumental function of a poem can be known through the purpose of the poem, the type of poem and the various thematic issues in the poem. For instance, aside the fact that a dirge can expose readers or audiences to such

traditional functions of education, entertainment and giving information; it has its instrumental function of "mourning the death"; an ode is sung to praise an entity amidst its traditional functions. The instrumental function is usually specific to the type of poem and occasion of performance.

IMAGERY IN POETRY

Imagery seems to be everywhere and nowhere in particular in a poem. It is often examined along the lines of tropes, figure of speech or figurative language; several names for the same thing. A closely associated term is image. One way to fully appreciate the term imagery lies in one's ability to tell it apart from the concept image. Let us start by defining imagery. *The Princeton Encyclopedia of poetry and poetics* defines imagery as referring "to images produced in the mind by language, whose words may refer either to experiences which could produce physical perceptions, where the reader actually has those experiences or to the sense impressions themselves" (p. 560). In other words, imagery refers to the images that are created in a reader's mind by the words of the poet. Imagery then should be seen as a linguistic situation where a poet uses strings of words to engage a reader's imagination and senses so that an image (usually novel or new) is created in the mind of the reader. Image within the definition can simply be regarded as a mental picture or mental representation. Second, image is presented as equal to imagery. What then is the difference?

Difference between image and imagery

In poetry, we can talk about two worlds: the internal world (which exists in our minds as imaginations) and the external world (which is our reality). How do we see our external world? We use our senses. We see trees using our eyes; we can know the difference between salt and sugar using our tongue; we see rough surfaces by touching each; we hear hoarse voice using our ears. The blind may not be able to see with their eyes, but the can certainly see with their other senses such as the sense of touch, taste, and hearing. Imagery uses language to interact with these senses we use to see to create an internal world that may not necessarily be exactly as that of the external world.

Some words directly refer to some things in the external world, so that, we unconsciously create a link between the words and the things to which they refer. It is that link that creates images in our minds. Usually, the link is impossible with abstract nouns and with some verbs and adjectives. Words like "pride", "understand", "tolerant" cannot be linked to any concrete thing; they do not have images in them because it is impossible to see exactly the thing they refer to in the external world using any of the senses we are familiar with. In effect, images may be seen as mental pictures we perceive from the external world using any of our senses and are triggered by words that have a concrete meaning.

The relationship we can establish then is that imagery is used to create images in our internal world. Poets are always expressing abstract thoughts which usually do not have any clear images associated with them. Poets are therefore forced to use language to create a new figure (a concrete form) for the abstract thought. The new figure becomes the image of the abstract thought and the processes involved in manipulating the language to create the link between the abstract thought and the new figure are imagery.

Image is thus the mental picture evoked through our senses of sight, taste, auditory, touch, smell, bodily processes, and movement while imagery is the use of figurative language to appeal to our senses to help us perceive the images behind the thoughts of poets. Imagery is a way of language use while image is an object or a consequence of imagery. Imagery leads to the formation of images while images serve a means through which other images may be created through imagery.

a. Types of imagery

Depending on the human sense that is appealed to through the use of language, we can identify seven types of imagery:

i. Visual imagery—appeals to our sense of sight. Examples include:
- "The clouds were low and hairy.. like locks blown forward in the gleam of eyes."
- "The iced branches shed 'crystal shells'."

ii. Auditory imagery—appeals to our sense of hearing. Examples are:
- "The rumbling … of load on load of apples coming in."
- "The roar of trees, the crack of branches, beating on a box."

iii. Olfactory imagery—appeals to our sense of smell. Examples include:
- "The sticks of wood 'sweet scented stuff'"
- "To a Young Wretch – the boy takes the tree and heads home, 'smelling green.'"

iv. Gustatory imagery—appeals to our sense of taste. Examples include:
- "The walking boots that taste of Atlantic and Pacific salt."
- "A haying machine passes over a bird nest without 'tasting flesh.'"

v. Tactile imagery—appeals to our sense of touch. Examples include:
- "So love will take between the hands and face."
- "The bed linens might just as well be ice and clothes snow."

vi. Organic imagery—appeals to our bodily processes. Examples include:
- "My heart owns a doubt; it costs no inward struggle not to go."
- "It's when I'm weary of considerations, and life is too much like a pathless wood."
- "Trees drinking up the pools and along with it, the flowers."

vii. Kinesthetic imagery—appeals to our sense of movement. Examples include:
- "I feel the ladder sway as the boughs bend."
- "Leaves go up in a coil and hissed, blindly struck at my knee and missed."
- "The black bats tumble and dart."

There are other forms of imageries that are not dependent on the human senses. They include:

i. Beastial imagery—the use of words that evoke mental pictures resembling or suggesting an animal or beast. Examples are:
- He eats like a lion with no morals.
- I would rather be a toad than to marry her.

ii. Fecal imagery—the use of words that evoke mental pictures resembling feaces.
- He is the shit of the family. Nobody wants him around.
- He said a lot of crap to him for breaking her heart.

iii. Fauna and flora imageries—they involve the use of words that use animals and plants respectively as a means of creating mental pictures.

As has been established, imagery involves the use of language to create new figures (forms or images) of meaning. There are several ways language can be used to create new figures and they are expressed through the figures of speech. Examples are as follows: metaphor, simile, irony, symbolism, personification and paradox.

Key ideas

- There are basically three forms/types of poetry: the narrative, the lyric and dramatic poetry.
- The genres of poetry are written poetry and oral or unwritten poetry.
- Poetry has generic or traditional functions as well as instrumental functions.
- Image is thus the mental picture evoked through our senses of sight, taste, auditory, touch, smell, bodily processes, and movement while imagery is the use of figurative language to appeal to our senses in order to help us perceive the images behind the thoughts of poets.

Reflection

- What are the two genres of poetry? How similar or dissimilar are they?
- What are the general functions of poetry that easily come to my mind when I reflect on the session?
- How has my experiences in this session equipped me to differentiate among the narrative, lyrical and dramatic poetry?
- How would I define image and imagery? What are the connections between them?

Discussion

- Which of the types of poetry involves the poet narrating an experience? How do you justify your choice?
- How are instrumental functions of poetry different from the generic functions of poetry?
- Explain any possible relationship between oral and written poetry.
- What would you regard as the key difference between an image and imagery?
- How would you discuss metaphor and personification as manifestations of imagery?

UNIT 2: NARRATIVE POETRY AND TYPES

Welcome to unit 2. In this unit we will focus on narrative poetry as a type or genre of poetry. Have you seen an example of narrative poetry before? Have you heard of narration or narrative before? What is narrative? Well, these have to do with story and storytelling. Are you surprised that we are talking about story and storytelling in relation to poetry? We will soon see why this is so.

Learning outcomes:
By the end of the unit, the participant will be able to:
- Differentiate between narrative and lyric poetry.
- Talk about the types of narrative poetry.
- State the features of narrative poetry.
- Identify and appreciate the narrative poetry.

SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION TO NARRATIVE POETRY AND ONE OF ITS TYPES (A BALLAD)

Welcome to the first session of unit 2. In this session we will focus on narrative poetry. We shall attempt to describe and show its features, and contrast it will prose narrative. We will then consider one type of narrative poetry (the ballad) and its features as well.

Learning outcomes:
By the end of this session, the participant will be able to:
1. Explain what narrative poetry is.
2. Identify the features of narrative poetry.
3. Explain ballad as a lyric poem.
4. Identify the characteristics of ballads.

NARRATIVE POETRY

Most of us are so used to reading stories as prose and watching movies that it becomes difficult to associate storytelling with poetry. But in fact, some of the world's great stories have been told in poetry. Typical examples are the Greek epics, the *Iliad* (about the Trojan War) and the *Odyssey* (about Odysseus' ten years of wandering), the medieval tales of King Arthur, and the great tales of Beowulf. Most of the African and Native-American tales of the creation of the world and the sublime deeds of heroes are also capture in poetic forms. In short, although we have gotten used to thinking of a story as prose in a book, until a few hundred years ago, stories were commonly told through poetry. A narrative poem or narrative poetry is a verse or poem that tells a story They were sung and recited. In non-literate societies, people got their stories from storytellers who relied on memory rather than on the written word; the memorized stories were often poems, partly because they were easy to keep in memory. It is those forms of poetry we now treat as narrative poetry.

Description

Narrative poetry tells stories as much as prose narratives do. They also organize experiences along a time continuum. The differences, however, lie in the facts that;

i. Compared to prose narratives, narrative poetry is more emotional since poetry specializes in building intensity.
ii. Whereas prose narratives offer more minute details in terms of setting and other relevant elements to storytelling, narrative poetry confines itself to the broader and more salient features.

iii.   Whereas prose narrative is subtle and analytic in rendering a story, narrative poetry tends to be general and picturesque.
iv.   More importantly, narrative poetry employs condensed language and dwell on more artistic composition than that of prose narrative which employs ordinary everyday language.

Characteristics

Narrative poetry observes and possesses all the essential principles and elements of prose narrative.
i.   It must narrate a story
ii.   It must possess unity, coherence, and proportion.
iii. It must have a starting point, a period of suspense, a climax of interest.
iv.   It must have a point of view, setting, characters, and a plot.
v.   The story reveals a chronology of events spanning a certain period of time.
vi.   The speaker tells the story in the third persona and in the past tense.
vii. It is populated by characters who speak in dialogue (in the past tense).
viii. There is the use of dialogue
ix.   It has a plot.

There are three kinds of narrative poetry: the ballad, epic and metrical tales.

THE BALLAD

Description

Ballads are typical examples of narrative poetry. Ballads are generally perceived as anonymous stories in a song. The ballad is one of the oldest poetic forms. It is passed down orally. It is a short verse or poem that tells a story. They were originally made to be sung. They acquired their distinctive flavor by being passed down orally from generation to generation, each singer consciously or unconsciously modifying his or her inheritance. It is not known who made up the popular ballads and so are usually approached as a societal artifact belonging to the community whose rural lifestyle and language behaviors identify with the poems. But often, they are said to have been composed partly out of earlier ballads by singers.

There is the idea that most popular ballad singers probably were composers only by accident; they intended to transmit what they had heard, but their memories were sometimes faulty and their imaginations active, and that led to the creation of new ballads. The modifications effected by oral transmission generally give a ballad three noticeable qualities:
First, it is impersonal. Even if there is an "I" who sings the tale, he or she is usually characterless or unrepresented in the story.

Second, the ballad—like other oral literature such as the nursery rhyme and the counting-out rhyme ("one potato, two potato")—is filled with repetition, sometimes of lines, sometimes of words. The story is told by repeating lines with only a few significant variations, and that usually set refrains as a basic trait of ballads.
Third, because ballads are transmitted orally, residing in the memory rather than on a printed page, weak stanzas have often been dropped, leaving a series of sharp scenes, frequently with dialogues.

Also, there usually exist several versions or tunes of a single ballad and no one version can be deemed the "correct one." Such state of affairs can be attributed to the fact that most popular ballads were transmitted orally and, in the transmission, several modifications were made depending on the storyteller, the audience of the storyteller, or the situation surrounding the telling of the story. In

effect, the ballads we sometimes encounter as written may just be the popular versions of the ballad. The many versions of "The farmer's curst wife" exemplifies the situation.

Of course, down the years straight into when writing began, there have been some significant changes in the form of ballads. There have emerged professional poets who have sought to imitate popular ballads, and in so doing, have created a new form ballad, literary ballads. Two famous literary ballads in existence are Keat's "La Belle Dame sans Merci" and Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner". Literary ballads usually tend to be characterized by a self-conscious narrative style different from the anonymous and impersonal popular ballads.

Features of the ballad
Here are a few ways we can identify the ballad:
1. They tell a story.
2. They are usually written in short stanzas with a simple rhyme scheme.
3. The language is simple to reflect rural life.
4. They are often characterized by stuck images
5. There is the frequent repetition of words, lines or phrases (as refrains).
6. It tells a compact tale in a style that achieves bold, sensational effect through deliberate starkness and abruptness.
7. It has a rigid economy of narratives.
8. It employs a variety of devices to create highly charged moments and emotional atmosphere.
9. It has supernatural characters
10. Ballads frequently focus on personal and communal tragedies.
11. They deal with subject matters/themes such as revenge, disappointment in love, supernatural beings and events, physical strength.

Read the poem below and identify the elements mentioned above.

Dust
She lived in the south by the river's mouth
and she was gently bred.
She polished her saucepans every day
and dusted under the bed.

Oh why do u polish your pans so bright
and chase the dust away?
I'm to be wed, the lady said
And tomorrow's my wedding day.

A man came from the edge of the town,
a worker in stone, they said.
There was dust in his eyebrows, dust in his clothes
and dust in the hairs of his beard.

She took him in
and the logs on the hearth grew red
as she tended the fire and laid the dust
and baked his daily bread.

But he stamped the hearth and raised the dust
and scattered the embers red

and pulled her house down about her ears
and left her there for dead.

Oh what shall I do without my house
and where shall I lay my head?
You'll not cry, by and by,
when the dust has settled, he said.

So he went away and there she lay
with the hard, hard earth for her bed.
The hearth was cold. There was dust, dust
in her nostrils and over her head.

Types of Ballads
Though the ballad was originally part of the oral tradition, as we indicated above, there are two types of ballads. These are the folk or standard/ traditional ballad and the literary ballad. We shall discuss each in the subsequent paragraphs.

1. Traditional Ballad

Description
Traditional, folk or popular ballads are those ballad forms which were passed on orally but later written down. These ballad forms are communally owned so they have no authorship. They reflect the customs and beliefs of the people who own them. They present to their audience or readers simple rural or rustic life. Traditional ballads still appear, however, in isolated sections and among illiterate or semi-literate people.

Features of traditional ballads
The general descriptions that have already been provided on ballads very much identify with traditional ballads. The distinctive features of traditional include what follows.
   i.   The traditional ballad is impersonal. We don't get any clue as to the personality and nature of the narrator. It comes with little or no comment on the actions described.
   ii. It usually has the supernatural playing important roles in the events that unfold in the storytelling.
   iii. Physical courage and love are frequent themes and the incidents are such that they happen to common people.
   iv. It often has to do with domestic episodes.
   v.   Little or slight attention is given to the characterization or descriptions.
   vi. It tends to have abrupt transitions.
   vii. The actions in traditional ballads are largely developed through dialogue.
   viii. Traditional ballads use colloquial language. Tragic situations and sudden disasters are presented with the utmost simplicity using plain and simple language
   ix. There is usually the pervasive use of repetition through which refrains are created.
   x.   They are written in a single episode with a highly dramatic tune.
   xi. Its subject matter usually tends to tragic or violent.
   xii. Most importantly, traditional ballads have no known authorship. This is because it is owned by the community within which it is set hence no single individual can personalize or claim ownership of it. It also makes it difficult to tell when it was composed.
Examples of traditional ballads are 'Sir Patrick Spens" and "Lord Randall". Below is the poem "Sir Patrick Spens".

Practice
Read the poem below and identify the features of the Traditional ballad we discussed above.

"Sir Patrick Spens
The king sits in Dunfirmline town,
Drinking of the blood red wine
Where can I get a steely skipper
To sail this might boat of mine?

Then up there spoke a bonny boy,
Sitting at the king's right knee
"Sir Patrick Spens is the very best seaman
That ever sailed upon the sea"

The king has written a broad letter
And sealed it up with his own right hand
Sending word unto Sir Patrick to come at his
Command

"An enemy then this must be
Who told the lie concerning me
For I was never a very good seaman,
Nor ever do intend to be"

"Last night I saw the new moon clear
With the new moon in her hair
And that is a sign since we were born
That means there'll be a deadly storm"

They had not sailed upon the deep a day,
A day but barely free
When loud and boisterous blew the winds
And loud and noisy blew the sea

Then up there came a mermaiden,
A comb and glass in her hand
"Here's to you my merry young men for you'll not see dry
 land again"

"Long may my lady stand
Qith a lantern in her hand
Before she sees my bonny ship
Come sailing homeward to dry land"

Forty miles off Aberdeen
The waters fifty fathoms deep
There lies good Sir Patrick Spens
With the Scots lord at his feet

2. Literary Ballads

Description

The literary ballad is a narrative poem created by a poet in imitation of the old anonymous folk ballad by adhering to its basic conventions of repeated lines, stanza, refrain, swift action with occasional surprise endings, extraordinary events evoked in direct simple language and scant characterization Usually, the literary ballad is more elaborate and complex; the poet may retain only some of the devices and conventions of the older verse narrative. In effect, the poet of literary ballad is given the option to retain or make changes to any of the features of traditional ballads (such as focusing on rustic life). Literary ballads were quite popular in England during the 19th century and poems like Keats's "La Belle Dame sans Merci", Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner", and Oscar Wilde's "The Ballad of Reading Goal" made waves.

Characteristics

It is worth mentioning that the general features of the ballad are identified with the literary ballad. However, below are unique features of the literary ballad:

  i.   The literary ballad is of known authorship. Unlike the traditional ballad, the literary ballad is a creation of an individual who adopts either the content or style of a folk ballad.

  ii. The literary ballad possesses a more polished style and it is self-conscious in its use of poetic techniques. It is sometimes described as a minstrel ballad because of the self-conscious style it employs.

  iii. It is important to note that although literary ballads combine stories with song, action with emotion, the story and action are given priority over it being a song characterized by emotions.

  iv. The subject and object have more personal identities. The stories are composed from the poet's perspectives just as the characters in the poems, though fictitious, can be associated with the poet's experience. An example is Keats' "La Belle Dame sans Merci: A Ballad"

Major differences between the Traditional and Literary Ballads

  i.   Contrary to traditional or popular ballad which has no known author (as the poem is communally owned), the literary ballad is of known authorship.
  ii. It is important to note that although literary ballads combine stories with song, action with emotion, the story and action are given priority over it being a song characterized by emotions. Traditional ballads were meant to be sung.
  iii. The degree of impersonalization is higher in the traditional ballads than it is in the literary ballad.
  iv. Also, ambiguity often characterizes ballads in general. However, it is perceived as a difference between the two types of ballads. Perhaps because stanzas are lost, or perhaps because the singer was usually less unconcerned with some elements of a story, the ambiguity of the traditional ballad commonly lies in the story itself (like who did what?) rather than in the significance of the story (what does it all add up to, what does it mean?). That is, whereas the ambiguity that we usually find with traditional ballad may be attributed to the fact that through its oral transmission, some elements or events in the story were lost due to the imperfection of mind and memories, that of literary ballad would usually be created for an effect. From the discussion so far, I am certain that you can glean the similarities between the two ballad types. Good.

a. An analysis of a Literary Ballad

"La Belle Dame sans Merci" By <u>John Keats</u>

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
    Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
    And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
    So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
    And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow,
    With anguish moist and fever-dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
    Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,
    Full beautiful—a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
    And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,
    And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
    And made sweet moan

I set her on my pacing steed,
    And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
    A faery's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
    And honey wild, and manna-dew,
And sure in language strange she said—
    'I love thee true'.

She took me to her Elfin grot,
    And there she wept and sighed full sore,
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
    With kisses four.

And there she lullèd me asleep,
    And there I dreamed—Ah! woe betide!—
The latest dream I ever dreamt
    On the cold hill side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,
    Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
They cried—'La Belle Dame sans Merci
    Thee hath in thrall!'

<blockquote>
I saw their starved lips in the gloam,
    With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke and found me here,
    On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here,
    Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
    And no birds sing.
</blockquote>

Which of the features of literary ballad discussed above is seen in "La Belle Dame sans Merci"? How different is the language of "La Belle Dame sans Merci" from "Sir Patrick Spens"? Are there any similarities between the two poems? What makes this poem very effective?

Key ideas

- Narrative poetry tells stories as much as prose narratives do. They also organize experiences along a time continuum.
- There are three kinds of narrative poetry: the ballad, epic and metrical tales
- Ballads are generally perceived as anonymous stories in a song.
- The two types of ballads are the traditional and literary ballads.
- Traditional ballads are those ballad forms which were passed on orally but later written down. These ballad forms are communally owned so they have no authorship.
- The literary ballad is a narrative poem created by a poet in imitation of the old anonymous folk ballad.

Reflection

- What would I define narrative poetry?
- What are some of the key characteristics of narrative poetry?
- Why would I classify a ballad as an example of a narrative poetry?
- How has the learning experience equipped me to know the difference between the two types of ballads?

Discussion

- How different is the narrative poetry from prose narrative?
- How do you explain a ballad to a learner?
- How different are the characteristics of traditional ballads and literary ballads?
- Which of these two types of ballads would appear to appeal to the learner? Why do you think so?
- With reference to any of the two poems outlined in this session, discuss the features of either traditional ballads or literary ballads?

SESSION 2: EPIC AND METRICAL NARRATIVE TALES

Welcome to session two of this unit. In this session, we are going to explore epic and metrical tale/romance as two other kinds of a narrative poem. We will also look at the types of epic poems and their peculiar features, as well as metrical tales.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of this lesson, the participant will be to:
  a. explain epic as a narrative poem
  b. identify two types of epics
  c. explain one type of epic
  d. list three examples of epic poem
  e. explain metrical tales
  f. identify metrical tales in context

THE EPIC

Description

The Epic is a poem extended in length, narrating an action of power and interest, centered on a single hero. Again, it tells the adventures and deeds of a hero in a great detail so that it ends up telling the story of a nation. The epic is thus a long narrative poem that usually unfolds the history or mythology of a nation or race. The form of the epic differs from culture to culture, and language to language. It is, however, often written in an elevated style. The generic motive of the epic is usually to excite admiration, and this is usually achieved in the plot of the story where complications are presented followed by solutions. It ends with a triumph over some difficulties. In other words, the Epic is long narrative poem that celebrates heroic achievements. It treats themes of historical, national, religious or legendary significance. Examples of epic poems are Homers 'Iliad' and Odyssey, Virgil's 'Aeneid', John Milton's 'Paradise lost', 'The epic of the Gilgamesh', 'Beowulf'. In Africa we have the great epics of *Sundiata* of the Manding people of West Africa, the *Mwindo* in Central Africa, and the *Ozidi* of the Ija in Nigeria.

Do you remember any of epic in your community? Can stories about those who led the establishment of Asebu and Mourei States, Central region; Asante, Asante region; Anlo, Volta region etc. be treated as epics? Find out from the elders in your traditional area if they have an epic.

Types of Epics

Like ballads, epic has come to be classified into two types due to the effect of time on the style and manner of presentation. There are the primitive /primary/traditional/ classical epic and epic of art/ secondary/literary epic. The "Iliad", "Odyssey", and "Beowulf" are examples of primitive epic, while "Divine Comedy", "Paradise Lost", and "Orlando" are examples of the epic of art.

  a. **Primitive/Traditional/ Classical epic**
     This type of is greatly shaped from the legends and traditions of a heroic age and is part of the oral tradition of literature. The primitive epics were developed from popular ballads E.g. Homers Iliad and Odyssey are closely linked to the historical antecedent of the Greeks.

     It is important to state that most of the primitive epics have authors since they were written down at a point. However, it stands that the respective poets of primitive epic who lived close to the ballad era to believe in the legend of the nation and to write about him or her. Primitive epic is thus spontaneous, simple, and sincere, and it has a strong power of expression (to elevate). They usually hold several defects such as the form being rudimental, awkward, and the characters are not well-conceived and analyzed; the plot is simplified and inadequately treated; the episodes and changes in fortune are poorly prepared and often left unaccounted for. Note that since these defects are usually

considered definitive of primitive epic, the "Iliad" and "Odyssey" are thought of as without defects.

b. **Epic of Art/Secondary/Literary epic**
This type was written down and consciously produced by sophisticated poets who adopted aspects of traditional epic for specific literary and ideological purposes. It is like the literary ballad; it is an adaptation of the traditional epic in style and structure. The epic of art was developed from canons and as models from Homeric epics; e.g. John Milton's "Paradise Lost". This is created on the myth of creation and the struggles between the powers of the universe. It is obvious that the characteristics may evince difference. Read John Milton's "Paradise Lost" on your phone. Consequently, whereas primitive epic originates from the heart of a whole nation, the epic of art has individual poets as owners. The epic of art is a conscious art production that is set to recognize the basic traits of Homeric epics. The style is complex and polished with elaborate structural features.

Features of Epic Poetry
a. Epic poems are usually lengthy. There is the use of extended epic similes.
b. Epic poetry often opens with an invocation of the muse and a formal statement of the theme.
c. It is highly metrical. In most cases, it is written in a blank verse. It uses a metrical structure known as a Dactylic hexameter: a meter consisting of six stressed syllables per line. It is written in elevated style.
d. It portrays one complete action and not multiple actions. That is, it falls on Aristotle's concept of the unity of action: It tells one story and that story has a beginning, a middle, and an end, and we can completely tell how the middle relates to the beginning and the end.
e. It is freer and broader in terms of how the actions are presented; it employs all techniques of performance including flashbacks, dialogue, and in media res.
f. They allow the inclusion of events, scenes, or incidents that are not essential to the progress of the main action.
g. Epics usually have the movement of the plot independent of the character. Although it is usually set about a hero, the plot does is not depend on the actions of the hero and that is how it can engage an entire nation.
h. The epic has a geographical setting that is extensive and sometimes cosmic. This is a hero of military, national or religious significance.
i. There is the presence of a central hero who may be semi-divine. The hero is involved in extended and exotic journeying which sometimes involves supernatural beings such as gods, angels or demons in action.
j. It celebrates heroic achievements. There are heroic battles. It therefore treats subjects such as bravery or heroism, courage, love, revenge, etc.

Differences between Ballad and Epic Poetry
Because both are types of narrative poems, let us first say that both the ballad and epic narrate stories. However, a ballad is shorter in length than an epic, ballad is composed to be sung on some occasions, and not to narrate, the epic is a narration. On the other hand, an epic poem typically tells a story about an important character or the heroic ideals of a specific society, the ballad concerns itself with commoners in rustic context. Both differ in style; whereas a ballad is composed in a simple language, an epic demonstrates mastery in style especially in language use.

METRICAL TALES

Description

A metric tale is a long poem that tells an already developed story in verse. The metric tale, also known as the "metric romance", appeared in the Renaissance and from then on, this type of literature developed into the modern-day Metrical Poetry literacy. Romance and happy endings were the most important components of these poems.

Characteristics of Metrical Tales

 a. The themes associated with the metric tale are adventures of questing knights, courtly love and romance.
 b. Its length varies; it can either be the size of a short story, or spanning to the length of a novel.
 c. A metrical tale is a narrative poem that is composed in verse.
 d. It relates to either real or fictional events.
 e. It uses straightforward language and relates to a wide range of subjects, characteristics, and experiences, both physical and emotional.
 f. A metrical tale it is a narrative poem that is told in the first person.

A Metrical tale does not necessarily have to form a plot. Home tales and love stories are good examples of Metrical tales. Metrical ales also involve stories of supernatural phenomena or tales bearing a high level of moral tenacity. They are composed in reverse and are usually the length of a short story. In other words, the term "metrical" or "meter" refers to a poem's measured rhythmic arrangement of words. So, a metrical tale is a form of poetry that relates, tells or narrates a story in measured arrangement of words, or rhythm.

Examples of metric tales include "The Lady of Shallot" written by Alfred Lord Tennyson, "The Lady of the Lake" by Sir Walter Scott, 'Evangeline' composed by Henry Hadsworth Longfellow and Geoffrey Chaucer's 'The Canterbury Tales'. Please, access "The Lady of Shallot" and examine it features in the light of the above.

Key ideas

> - The epic is a poem extended in length, narrating an action of power and interest, centered on a single hero.
> - We can classify the epic into two types due to the effect of time on the style and manner of presentation. There are the primitive /primary/traditional/ classical epic and epic of art/ or secondary/literary epic
> - There are clear differences between a ballad and an epic.
> - A metrical tale is a form of poetry that relates, tells or narrates a story in measured arrangements of words, or rhythm.

Reflection

> - What are some of the comparisons that can be made between an epic and a ballad?
> - What are the unique features of the epic?
> - How unique are these features when compared with metrical tales?

Discussion
- How has this session equipped you to understand the epic as a form of narrative poetry?
- How similar and dissimilar are epics and metrical tales?
- How different is the metrical narrative tale from the ballad?

UNIT 3: LYRICAL POETRY

In this unit we are going to look at lyric poetry. We shall explore the concept 'lyrical poetry' by discussing its features and types. We shall then concentrate on one example of lyrical poetry, the sonnet, its features and types. Thus, beyond looking at the concept of lyrical poetry, this unit will focus on three traditional sonnets in addition to other less known forms of the sonnet.

Learning outcomes:
By the end of the unit, the participant will be able to:
1. explain the concept 'lyrical poetry' and discuss its features.
2. state the types of the lyrical poetry.
3. explain the sonnet and examine each type.
4. compose a sonnet on any subject.

SESSION 1: DEFINITION, CHARACTERISTICS AND TYPES OF LYRIC POETRY

Welcome to the first session of this Unit. In this session, we shall learn about lyric poetry, its features and types. We shall then turn our attention to sonnets, with particular focus on Petrarchan sonnets.

Learning outcomes:
By the end of this session, the participant will be able to:
a. explain what is meant by lyric poetry.
b. tell the distinctive features of lyric poetry.
c. state the types of lyric poetry.

LYRIC POETRY
Description

You recall that in Unit one, we said that poetry can be grouped into three genres. How do we tell the difference among the three genres? One useful way to do this is to focus on explaining each genre and identifying its unique characteristics/feature/qualities. Before, we come to the types of Lyric poetry, it is appropriate to ask the question 'What is Lyric poetry? Let's think through it.
The word Lyric is derived from the Greek word *lyra* (musical instrument) and *melic* (melody). Traditionally lyric poetry was sung to the accompaniment of a musical instrument called *lyra*.

Now, let us sat that Lyrical poetry is a verse or poem that can be sung to the accompaniment of a musical instrument. Lyrical poetry can also be explained as a verse or poem that expresses intense personal emotions or feelings of a single speaker. The musicality is crucial in heightening the emotions of the speakers. William Nerys argues that lyric poetry is "the immanence of the self, its centrality is within the composition as the subject of the writing, and the role of language as a transparent medium for communicating intense emotions" (28).

Lyrical poetry is strictly used to express emotional states or thoughts (like love). The emotions that are expressed are mostly personal to the poet. In fact, whereas narrative poems focus on the emotions within the stories they tell, the emotions or thoughts that lyric poetry presents are usually universal; the emotions may be personal to the poet, but not unique. If it is unique to the poet, it simply means that no one can appreciate the emotions the poet expresses with his or her poem and that is not the object of lyric poetry.
Lyrical poetry does not tell tales, it sings about the tales; and that the elements of emotion usually dominate the song.

Lyrical poetry possesses several traits in terms of form and structure. But let us look at them generally. It is usually short in structure. Lyric poetry tends to be melodic and makes use of literary tools or words that yield high musical effects. In effect, though the subject of the poem could be emotional, the choice of words and its arrangement, coupled with the sound pattern evokes the musicality to heighten the emotions.

Characteristics of Lyrical Poetry
1. It expresses the thoughts and feelings of the poet. In other words, it captures the emotional intensity of the speaker's experience. This is why lyrical poetry is sometimes described as intensely subjective or highly personal and contemplative. The speaker in lyrical poetry is called persona. This persona is often remembering or creating a unique experience for personal benefit. Lyrical poetry therefore tries to capture the feeling or experience of the persona.
2. It is usually characterized by its brevity and musical quality.
3. It relies heavily on figurative language and poetic devices such as simile, metaphor, rhyme, voice, imagery etc., to convey its message.
4. Almost every type of lyric poetry follows a formal structure that dictates the rhyme scheme, meter, and verse form. The poem is given a strong rhythm. It is frequently set to use sound devices like assonance, consonants, alliteration, among others to heighten its melodious nature.
5. It is usually written in the first-person point of view (use "I"). It is capable of other points of view (it uses third-person point of view when describing an object like love, or beauty where the poet is far removed)

The poem below is an example of lyrical poetry. Read it and examine the characteristics discussed above in the poem:

RYTER ROETHICLE'S "LUST III"
Whilst abed in dark of night, I feel the beat
As your kisses arouse me, and once again
I become a beast blinded by the pulsing heat.
Passion taking over, becoming only semi sane
And as your mouth leaves me and I am incomplete
Still left with other pleasures that I must attain
I feel heat surround me that matches my own
Driving me to heights that I have never known.
Now we are riding with the storm,
Who is the rider and who the beast?
There is no sense as we drive each other on,
The humpback beastie keeps changing form
Such manna on which to feast
Till the final cries, then all is gone.

You can also use your phone to access more lyrical poems for study.

TYPES/FORMS OF LYRIC POETRY
Lyric poetry has many defined forms. It has generally been stated that the lyrical poetry is not a form but manner. This is because there are many forms within which the lyrical manner is situated. **Some common lyrical forms are sonnet, elegy, ode, and villanelle**. All these forms are typically composed bearing in mind the idea of music in "lyric" and emotion. They would normally possess the very traits of music except that whereas music prioritizes song over emotion, lyric poetry prioritizes emotions.

It is also proper to describe the following broad types as lyrical in nature:
1. Descriptive Lyric Poetry
2. Reflective Lyric poetry
3. Confessional Lyric Poetry

As you can see, the term lyric poetry functions as an umbrella term that brings together different types of poems. It is very important to remember this. We will come back to these general types of lyrical poetry, but for now, let us discuss one of the common forms of lyrical poetry, sonnets.

THE SONNET
The sonnet began in Italy, where the poet Francesco Petrarch first established it as a serious form of poetry. Petrarch wrote a large collection of sonnets addressed to a young woman named Laura. Francesco Petrarch (1304-1374) called his sonnets canzone; the term sonnet thus indicates in effect a genre of love songs. Petrarch also refined a particular type of sonnet known as the blazon (blahzohn). A blazon is a sonnet that catalogues the features or traits of its subject, usually a woman, and describes them using hyperbole, metaphor, or simile. In effect, some describe sonnet as a little song especially, love songs addressed to a beloved.

We will define the sonnet as a lyrical poem of fourteen lines with a prescribed rhyme scheme. In other words, the sonnet has a fixed structure and defined by a rhyming pattern. Sonnets have traditionally been written in iambic pentameter. The sonnet began in Italy and English poets such as Sir Thomas Wyatt, Henry Howard, William Shakespeare, John Milton etc. adapted and transformed it for their specific purposes. There are two basic types of sonnets: Petrarchan or Italian sonnet (made famous by the 14-century Italian poet Francesco Petrarch) and the Shakespearean or English sonnet (popularized by William Shakespeare). These sonnet types are defined primarily by their rhyme scheme. Later, a third type was introduced by Edmund Spencer. From the above discussion, you should be able to identify some features of sonnets. Let us mention a few:

1. A sonnet is a fourteen-line poem.
2. It is traditionally written in iambic pentameter. (We will discuss it later)
3. It follows a prescribed structure (either Petrarchan, Shakespearean, Spenserian etc.).
4. It expresses a single concentrated idea or thought.
5. It is highly personal and therefore concentrates on the persona's feeling, emotions, and experiences about a loved one, an object, an event, etc.
6. Thematically, the dominant thematic issues in sonnets are love, joy, sadness, death and immortality, the transience of time, etc.
7. It has a defined rhyme scheme.

Let us move on to discuss the types of sonnets.

Italian or Petrarchan Sonnet
We will better appreciate the Petrarchan sonnet by looking at an example of it:

> When I consider how my light is spent
> Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
> And that one talent, which is death to hide,
> Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
> To serve therewith my Maker, and present
> My true account, lest he returning chide:
> "Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?"
> I fondly ask; but Patience, to prevent.

> That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
>   Either man's work, or his own gifts. Who best
>   Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
> Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed
>   And post o'er land and ocean without rest.
>   They also serve who only stand and wait."

a. **The Structure of the poem**

If you look at the poem carefully you will realise that it is a fourteen-line poem. This is a very important feature of a sonnet. Per the content, the poem is divided into two: the first eight lines (the Octave) stating a problem or proposition and discussing it. The persona complains of a deficiency in him and laments its effect on him. The second part is the last six lines (the Sestet) which attempt to resolve the problem stated in the first eight lines. A voice comes in to calm the persona of his plight. He is urged to bear his burden joyfully.

In the Italian sonnet, the theme is developed in two stages. The first eight lines, or the octave, presents the theme or raise the issue, and corresponding doubt, query, etc., and the last six lines, the sestet, "answer the query, resolve the problem, and drive home the point by an abstract comment." Sometimes the octave of the Italian sonnet is divided into two parts or quatrains, as the sestet is divided into two parts called tersest.

b. **The Rhyme Scheme**

By rhyming scheme we are referring to the sounds of the end word/syllable for each line. In the above poem the last word in the first line rhymes with the last words in the fourth, fifth and eight lines (*ways, grace, day's, and praise*). You will also see that the last word in the second line rhymes with the last words in the third, sixth and seventh lines. Identify these words. The rhyme scheme of the lines is ABBA ABBA. The second part has the last words of lines nine, eleven and thirteen rhyming while that of lines ten, twelve and fourteen also rhyming; giving us CDCDCD (ie alternating couplet).

What does the rhyme scheme ABBAABBA CDCDCD tell you about the structure or organization of the Petrarchan sonnet? If you look at the rhyme scheme carefully again you will see that the rhyme scheme divides the Petrarchan sonnet into two parts or two-part structure; the Octave and the Sestet. The rhyme scheme shows that the Octave consists of two quatrains. A quatrain refers to four lines. The Octave has the rhyme scheme ABBA ABBA. The Sestet however has three different rhyming schemes as CDCDCD or CDECED or CDCDEE. It must be added that at the beginning of the sestet, there is a Volta or turn. The sestet actually grows out of the octave, though in a different way, and completes the single thought of the whole poem. Normally, too, a definite pause is made in thought development at the end of the eighth line serving to increase the independent unit of an octave.

What does the above discussion tell us about analyzing a sonnet? Well, it shows that in addition to talking about the subject matter, theme or themes, and poetic devices, you will also have to pay attention to the structure or organization of the poem.

The Message

What are some of the literary devices employed by the poet in "The World is Too Much with Us?" Read the poem carefully again. Can you identify personification, allusion, imagery, consonance, simile, metaphor, etc? The major theme is the call to make good of every situation one finds himself or herself. In other words, though the persona laments his condition of blindness, he is urged to make use of it in the best way he can.

On the question of message, the rhyme scheme once again provides authenticity to it. The universal truth in the message is echoed in the perfect rhyme scheme. The scheme shows the natural connection and sequence among the lines in the AB BA AB BA; and CD CD CD or other variants for the sestet.

Approach
The persona employs internal monologue in the octave and resorts to dialogue in the sestet. The style of communication depends on the subject and how to make it effective. The interaction thus makes the poem realistic as it amply reflects humanity. The use of metaphor conceals the physical blindness but plunges readers into the Christian realm where everyone knows of the eventual account to give.

Key ideas

- Lyrical poetry does not tell tales, it sings about the tales; and that the elements of emotion usually dominate the song
- It is also proper to describe the following broad types as lyrical in nature: descriptive, reflective and confessional.
- Some common lyrical forms are the sonnet, elegy, ode and villanelle.
- The sonnet is a lyrical poem of fourteen lines with a prescribed rhyme scheme. Sonnets have traditionally been written in iambic pentameter.
- The Italian sonnet develops its theme in two stages: the octave and sestet, which is also reflected in its rhyming scheme.

Reflection

- What are some of the broad types of lyrical poetry?
- What are the common types of lyrical poetry that were the focus of discussion in this session?
- What would you regard as the key features of the sonnet?
- How unique is the Italian or Petrarchan sonnet?

Discussion
- How would you help a learner to appreciate the definition of lyrical poetry?
- How has this session equipped you to appreciate the features of a sonnet?
- How has this training session helped you to understand the features of a Petrarchan sonnet?

SESSION 2: ENGLISH SONNET, SPENCERIAN SONNET AND OTHER FORMS OF THE SONNET
In this session, we are going to first discuss the English sonnet. We will do this, having in mind the structure and rhyme scheme of the Italian sonnet. We will then consider the nature and characteristics of the Spencerian sonnet and other sonnets such as Caudate, continuous or iterating, chained or linked, crown of sonnet, terza rima and tetrameter.

Learning outcomes:
By the end of the session, the participant will be able to:
1. Explain the features of the English sonnet.
2. Do an appreciation on the English sonnet
3. Analyse a Spenserian sonnet.
4. Discuss the differences between Spenserian, Petrarchan and Shakespearean sonnets.
5. List three other forms of sonnet apart from the Shakespearean, Petrarchan and Spenserian sonnets.

ENGLISH OR SHAKESPEAREAN SONNET

Description
Now we must discuss the Shakespearean sonnet. What is a Shakespearean sonnet? We have said that the English sonnet was an adaptation of the Petrarchan sonnet. Shakespeare adapted and popularized it with a new conventions of sonnet composition among the English. Unlike the Petrarchan sonnet, the rhyme scheme of the Shakespearean sonnet is ABAB CDCD EFEF GG. You can see that the Shakespearean sonnet is structured or organized into three quatrains (4 lines) and a couplet (last two lines with same rhyme scheme). Let's look at an example of a Shakespearean sonnet.

$$1^{st} \text{ quatrain} \begin{cases} A \\ B \\ B \\ A \end{cases} \qquad 2^{ND} \text{ quatrain} \begin{cases} C \\ D \\ C \\ D \end{cases} \qquad 3^{rd} \text{ quatrain} \begin{cases} E \\ F \\ E \\ F \end{cases} \qquad \text{couplet} \begin{cases} G \\ G \end{cases}$$

You will see that the rhyme scheme is derived from the sound of the last word/syllable on each line of the fourteen lines. The Shakespearean rhyme scheme shows that the sounds alternate for the first 12 lines (six alternating couplets). The last 2 lines have the same sounds which is why they have the alphabet and are called couplet.

Structure of the English sonnet
1. It is a one stanza poem but it has three quatrains and a couplet.
2. The first two lines make the proposition which gets developed through the poem.
3. There are internal breaks along the quatrains. Sometimes reinforced with punctuations.
4. The last two lines provide a firm (epigrammatic) conclusion to the discussion.
5. The rhyme scheme help demarcate the divisions and the clinching of the message in the poem.

Though Shakespeare does not follow the Petrarchan division of the sonnet into the octave, and the sestet, yet there is an invisible division of the Shakespearean sonnet into octaves and sestets, because the arguments in a great number of sonnets of Shakespeare have silent pauses at the eight lines. We will have to examine this assertion closely by studying a number of Shakespearean sonnet.

Message
In Shakespearean sonnet, just like the Petrarchan sonnet there is a relationship between form and content. First, the internal divisions dictate how the message/theme of the poem is developed. Unlike in the Italian form of the sonnet, in the Shakespeare form, different ideas or thoughts are expressed in the three quatrains; of course, each succeeding quatrain grows out of the preceding ones. The first quatrain may be called the argument which is an explanation of what is going to happen in the following quatrain. The first two lines usually proposes the issue/debate/question. The second quatrain may be called the theme or the central idea which may be expressed directly or indirectly. The third or the last quatrain may be called the dialectic or the logic or the reason that supports the whole argument or the central argument. And the concluding couplet is the „tie-up" which binds the argument or the theme, and also presents a conclusion. Let me whisper that this appears the pattern of poetic composition in the period of Shakespeare's writing – Metaphysical poets.
Let us examine the poem below against the observations made on Shakespeare's sonnet:

SONNET 18

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.

1. Can you identify the quatrains and the couplet? Do you think the topic of the discussion is captured in lines one and two? How is the topic developed through the first quatrain through the second and the third? Do you think the last two lines make firm conclusion on the topic?

2. Let's look at the Shakespearean rhyme scheme and the message. We have mentioned the pattern of the rhyme scheme. I hope you remember. Good.
   Do you think the pattern AB AB of the first quatrain shows a unity between the first AB and the second AB? Do the CDCD and EFEF show natural progression/development of the topic? What about the couplet GG? Does it agree with the finality in the lines?

3. We have indicated in the previous session that a perfect rhyme scheme shows the universal acceptability of the truth in the message. Is this true of the poem above and its rhyme scheme?

Shakespeare's sonnets are titled with numbers from 1 to 154. Google any number for a sonnet and analyse it in the light of the above. Though Shakespeare's sonnets treat issues such as love, death, immortality, nature, beauty etc., the process of developing the themes follow the approach we have discussed above.

THE SPENSERIAN SONNET

Background
The Spenserian sonnet, invented by sixteenth century English poet Edmund Spenser, cribs its structure from the Shakespearean—three quatrains and a couplet—but employs a series of "couplet links" between quatrains, as revealed in the rhyme scheme: abab, bcbc, cdcd, ee. The Spenserian sonnet, through the interweaving of the quatrains, implicitly reorganized the Shakespearean sonnet into couplets, reminiscent of the Petrarchan. One reason was to reduce the excessive final couplet of the Shakespearean sonnet, putting less pressure on it to resolve the foregoing argument, observation, or question.

The Rhyme-Scheme
The rhyme-scheme of the Spenserian sonnet is quite different from that of the Petrarchan sonnet and Shakespearean sonnet. Its rhyme-scheme is: a b a b; b c b c; c d c d; e e. It contains four parts:

three quatrains and a concluding couplet (just like the Shakespearean sonnet. The Spenserian sonnet is also called linked sonnet", because of its peculiar rhyme scheme where the three quatrains are linked together; the last line of the first quatrain rhymes with the first line of the second quatrain; and similarly, the last line of the second quatrain rhymes with the first line of the third quatrain. As in the Shakespearean sonnet, here also the concluding couplet that summarizes the argument of the foregoing lines, or binds up the sense of the foregoing lines. The linking structure follows that of Petrarchan sonnet with a difference. With the Petrarchan sonnet's abba abba, it is the first line of the first stanza that end the stanza and opens the next stanza. The Spenserian sonnet's abab bcbc, sees the link from the second line of the first stanza onto the first line of the second stanza. The following sonnet of Spenser may illustrate the rhyme-scheme as well as other features of the Spenserian sonnet:

> One day I wrote her name upon the strand;
> But came the waves, and washed it away;
> Again I wrote it, with a second hand;
> But came the tide, and made my pains his prey;
> Vain man, said she, that dost in vain assay
> A mortal thing so to immortalize;
> For I myself shall like to this decay,
> And eke my name be wiped out likewise.
> Not so, quoth I let base things devise
> To die in dust, but you shall live by fame;
> My verse your virtues rare shall eternize,
> And in the heavens write your glorious name.
> Where, when as death shall all the world subdue,
> Our love shall live, and later life renew.

Identify the rhyme scheme of the poem and discuss how the rhyme scheme reflects the divisions in the poem.

The Message
Thematically, the Spenserian sonnet treats subjects ranging from love, death, beauty, immortality, nature to contemporary social issues. As we said of the development of the message in Shakespearean sonnet, examine how the structure develops the message. In the above poem, the persona discusses means of immortalizing a loved one. He opens the discussion in lines one and two and echoes it in the next two lines. The second stanza states the theme directly in line six. This gets developed along the structure till the couplet gives a logical conclusion.

The Approach
Approach of presentation varies from one poem to another, depending on the subject matter and style of the poet. In this poem, the poet employs multi-perspectival approach. There is a first person narrator who interacts with the reader. Then there is a dialogue between the persona and a personified wave (an all-knowing nature). The dialogue introduces an overt debate in the poem but finally, the persona's view triumphs. The diction is typical of the period of writing and it is composed in iambic pentameter (just like the Shakespearean sonnet). The sound in the poem is duly crafted to make the poem musical and evoke emotions. There is the use of figurative language in the poem. Do identify the literary devices used and discuss their effects in the poem.

OTHER FORMS OF THE SONNET
As we have already hinted, we are trying to familiarize ourselves with some poetic structures that are counted as sonnets. Since we are aware of the traditional types, we shall pay attention to the differences that exist between the traditional types and these ones.

Generally, poets write a series of sonnets for a particular person or on a particular central theme, and call the series a "sonnet cycle". The advantages of the cycle are that they enable the poet to explore many different aspects and moods of the experience, to analyse his feelings in detail and to record the vicissitudes of the affair. At the same time, each individual sonnet lives as an independent poem.

1. **Caudate sonnet**

   This type of sonnet was invented by the Italian poet Francesco Bemi (1497-1536). Generally, sonnets of this pattern or type are used for satirical purposes. In this poem, in addition to the usual 14 lines, a coda or tail", generally in the shape of a half line, is added. Sometimes more than one coda are added. John Milton, for instance, used the caudate pattern in his satirical sonnet "On the new Forcers of Conscience under the Long Parliament." in this poem, two codas occur. It implies that they might have more than fourteen lines.

2. **Continuous or iterating sonnet**

   This type of sonnet is not very different from the common types of sonnets, but varies from them in only one respect; that is in it, one (or sometimes more than one) rhymes sound occurs throughout the sonnet. If the same-sounding word or words occur in the rhyming for a number of times in the lines, then the sonnet may be called a continuous or iterating sonnet – it is not essential that the same-sounding word will occur in all the lines and rhyme. For instance, Shakespeare's Sonnet 135 may be called a continuous or iterating sonnet. If such a sonnet is read backward, then we may call it a retrograde sonnet. Let's google and examine it.

3. **Chained or linked sonnet**

   Here, the last word of the preceding line becomes the first word of the succeeding line. Here, again, it is not essential for a sonnet to follow this pattern throughout to be called a chained or linked sonnet, but if most of the lines follow this pattern, then that will do.

4. **Crown of sonnets**

   Traditionally, a sequence of 7 Italian Sonnets so interwoven as to form a crown or Panegyrics for the one to whom they (i.e. these seven sonnets, and the other sonnets to which these seven are working as a crown) are addressed. The interweaving is accomplished by using the last line of each of the first 6 sonnets as the first line of succeeding sonnets, with the last line of the seventh being a repetition of the opening line of the first. A further restriction prohibits the repetition of any given rhyme sound once it is used in the crown.

5. **Terza rima sonnet**

   The only differentiating feature of this type of sonnet is that its rhyme scheme follows the terza rima pattern. The terza rima is "A verse form composed of iambic tercets rhyming a b a, b c b, etc. The second line of the first tercet supplying the rhyme for the second, the second line of the second tercet supplying the rhyme for the third, and so on, thus giving an effect of linkage to the entire composition" (Preminger, 847-48).

6. **Tetrameter sonnet**

   Generally, sonnets are written in decasyllabic (ten syllables) pentameters. But in tetrameter sonnets, the verses are octosyllabic (eight syllables) tetrameters. Shakespeare's Sonnet 145 is a tetrameter sonnet.

From this list, which is certainly not exhaustive, it is clear that the sonnet has enjoyed popularity throughout centuries. And only at the beginning of the twentieth century has the sonnet begun to lose public favour.

Key ideas

- In the treatment of sonnets, there is a relationship between form and content.
- The Shakespearean sonnet is structured or organized into three quatrains (4 lines) and a couple.
- The Spenserian sonnet, through the interweaving of the quatrains, implicitly reorganized the Shakespearean sonnet into couplets, reminiscent of the Petrarchan.
- There are other forms of sonnets such as Caudate, terza rima and tetrameter, among others.

Reflection

- What are the key features of the Shakespearean Sonnet?
- What are the key characteristics of the Spenserian sonnet?
- How would you distinguish between the Shakespearean and Spenserian sonnets?
- How similar is the Shakespearean sonnet to the Petrarchan sonnet?
- Mention two other forms of sonnets apart from Shakespearean?

Discussion

- How is the structure of a sonnet related to its theme?
- How would you link the sonnets in terms of their various rhyming scheme?

UNIT 4:   OTHER LYRICAL POETRY

Welcome to Unit 4 of this module. In this Unit we are going to look at other forms of lyrical poetry. I hope you can recall the features of lyrical poetry. We shall examine lyrical poems such as elegy, ode, and other less known lyrical types. It is our belief that you will pay attention and also read ahead. Don't forget to look for samples on the internet to read.

Learning outcomes:
By the end of the unit, the participant will be able to:
6.   Explain the other types of lyrical poetry and examine each type
7.   Discuss the social importance of each type.

SESSION 1:   ELEGY, ODE AND CONFESSIONAL LYRICAL POETRY

Welcome to session One of Unit Four. In the previous unit, we looked at the sonnet, types and features. In this session we shall look at other types of lyric poem: elegy, ode and Confessional lyric poetry.

Learning outcomes:
By the end of this session, the participant will be able to:
 1.   Explain what is meant by elegy.
 2.   Identify the features of an elegy.
 3.   Write an appreciation on an elegy.
 4.   Explain what is meant by ode.
 5.   Give an instance of an ode.
 6.   Explain and mention a feature of confessional lyric poetry.

ELEGY

Definition of Elegy
As you are aware death is part and parcel of human experience. Humans have since time immemorial, been confronted with the death of loved ones, national leaders, etc. One way humans have tried to respond to death, to immortalize their loved ones, find consolation or closure is through the composition of poems. Such poems are called Elegies. Can you now define elegy? Well, elegy is a lyrical poem that expresses sorrow or lamentation especially for one who is dead. It a poem that both praises the dead and laments his/her passing. It is therefore a poem of serious reflection that mourns the loss of a loved one or an important personality. Read from the internet, the difference between elegy and lamentation.

History of Elegy
It is important to stress that originally or in classical literature, the term elegy did not have anything to with the subject of grief, death or mortality. Elegy was simply any poem written in the elegiac meter. In fact, in addition to laments, some were love poems. Things changed in the sixteen century when elegy, in English literature, took on the specific meaning of lamentation. Not only that, in English literature, elegy is not defined in terms of elegiac meter. It may be written in any meter the poet choses. The elegy flourished or became popular in the eighteenth century particularly among English Romantic poets. They valued the elegy for its personal and emotional qualities. In fact, the Romantics reinvented the traditional elegiac stanza defining it as a quatrain (four-line stanza) in

iambic pentameter (5 ians per line), following an ABAB rhyme scheme. One of the famous elegies is Thomas Gray's eighteenth-century poem, "Elegy Written in a Country Church Yard".

The pastoral is a unique kind of elegy. It draws on or borrows from classical conventions of representing its subject as an idealized shepherd in an idealized pastoral background. It usually begins with an expression of grief and invocation to the muse to aid the speaker in expressing his sufferings. It also usually contains a funeral procession, a description of sympathetic mourning throughout nature, and reflections on the unkindness of death. It ends with acceptance or affirmation of nature's law. Other examples of elegy are "Lycidas" by John Milton, "To an Athlete Dying Young" by A.E. Houseman. Elegies are also common in African societies except that they come in the form of oral poetry such as dirges. You can share an elegy you with the class. Please, google these poems and read.

There are various reasons why people choose to write elegies. Unlike epic poetry or ballads which use the third person to focus on figures from popular mythology and folklore, elegies are a deeply personal form of poetry that typically uses the first person to emphasize a private emotional experience of individuals. Elegies are a wonderful example of the way poetry can serve a personal and emotional purpose. Throughout history poets have written elegies to commemorate loss of loved ones and also as a way of mourning and processing their death.

Features of the Elegy
Can you identify or mention any features of elegy? Let us look at a few:
1. It has a pensive or sad mood and is usually characterized by nostalgia or melancholy.
2. It mourns the passing of life and beauty of a dear one.
3. It focuses on the private emotions or thoughts of the speaker.
4. It uses formal and elegant language and structure.
5. It explores questions about the nature of life and death or immortality of the soul.
6. It may also express the speaker's anger by death.
7. It usually ends on a note of consolation.

Please read Thomas Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Church Yard" and discuss its elegiac features.

ODE

Explanation of Odes
Odes are relatively long lyric poems that often celebrate specific operations or praise an object or idea. Some features or characteristics of odes are that:
a. it combines personal emotion and general meditation.
b. it is written in a very elevated, grand or sophisticated style. Examples are "Ode on Melancholy" by John Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn" by John Keats, and "Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood" by William Wordsworth. (Please, look for these poems on the internet and read).
c. It has a uniform metrical scheme.
d. It is characterized by escapism. This enables the poet to leave the real world and take shelter in the world of imagination. The result is, it involves the purgation of emotions (catharsis).

Types of Odes
There are three types of odes: they are the Pindaric ode, Horatian ode and irregular ode. Let us consider them in detail.

a. **Pindaric Ode**: This type of ode is associated with or named after the Greek poet Pindar. It is divided into three parts:
    i.   *Strophe*: This is the formal opening of the argument in the poem. It usually consists of two or more lines repeated as a unit. It can also refer to any group of verses that form a distinct unit within the poem.
    ii. *Antistrophe*: This section of the ode is structured in the same manner as the strophe but typically offers a thematic counterbalance.
    iii. *Epode*: This section or stanza typically has a distinct meter and length from the strophe and antistrophe and serves to summarize or conclude the ideas of the ode.

Characteristics of Pindaric ode
    i. It has a formal language and tone.
    j. It is mostly accompanied with music and therefore it is sung.
    k. It is mostly divided into three stanzas.

b. **Horatian Ode**: This is named after the Roman poet Horace, who lived during the 1st century. The Horatian ode consists of two-or four-line stanzas that share the same meter, rhyme scheme, and length. Unlike the more formal Pindaric ode, the Horatian ode traditionally explores intimate scenes of daily life. An example is "Ode on a Grecian Urn" by John Keats.

Characteristics of Horatian odes
    i. It is less formal
    ii. It is more personal than the other odes.

c. **Irregular Ode**
    Also known as the Cowleyan ode, named after English poet Abraham Cowley, the irregular ode relaxes the structure of the ode poem even further. It is mostly used these days than the first two. It follows the non-compliance to the strict literary conventions as captured in the modernist theory. It however reflects the basic definition and the characteristics of the Ode discussed above.

Let's access the American poet, Allen Tate's "Ode to the Confederate Dead" written in 1928 for analysis. As you read the poem, pay attention to:
    i.   the subject of the poem.
    ii. the nature of the language.
    iii. the attitude of the speaker towards the subject of address.
    iv. the mood and atmosphere of the poem.
    v.   the structure of the poem.
    vi. your impression about the persona and the subject.

CONFESSIONAL POETRY
Definition of Confessional Poetry
The word 'confession' should be familiar to you. What does it mean? It suggests something private and intimate. How does this relate to confessional poetry? The confessional lyric poetry is a relatively recent phenomenon. It may be written in any of the forms described above and reads like autobiography in verse. Unlike other types of lyric poems where there is a certain amount of distance between the poet's life and the experience in the poem, in confessional poetry the distance

is less. The events may be altered, exaggerated or underplayed to give the confessional poem a more universal appeal. To know whether a poem is a confessional lyric, it is mandatory to research into the life of the writer. This will help you get the connections between what is in the poem and what happened in the actual life of the writer. An example of a Confessional poem is Sylvia Plath's "The Applicant":

<u>Sylvia Plath</u> "The Applicant"

First, are you our sort of a person?
Do you wear
A glass eye, false teeth or a crutch,
A brace or a hook,
Rubber breasts or a rubber crotch,

Stitches to show something's missing? No, no? Then
How can we give you a thing?
Stop crying.
Open your hand.
Empty? Empty. Here is a hand

To fill it and willing
To bring teacups and roll away headaches
And do whatever you tell it.
Will you marry it?
It is guaranteed

To thumb shut your eyes at the end
And dissolve of sorrow.
We make new stock from the salt.
I notice you are stark naked.
How about this suit——

Black and stiff, but not a bad fit.
Will you marry it?
It is waterproof, shatterproof, proof
Against fire and bombs through the roof.
Believe me, they'll bury you in it.

Now your head, excuse me, is empty.
I have the ticket for that.
Come here, sweetie, out of the closet.
Well, what do you think of *that*?
Naked as paper to start

But in twenty-five years she'll be silver,
In fifty, gold.
A living doll, everywhere you look.
It can sew, it can cook,
It can talk, talk, talk.

It works, there is nothing wrong with it.

You have a hole, it's a poultice.
You have an eye, it's an image.
My boy, it's your last resort.
Will you marry it, marry it, marry it?

The most suitable approach to studying this type of poetry is the autobiographic approach. In this, the historical and biographical backgrounds of both the poet and the poem are crucial to appreciating the message of the poem.

Key ideas

- Elegies are poems that are used to respond to death, to immortalize our loved ones, find consolation or closure.
- Odes are relatively long lyric poems that often celebrate specific operations or praise an object or idea.
- The confessional lyric poetry is a relatively recent phenomenon and it reads like autobiography in verse.

Reflection

- What are some of the differences between elegies and odes?
- What are the differences between the Odes and confessional lyric poetry?
- What are the unique features of elegies?

Discussion
- How has this session equipped you to understand elegies as a form of lyrical poetry?
- How would you convince a learner to understand the meaning of odes?
- Differentiate between the Horatian ode and the irregular ode.
- How would you define confessional lyric poetry?

SESSION 2: DESCRIPTIVE LYRIC POETRY, REFLECTIVE LYRIC POETRY AND PASTORAL LYRIC POETRY
Welcome to this session. We're going to focus on descriptive, reflective and pastoral lyric poetry. They are forms that are less known lyrical poetry.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of this session, the participant will be able to:
1. Explain descriptive lyric poetry.
2. Explain reflective lyrical poetry.
3. Explain pastoral lyric poetry.
4. Give at least one feature each of any of these types of lyric poetry.

DESCRIPTIVE LYRIC POETRY
This is a general type of lyric poetry written in the present tense. Unlike the sonnet it has no specifically defined form. The persona in a descriptive lyrical poem usually describes an object, an event or a private experience as if it were present or happening now. Examples:
                    Alfred Lord Tennyson "The Eagle"

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.

Besides employing the broader elements poetry, its focus is to present scenarios and events in the descriptive manner so as to create mental pictures in the mind's eye. Such as poet chooses words that directly affect the senses in order to create the imaginary pictures. The persona's use of "clasp" creates a different meaning of hold on to a "crag" a specific type of cliff or mountain. The diction is carefully selected and arranged for sensuous effect. Read Kwesi Brew's "The Mesh" and share your views on it in class.

REFLECTIVE LYRIC POETRY

This is also a general type of lyrical poetry that is written in the past tense. The persona is remembering or reliving an experience or event. Reflective poems contain some explicit or implicit generalization about life, by the poet. It is usually retrospection and introspection. Simply put, it is a mere reflection of the state of mind of the poet put forth in a poetic manner.

The structure and rhyme schemes are open to reflect the inner interpretation of the poem. A perfectly structured poem may reflect a universally acceptable opinion on the subject. The rhyme scheme also augments the above view.

Here is an **example** of a reflective poem:
Finding meaning in what I do,
Is a real task. I wish I knew,
How to go about, or what to do,
Whom to talk with, I wish I knew.
The pointless thoughts ticking around,
A real meaning waiting to be found.
Is there any? My heart pounds,
Diverting my mind, I sleep sound.
It must mean something, I think.
After a sound sleep, in surprise, I blink.
I have to leave this worldly world,
In order to search for a meaning.
For it is only me, and I can do it.
I realise that the meaning I've been looking for,
Is not of the world,
But that of me.
And, all this while, it suddenly strikes,
Whatever I'm looking for, will be found
Nowhere in the outer world,
But within myself.
For it's actually no meaning
I've been looking for,
It is myself.

In the above poem, if we look at the rhyme scheme, we realize that the first three stanzas rhyme (with the exception of line four of stanza three) because the issues raised seems to follow the

general wish of humanity. However, the last three stanzas bring out differences in the views expressed hence, the stanzas are unrhymed. The opinions propounded here are reflected in the specific lyrical poems we have studied.

THE PASTORAL LYRIC

Have you heard of the term pastoral in literature? The pastoral term in literature has broader implications, like the term satirical, to be primarily an attribute of poetry in general. We may thus speak of the pastoral narrative, as Sidney's "Arcadia," the pastoral drama, as Fletcher's "Faithful Shepherdess," the pastoral elegy, as Milton's "Lycidas," and the pastoral lyric, as many lyrics of Herrick. Please, have time to google and read the examples mentioned above. These examples show that pastoral is not exclusive to lyrical poetry.

In poetry, the term is used to describe a type of poem of moderate length, intermediate between the narrative and the lyric, in which rural scenes and episodes, and dialogue between rustic characters, are the most important material. I hope you have read the defining principles of the term. Mention them.

The objective of pastoral poetry is not to represent the realities of rural life, but mainly to highlight two interesting features; its simplicity and its idyllic tranquility. Some poets have also used the pastoral lyric to reflect the realities of the rural life and project its ideals. For example, Theocritus, a major composer of pastoral poetry, achieved a certain degree of realism with pastoral poetry. John Pepper Clarke's "Abiku" is an example of African pastoral lyrical poetry. Both poets make their situations, episodes, and styles of language natural and conformable to the rustic traits of the themes. Following this, subsequent imitators dressed out their rustics in court attire, investing them not only with artificial language but with artificial aspirations, sentiments, and manners, so as to leave hardly anything bucolic except the setting. Sir Philip Sidney in his "Arcadia" illustrates this. Please google the poem and study it.

Key ideas

- Descriptive lyric poetry is a lyric poetry written in the present tense.
- The focus of descriptive lyric poetry is to present scenarios and events in a descriptive manner so as to create mental pictures in the mind's eye.
- Reflective lyric poetry is written in the past tense.
- Reflective lyric poetry is a mere reflection of the state of mind of the poet put forth in a poetic manner.
- Pastoral lyric poetry is used to describe a type of poem of moderate length, intermediate between the narrative and the lyric, in which rural scenes and episodes, and dialogue between rustic characters, are the most important material.

Reflection

- What would I regard as the defining property of descriptive lyric poetry? How does this property make this type of poetry unique?
- How have my experiences in this training session equipped me to appreciate these other forms of lyrical poetry?

Discussion

- How has this session equipped you to know the differences among the three forms of lyric poetry discussed so far?
- What is Pastoral?

UNIT 5: DRAMATIC POETRY AND OTHER ELEMENTS

This unit discusses the third type of poetry, dramatic poetry. We shall look at its features as well as the types. We shall also discuss other poetic elements such as senses, scheme, sounds and rhymes and their general effects on poetry. It is hoped that after this Unit, you will not find it difficult to examine and discuss dramatic poetry and other forms of poetry.

Learning outcomes:
By the end of the unit, the participant will be able to:
1. Describe and discuss the features of dramatic poetry.
2. Explain the relevance of senses and sounds in poetry.
3. Examine the effect of schemes in poetry.
4. Analyse any given dramatic poetry.

SESSION 1: DRAMATIC POETRY AND OTHER ELEMENTS
Welcome to this Session. In this session, we explore dramatic poetry as a form of poetry. Unlike the other forms of poetry, it possesses features that are plain but complexly knitted. It also possesses properties that in part, identify with drama and the other part, narrative poetry; and that makes it a form of a hybrid of literary art. We will examine the features. We will then consider the senses in a given poem, as well as their literary relevance.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of the unit, the participant will be able to:
1. Describe dramatic poetry.
2. Discuss the characteristics of dramatic poetry.
3. Explain the types of dramatic poetry.
4. Identify the senses in a given poem.
5. Discuss the literary relevance of the sense perception in a given poem.

DRAMATIC POETRY

Description
Do you remember the two types of poetry we have mentioned? The third is dramatic poetry. Of course, you are familiar with the word 'drama,' aren't you? How does this help you explain dramatic poetry? Dramatic poetry is a type of poetry that presents a character(s) in a conflict situation. Like most lyric poems, dramatic poems are often told from the first-person point of view. While in the lyric poem, the 'I' perspective represents that of the poet surrogate, in dramatic poetry the "I" signifies a dramatic character who is not the poet. The speaker may be explaining a motivation for an action or behaviour or may be solving a problem. Most frequently dramatic poems are in the present tense and the speaker is in a particular place and time.

In other words, dramatic poetry is sometimes referred to as dramatic verse. It is usually described as born from the fusion of two elements, poetry and drama. In effect, like drama, dramatic poetry tells a story using characters as the channel. It imitates actions of real life and tries to provide a view of life in a way that guides its viewers towards an interpretation of life. On the other hand, dramatic poetry is also very expressive as poetry, appealing intensely to one's emotions with language constructed using figurative language and set to a rhythm that is lyrically satisfying. So, we can

describe dramatic poetry as a form of poetry initiated to ensure a meaningful relationship between content (telling a story), structure (in a form of dialogue and in stanzas), and language (not in an ordinary language as we see with drama, but a poetic language that punctuates its content).

The manner in which the story telling is presented in dramatic poetry can also be described as subjective to the characters, but objective with the poet. As has been identified, the voice of the poet is not heard at all in dramatic poetry. The poet thus presents the characters as they are to us. In doing so, we are met with the characters expressing their thoughts, emotions, and assessments of situations. Dramatic poetry thus foregrounds and places value on the characters' individual thoughts, emotions and actions, and relegates the poet completely to the background.

Dramatic poetry is a unique form of poetry; poetic drama highlights a way of language use in drama. The distinction can be found in dramatic lyrics—a form of dramatic poetry that is composed to be read and not staged. That is, whereas poetic drama, like any other form of drama, is composed to be staged or enacted in action, dramatic poetry gives emphasis to the use of language that appeals to the mind's imagination.

In most cases, dramatic poetry takes the form of dramatic monologue, a poem written as a speech made by a character (other than the author). In a dramatic monologue, the character who makes the speech addresses another character who remains silent (address/apostrophe). In an instance where there is a reply, the monologue becomes a dialogue.

In some instances, dramatic poetry presents tales or stories just as narrative poetry. However, unlike the narrative poem, the story is presented through a character's voice, perspective or language and never through the poet as a narrator. Dramatic poetry places emphasis on the character; the character's thoughts, emotions, and actions.

Characteristics of Dramatic Poetry
We have established that poetic genres though connected in many ways, it is also evident that each genre defines itself through specific features. Can you recall the defining features of narrative and lyrical poetry? Now, let us look at the defining characteristics of the dramatic poetry:

a. It uses the speech and actions of at least one person to depict a scene or a plot.
b. It usually follows a verse form or rhyme. There is usually a set rhythm to it.
c. It appeals to the mind, imagination as well as bodily-eye. Bodily-eye is seen as a form of visualizing (there is also the mind's eye) using the human sense. It demands that you can sense some bodily movements, actions, and ways of doing in the poem in order to appreciate the poem. Dramatic poetry, therefore, employs scenic painting, decoration, and often music.
d. It is compact, concentrated and has more intense compared to the epic.
e. It is a poem written as a speech to be made by a person (a character within the poem) who presents his/her innermost thoughts to a specific listener—we usually identify the listener with the reader(s) or the implied audience. The listener, however, remains a listener and does not reply the character.
f.   The persona or character reveals his emotional, philosophical, or psychological state through a language that is lyrical and expressive enough to present the character's personality.
g. It is usually set at an important time or stage in the speaker's life, or within a specific event.
h. Since he/she is drawn into a critical moment where they cannot help but reflect out-loud to the reader's ear, the speaker is unconsciously and innocently made to reveal part of

their personality they keep hidden, and he/she does so with no idea they are being judged by the listener.
i. The speaker is usually argumentative and tries to make a case for his character or temperament; and that is what usually set off sympathy within the reader.

Since dramatic poetry allows a poet to only speak through a character in the story it presents and not as the poet of the poem, it would include tragedy, comedy, drama proper, dramatic monologues, dialogues, dramatic lyrics as forms of types of dramatic poetry. Depending on the form, you may have additional features.

Types of Dramatic Poetry
Traditionally there are four types of dramatic poetry: dramatic monologue, dramatic narrative, dramatic soliloquy and dramatic dialogue. Let us just consider dramatic monologue.

Dramatic Monologue
This refers to a poem that represents the speech or conversation of a person in a dramatic manner. An example of a dramatic monologue is "My Last Duchess" by Robert Browning.

I. Types of Dramatic Monologue
1 Romantic monologue
2 Philosophical and psychological monologue
3 Conversational monologue

II. Features of a Dramatic Monologue
1. It involves a single person delivering a speech on one aspect of life.
2. The audience may or may not be present
3. The speaker's temperament and character are depicted through his speech.

Please, google or refer to the sources provided and read on the other types of dramatic poetry.

AN ANALYSIS OF A DRAMATIC POEM
Read the poem below silently. Then dramatize it. Be in pairs and one acts it aloud to the other who listens but demonstrating facial expressions and gestures in response to the content of the poem.

KOFI AWOONOR "GO TELL JESUS"

Go
Go tell Jesus
that his messengers have come
but have forgotten all His words
Ask Him if He said
Men are all equal or
Men are un -equal?
Who did He say God is?
A bearded old boogy
sitting far up in the skies
watching and not caring?
Go
Go ask Jesus
whether He really said
we cannot reach our God
if we do not pass through Him

Tell Him to tell you
the fate of my ancestors
Who lived and died before
He the Christ was born
Will all of them be
Damned?
Go
Go ask Jesus
why He did not tour the world
to spread the word of death
but gave it to a chosen few
and in parables they can't explain

Tell Him
Tell Jesus
that that little peace I enjoyed
before His messengers arrived
has been disturbed
and I cannot sleep and dream
until it is restored
Tell Him
Tell Jesus
there is chaos in my house
My sons have left their heads and hearts
My daughters their hearts and heads
They are screaming shrieking
burning each other's Souls
all because
His messengers have come
but have forgotten His words
May it please Him come again
That we may see the truth
That the truth may make us see
That peace is not a piece of bread in wine
Go
Go tell Jesus
His messengers have come
But have forgotten His Words of Life"

Share your impression on the performance and discuss its effect.

Background

This is an interaction between a traditional or African who is appalled at the behavior of the supposed messengers (colonialist/missionaries) of Jesus, and the addressed (reader/audience). In the poem, the persona expresses his disappointment at the conducts of messengers who are 'believed to know better' but only end up challenging basic principles of life (equality of humanity) and the belief in the nature of God (an old man who does not care about what happens to humanity). He also asks the listener to go and ask Jesus on the fate of those who died before the coming of Jesus and His concept of salvation. The persona wants an answer to 'why Jesus gave His message in parables to messengers who do not even understand the parable' hence, mis-presentation of the message. The persona employs two dominant grammatical structures i.e. imperative and interrogative. The persona then registers his anger on the fact that he no longer enjoys his peace, he

cannot sleep comfortably (both literal and literary sleep), his children have turned against him (though it is expected that knowing the truth will make them knowledgeable). Finally, he challenges the exaggerated belief in the communion as the source of peace.

Sense of dialogue

The grammatical structures employed cannot be meaningful if there were no imaginary character who is addressed in the poem. First, the persona commands the implied subject of the imperative structure 'You' to convey a message to Jesus. It is obvious that the imperative structure cannot be 'subjectless' hence, one gets the impression that the persona is talking to someone. There is a strong sense of dialogue in the poem. Second, there is a second level of dialogue implied in the interrogative structure. In stanzas one and two, the persona poses two questions each and asks the addressed to go and ask Jesus for answers to the questions. One realizes that the conversation is not just between the two, but has drawn in Jesus who must provide answers to the nagging questions. In reading the poem, one does not feel the reading but visualizes a performance of a dialogue between the persona and the addressed, and also expect answers from Jesus. The visualized drama adds meaning to the poem than just a verbal recitation.

Nature of characters

There are two main characters involved directly in the poem. These characters have defined roles they play. One is the voice we hear while the other is the silent participants who receives the message in order to carry it on. In this poem, we don't come into contact with the poet; we hear him through a surrogate character who acts out what the poet might have sad to us. In this sense, the ownership of the message of the poem is moved from the known poet to an unidentified character, thus, concealing the identity of the speaker and making it open to all listeners. No one is held responsible for the 'piercing' sense of the content.

Tone

There is a direct and immediate attachment to the tone and mood of the poem. As readers (implied audience), we stand as the addressed and we associate with the reception of the content than if a different approach had been employed. The belief and philosophy of the traditional believer is brought to bear in challenging the basis of the arrival of Christianity. The introspection is given rend in the dramatic approach the poet adopts.

Go back to Session of this Unit and identify the features of dramatic poetry in the aforementioned poem.

SENSES IN POETRY

Description

Ask yourself these questions: "how do we perceive this world"? How do we see that there is a perfume in the air? How do we see running as different from walking? How do we perceive salt from sugar? The answer to these questions is that we do all our seeing through our sense organs as human beings. When we interact with our environment, we see things not just with our eyes or sight, but with our hands, mouth, ear, nose and our intuition response to certain acts. Our minds store the things we see with our senses (touch, movement, smell, taste, sight, bodily processes and sound) so that should we come across them again or hear a description of them, we are able to imagine them as we had sensed them in our previous experiences. The blind may not be able to see with their eyes, but they can certainly see with their sense of touch and other senses such as taste and hearing.

Poetry uses sensory language; a language that brings writing into life within a reader's imagination, and draws the reader into the writing as a witness or as part of the writing. Sensory language is

usually perceived as words that link our world to our senses. It relates to words or string of words that have an established link with the external world and pushes the reader to use a particular sense to create an imagination of a scene within a poem. It would include words that directly appeal to our sense of taste, touch, feel, movement, smell, sound, and bodily processes. We are going to examine the senses and we shall use Senghor's "I will pronounce your name" as our illustrative poem.

The Senses

a. **Sense of Taste**
Let us consider tasting food. Which part of the body do we use in tasting? It is the tongue. When given food to taste, you may say it tastes delicious, sour, bitter, sizzling, or dry. In the same way, when you see food, you might say the food looks dry or appetizing. What the two instances have in common is a language situation where it is correct to say "the food looks delicious" and "the food taste delicious", or "The food looks dry" and "The food tastes dry" as well. In either case, the reader must be able to tell which of the senses, whether it is taste, looks (sight) or both, that the language draws from the reader to use.

One of the basic ways to tell if the sense being appealed to is taste would be to look for phrases such as "the taste of", "taste from" or references to the tongue or tongue buds. Examples are;
- "The walking boots that **taste of** Atlantic and Pacific salt."
- "A haying machine passes over a bird nest without '**tasting** flesh.'"

"Salt" and "flesh" are two words that can appeal to both sight and taste. However, the words "taste of" and "tasting" do show that the author wants us to use our sense of taste to see the image s/he presents. In poetry, description of a sense of taste or a mere mention of a tasty item evokes the sense of taste and analysis could be done on how the sense is presented in the context and in relation to other elements. For example, the expression "… your name like sugared clarity …" in the poem "I will pronounce your name" evokes the taste of sugar and readers associate the taste of sugar with the name of the entity. The simile then gets meaning from this association.

b. **Sense of Touch**
Imagine the feel of a warm soft body. What about the cold soft body of someone you embrace? Have you ever shaken the palm of a handsome gentleman? What comes into your mind if his palm feels rough, coarse or hard? Have you held a part of human being that feels like a well ripen mango fruit? What impressions come into your mind? We pick an overwhelming amount of information from touching (un)consciously and as students of poetry, we learn a lot from these experiences. In poetry, language is therefore used to this sense feel in the mind's eye. Though, words such as "feels", "touch" or references to the hand are suggestive of touch and feel, the mention of entities pricks our sense of touch. For example,
"**The bed linens** might just as well be ice and **clothes** snow."

"The bed linens" and "clothes" give a sense of protection to our bodies. However, the mention of "ice" and "snow" evokes a sense of cold, discomfort and unprotected. Again, "… when the heat of the day is silenced…" draws our mind to the time of the day i.e., evening when the sun has gone down and its heat is not felt. These evocations create interpretations in the literary context.

c. **Sense of Movement**
This sense implies our ability to detect movements as well as sensations that is conveyed in such movements. For example, the word "banished" in the excerpt "…

Princess of Elissa, banished from Futa on the fateful day" produces an impression on how the princess left her kingdom. This undoubtedly attracts sympathy for and anger toward the perpetrators. It could also imply the ability to sense the position, location, orientation and movement of the body and its parts.

In as much as words create movement impression, descriptive phrases and their modifiers such as adverbial also register similar effects. Most at times, by adding other descriptions, we are guided to sense a new form of movement similar to those we experience in the external world, but entirely imaginative and different. There are words to help us identify such instance of appeal to our sense of movement.

- "I feel the ladder **sway** as the boughs **bend**."

In the examples above, the words in bold all seem to verbs that instigate an action that necessarily involves a movement. "Sway" for instance triggers a sense of movement that is rhythmically set in motion from side to side, or backwards to forward. "Bend" creates a deliberate artistic image.

d. **Sense of Smell**
   In sensory language, olfactory imagery (an imagery that appeals to our sense smell) is often placed above all other imageries as having the most relevant and scientifically proven literary effect. The memory we create through our experience of smell, when appealed, triggers the release of oxytocin. Oxytocin is a hormone popularly referred to as "cuddle hormone" or the "the love hormone". It is associated with causing trust and the formation of attachments in humans. That is to say, when language is successfully used to appeal to our sense of smell, there will be a chain reaction in the reader or audience; the reader would usually experience an immediate, intimate understanding of characters; it would also influence the reader to set aside their disbelief and bond with the characters. Rachel. S. Herz, an assistant professor of psychology, Brown University, shares the view that:

   Smell speaks to our primal mind. The importance of including the sense of smell in our writing is not just to follow the age-old advice to "use sensory language" to engage the reader, though smells can engage the reader more deeply and directly than any other sense. More than that, smell acts like a laser, cutting straight through to our emotional cores.
   In our illustrative poem, the sense of smell is appealed to in:

   Naett, your name is mild like cinnamon, its is the fragrance in which the lemon grove sleeps.
   The mention of "fragrance" in the second clause gets the reader to imagine any fragrance that has sedative effect on lemon groves.

   Like taste, sight and movement, smell also shares in their language repertoire. Once again, we deal with such situations by considering some key words. "Smells like", "smells of", "smelling" or reference to the nose can do the trick. Words and phrases that evoke such a sense aid in identification and discussion. The contexts below create for us the opportunity to examine the effects of "sweet scented stuff" and "smelling green".
   - "The sticks of wood 'sweet **scented** stuff'"
   - "To a Young Wretch – the boy takes the tree and heads home, '**smelling** green".

Discuss the effects of the sense of smell in the above.

e. **Sense of Hear**

Look at the second noun phrase in the excerpt below:

Naett, that is the dry tornado, the hard clap of lightning

What sense is appealed to here? "The hard clap" of lightning appeals to our sense of hearing and we are quickly thrown into imagining the sound that lightning makes and associate it with Naett. In the context above, we can interpret the sound in relation to the character of Naett and associate its attributes to her. Sound only becomes relevant when our mind is able interpret it as unique and having meaning. In the context of knocking, one might characterize a manner of knocking as hostile or friendly. Onomatopoeic such as a snake hissing, a dog barking, water is splashing, or a lion roaring appeal to the sense of hearing. Anything that alerts us on using our ear to hear as well interpret it as sound appeals to our sense of hearing. Consider the effects of the structures below:

- "The **rumbling**… of load on load of apples coming in."
- "The **roar** of trees, the **crack** of branches, **beating** on a box."

The words in bold are mostly words relating to onomatopoeia. They are instances where the sound of the word draws in its associated meaning.

f. **Sense of Sight**

The eye provides the easiest means to get to the mind. Imaginations are usually borne out of what we see and re-invent it in the mind's eye. In poetry, the sense of sight is very imperative. In the excerpt below, Naett has four noun phrases which function as appositives. The noun phrases appeal to sight so we see these in mind's eye and associate them with Naett. This reflects on our view on the character of Naett. The image of Naett is created through the appositives.

Naett, coin of gold, shining coal, you my night, my sun!

Beside the above, humans are able to perceive shapes, distance, movement, color, heat, and depth with their eyes. It also means that words that associate with these aspects of perception naturally appeal to our sense of sight and they create literary effects. For this, we may have a lot of instances where imageries created appeal mostly to our sense of sight to create the images in poetry.

- "The clouds were **low and hairy**… like locks **blown forward** in the gleam of eyes."
- "The iced branches shed '**crystal shells**'."

All the words in bold in the examples above are entities and movements we can observe with eyes. Since we see things most of the time with our eyes of or sense of sight, we tend to depend a lot on it. It for that reason that most poets would resort to use a language that usually to appeal to our sense of sight to engage our imagination.

Implications of Senses in Poetry

You should take notice of the fact that every poem makes use of sensory language. When in use, the sensory does not just appeal to one sense, but to multiple senses as much as needed. What seems important in the use of sensory language is that it is rich enough to help the reader activate his/her imagination. There are usually instances where the language appeals to one sense more than the others. Of course, there are instances where the poet may limit himself/herself to appealing to just one sense. Also, the senses reflect on the character(s), setting and even the diction of the poem. To

appreciate the use of imagery or figurative expressions in a poem depends on the effects of the senses in the context of poetic creativity. The ultimate is that senses enhance the artistry and make the meaning of the poem clear.

Key ideas

- Dramatic poetry is a type of poetry that presents a character(s) in a conflict situation.
- There are four traditional types of dramatic poetry: dramatic monologue, dramatic narrative, dramatic soliloquy and dramatic dialogue.
- There are senses in any given poem.

Reflection

- What are the relevant characteristics of dramatic monologue?
- How do I differentiate among the four types of dramatic poetry?
- What are the unique features of the epic?
- Which particular sense appears to be mostly appealed to in poetry?

Discussion
- How has this session equipped you to understand the senses in a given poem?
- What are the key features of dramatic poetry?

SESSION 2: SCHEMES, RHYMES AND SOUNDS

In this session, we take a look at schemes, rhymes and sounds. Scheme implies the nature and varied forms of repetition. It reflects language structure central to the construction of artistry in poetry. Our focus will also be on rhymes. We shall explain what it is and discuss its types and literary implications. Finally, we will look at sounds and their relevance too in poetry.

Learning outcomes:
By the end of this session, the participant will be able to:
1. Identify any scheme employed in poetry.
2. Examine the literary relevance of the scheme in the poem.
3. Identify the sounds that are employed in a poem.
4. Analyse the literary effects of the sounds in the poem.

SCHEMES (ELEMENTS OF REPETITION)

Description
Up until now, we have mentioned language as central to poetry, having identified poetry as a medium of literature that specializes in language use. We have looked at the language of poetry as a figure of speech or figurative language—a form of language use that allows new forms of constructions of language to produce new figures in the imagination of readers in an effort to represent an abstract thought. We consider metaphors and alliteration as forms of figurative language. Consider the examples below:
  i.   Her tears were a river flowing down her cheek.
  ii. Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers…

What can you identify as different from examples i and **ii**? In other words, what is unique to the two examples? In example i, it is the meaning of "river" and its forceful association with "tears": A "river" is a large natural stream of water flowing in a channel to a sea, lake, or another river while tears are drops of liquid produced from the eyes. In example ii, it is the repetition of the sound /p/ at the initial position of each word that makes it unique: the repetition of the /p/ sound creates a strong sense of rhythm in the example and gives it a musical tune. The difference between the two examples then lies in the fact that, in example i, the manipulation of the language as a figure of speech (metaphor) occurs with the irregular comparison drawn between the meaning of "tears" and that of "river" to create a meaning of "a lot of crying", while in example ii, the manipulation of language as a figure of speech (alliteration) occurs with how the words and sounds are arranged to give the poem its rhythm and musical tone.

Example **i** is an instance of a trope and **ii,** a scheme. From the set premise then, we can say that:
a. Schemes are a part of figure of speech which foreground repetition of expression.
b. Unlike tropes which foreground irregularities of content (as we saw with the direct comparism between tears and river), schemes may be identified as phonological, graphological, formal (grammatical) or lexical patterning while tropes may be identified with formal or semantic deviation.

Leech (1969: 74-75) describes schemes as abnormal arrangements that lend themselves to the forceful and harmonious presentation of an idea and include figures such as alliteration, anaphora and chiasmus. But in this discussion, we shall simply examine schemes as the arrangement of individual sounds (phonological schemes), words (morphological schemes), and sentence structure (syntactical schemes).

Exemplification of Schemes
Almost every form of scheme is created through two mechanical processes: repetition and parallelism.

a. **Repetition**
Repetition is very common in speech and it is easier to construct in any verbal art. Sometimes, people use it in such a way that marvels audience. There are instances too that they can get you very irritated. Its stylistic effects may be felt from both fronts. This means that repetition is a very powerful linguistic and rhetorical tool that can be abused or used in a more delicate way to serve some complex communicative purposes.

Now, what do we say is repetition? We can simply define repetition as a replication of already existing parts of a text, be it a word, phrase, or a line or a stanza in this case. The replication could be either one that is immediate or intermittent. It is classified immediate when the reoccurring word or group of words is repeated right next to each other. That is, between the repeated items, you cannot find any other word(s) coming in between them. Such type of repetition Leech refers to as **epizeuxis** which falls under free repetition. That is, in the case of an immediate form of repetition, if the supposed repeated structure is "A", then the immediate form of repetition can be represented as "A A A A A…." The intermittent form of repetition has much more to do with meaning than just the repetition of a word or group of words. With the intermittent repetition, there is usually a word or a group of words that come(s) between the repeated word. Also, the repeated word changes its word class when it is repeated since they are repeated in an irregular order. It means that the word that is repeated is made to play a different grammatical function when repeated. Examples:

i. **Oh my, oh my, oh my,** what have you done?
ii. Never **ever ever ever** have I been so disrespected.
iii. "The future is no **place** to **place** your better days." (Dave Matthews, "Cry Freedom")
iv. "The way **to stop discrimination on the basis of race** is **to stop discriminating on the basis of race.**"(Chief Justice John Roberts, June 28, 2007)

The examples **i - iv** above exemplify forms of repetition. **i** and **ii** are instances of **epizeuxis** while that of **iii** and **iv** are **ploce**. Since the first two are easy to understand, let us consider the other two examples. In example **iii**, "place" is repeated but with "to" coming in between the repeated words. Also, the first "place" is a noun referring to an area while the one repeated is a verb meaning to put in a specific place. In example **iv**, there is "is" between the repeated structures. Most importantly, there is "discrimination" which is a noun and "discriminating" which is an adjective.

There is still more to repetition than these two forms of repetition. Repetition as a scheme does not just involve the repetition of words or group of words. In most of its advanced use, it has been characterized by the repetition of structures, sometimes grammatical or phonological or even a stanza in this case. Leech (1969) talks about them as verbal parallelism; it can be described to have three tenets:

1. Unlike the epizeuxis and ploce, repetitions of verbal parallelism will always have a "relevant unit of text' which could basically be a stanza of a verse, a line of a speech or a stanza, a sentence, a clause, a phrase, a word or even a syllable.

2. Second, the repetition of the relevant unit of text must occur at equivalent or regular positions. So, if a word or group of words to be repeated come(s) at the beginning of a sentence, it/they must be repeated at the beginning of the next sentence (anaphora). Consequently, if the repeated word or group of words function(s) as the subject of sentence one, it must do same in sentence two if repeated. Rhymes fall under this category of repetition.

3. Third is that, wherever verbal parallelism manifests, apart from the structure that must be repeated wholly, there must be words or group of words that must not remain same or be repeated and those are the variants (variables).

Let us consider some examples.
i. "**It was** the best of times, **it was** the worst of times, **it was** the age of wisdom, **it was** the age of foolishness, **it was** the epoch of belief, **it was** the epoch of incredulity, **it was** the season of Light, **it was** the season of Darkness, **it was** the spring of hope, **it was** the winter of despair." - Charles Dickens
ii. "Fear leads to **anger; anger** leads to **hate; hate** leads to suffering." —Yoda, *Star Wars*

In the examples above are repeated words or group of words. Look closely and you will find that the repetition occurs at similar structural positions. But let us follow the tenets. First, example i. has a relevant unit which is "it was", and ii. has "anger" and "hate". Second, the relevant units seem to be repeated at regular positions. For example, in **i.** the relevant unit occurs at the beginning of the successive sentences, particularly functioning as the subject and the main verb. In example **ii.**, all the respective clauses take the structural form a subject plus verbal element (phrasal verb) plus object; the repetition occurs at the object and subject positions. Third, the have words occupying the other functional positions apart from those taking the relevant units, and they keep changing from one sentence or clause to another.

The form of repetition you see above are two different forms of verbal repetition: anaphora and anadiplosis. With anaphora, the repeated word or group of words are repeated at the initial position equivalent positions (just as you see with example **i**). Using anadiplosis, the word or group of words are place at the final position of the first structure, and repeated at the initial position of the second successive structure (just as seen in example **ii**). There are schemes of repetition that you can explore such as polyptotyn, homoioteleuton, epistrophe, symploce, epanalepsis, and antistrophe. (Read on Schemes from Leech 1969).

Remember that repetition is a scheme and a figure of speech. When used, they help set the rhythm, mood and tone of a poem. They lay emphasis on some ideas. They provide form and structure to some poems. They set up other independent schemes like parallelism, alliteration and others. Generally expressed, we say that repetition is a literary device that provides an aesthetic value to a poem, may bring comfort, suggest order, or add some meaning to a literary piece; but above everything else, they mark as instance of a spontaneous flow. Do map these functions to each of the examples we have discussed above.

b. **Parallelism**
Parallelism is an important schematic tool. It comes very close to repetition. In fact, the concept of a verbal parallelism as a form of repetition is very much dependent on the fusion between the concepts of parallelism and repetition as the individual lexemes in the phrase. In effect, to appreciate parallelism is to have a grasp on the differences and similarities it shares with repetition. Parallelism is the use of pattern or structural repetition in a literary text so that the individual structural elements (like subject, object, and verb at the syntactic level) are matched to each other.

Extract A:
All our gods are weeping.
Idemli is weeping.
Ogwugwu is weeping.
Agbala is weeping,
and all the others.
Our dead fathers are weeping because of the shameful
sacrilege they are suffering and the abomination we all
have seen with our eyes.

From the extract above, you will see a pattern or structural repetition of the subject and the verb so that all the subjects can be grouped together as forming a paradigm as seen in figure 1.
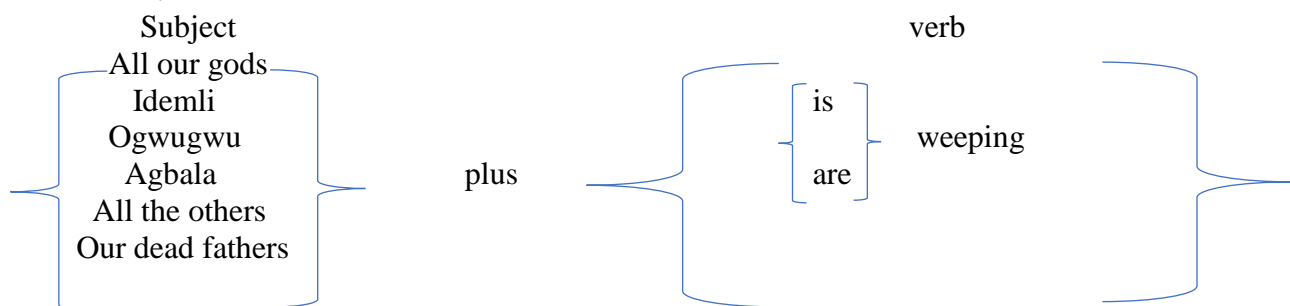

Fig. 1. The parallel form of extract A

From fig. 1, "weeping" is repeated throughout the respective structures while "are" and "is" are used as variants depending on whether the subject they correspond to is singular or plural. The

subject position is however filled with different words and phrases (variants/variables). It is easy to notice that the above structure is somewhat a structure of verbal parallelism which is a form of repetition (epistrophe). What then becomes thedifference between verbal parallelism as repetition and parallelism? The difference lies in their internal organization and their point of focus.

With the internal organization, parallelism must always have a repetition of structural pattern (SVO) that allows us to compare and contrast the individual elements (nouns, adjectives, noun phrases and the rest) in the structure, while repetition may not have the repetition of a structure but it will always have a word or group of words repeated (as we saw with epizeuxis and ploce). With their differences, the relevant unit in verbal parallelism is the word or group of words that are repeated, while for parallelism, the relevant unit includes the words or group of words that are different from each other, but they all play the same structural function in the respective structural pattern as we see in fig. 1. In fig 1, "All our gods", "Idemli", "Ogwugwu", "Agbala", "All the others", and "Our dead fathers" are different words and phrases, but they all perform the function of the subject in their respective sentences as we see in extract A. They become the focus when dealing with parallelism. "Weeping" would become the focus if we were looking at repetition.

Thus, parallelism occurs at all levels of linguistic organization: phonology, semantics and syntax. At the phonological level, we are looking at structures described as alliterative, and other concepts like internal or end rhyme or stress isochronicity (a form of rhythmic flow between two or more different structures). At the level of semantics, we take interest in the relationship and meaning of the words or group of words that play the same function in parallel structures, whether the words are synonymous or antonymous to each other. On the level of syntax, we look at the parallel structures as syntactic equivalents; if the first structure is SVO or NP+VP+NP, then the next structure must have the same structural pattern to be classified as parallel to the first structure. Parallelism serves a number of functions.

a. It is used to create a strong relationship or connection between two or more independent structures; we are presented with structures that have been similarly patterned so that we are able to compare or contrast their elements (word) as equals. It produces semantic compound in the process.

b. It is used for rhetorical emphasis; because of the repeated structural pattern, it draws our attention to important themes or parts of a text.

c. It helps express complex emotional states; it helps structure the language so that a poet can express a single emotion with multiple words and expressions and still be able to relate all of them. It therefore makes a text focused, compact, intense, and well structured.

d. It can be used to impose new meaning on words.

There may be other literary relevance you may find with parallelism, but bear in mind that parallelism in the hands of a master poet can be used to achieve aesthetic effect aside its use to communicate complex emotional states.

Importance of schemes in poetry
Schemes are very relevant to poetry. They help condition the language of poetry, give form and structure to help identify some forms of poetry from others. Consider just the relevance of the rhyme scheme and you begin to appreciate the fact that the importance of scheme to poetry cannot be over emphasized. The importance if schemes can stated as:

a. Schemes are like decorations; they explicitly draw our attention to relevant parts of a poem.
b. They help give form and structure to the expression of complex emotional states.
c. They provide pleasure and simplicity to the reader who tries to process the poem.

RHYMES

Description

Rhymes are identical syllables of words which may appear in successively in a line or in successive lines or alternating lines of two, three, four etc. If rhyme schemes are far from each other, they lose their immediacy and effectiveness. It must be emphasized that rhyme is determined by sound not spellings. For example, "puff" will rhyme with "rough", while "rough" will not rhyme with "though".

Determination of End Rhyme

The sound of the last syllable of the first line is labelled letter 'a', that of the next line is 'b' and the order continues. This is also called the final rhyme because it occurs at the end of the line. Any time any of the sounds repeats in a subsequent line, the letter is repeated. Let's look at the rhyme scheme of the first two stanzas of **Robert Burns' "The Lass That Made the Bed to Me"**

When Januar' wind was <u>blawing</u> cauld,	a
As to the north I took my way,	b
The mirksome night did me enfauld,	a
I knew na where to lodge till day:	b
<u>By</u> my <u>gude</u> luck a maid I met,	c
Just in the middle o' my care,	d
And kindly she did me invite	c
To walk into a chamber fair.	c

It must be mentioned that though there are varieties of rhymes, most literary analysts limit the study of rhymes to end rhymes as we have shown above so much that the absence of it has a name – blank verse. Blank verse is unrhymed lines that follow a strict rhythm, usually iambic pentameter.

Variations of Rhyme

i. Perfect rhyme is when the stressed vowel following the sounds are identical. Eg. Slow/glow; street/fleet; buying/crying etc.
ii. Half rhyme is when the final consonants of the words are identical but the vowels are different, creating similar but not identical sounds. Eg. quiet<u>ness</u>/exp<u>ress</u>
iii. Masculine rhyme is when the final syllables of the rhyming words are stressed. Eg. inquired/desired
iv. Feminine rhyme is when the rhyming of the stressed syllable is followed by identical unstressed syllables. Eg. Flowers/bowers
v. With Internal rhyme the rhyming words are found successively within the line of the poem. It is also possible to see a word or words in the line rhyming with the last word of the line. Eg. Small flattened straightened feet were patterned. This line has the internal rhyme with the final syllable rhyming with them.
vi. Initial rhyme occurs when the initial words of the lines rhyme. This shares similarities with anaphora which is a repeat of a word, phrase or clause at the beginning of successive lines.

There is also slant rhyme where there are either identical vowel sounds but different consonants (assonance) bird/thirst or identical consonant sounds but different vowel sounds (consonance) pat/pit.

Implications of Rhyme
    i.   It enhances the musicality of the poem.
    ii.   It supports the memorization of the poem.
    iii.   It strengthens the poem's psychological impact.
    iv.   The message of the poem is foregrounded through the rhyme
    v.   The end rhymes help deepen the structure of the poem.
    vi.   The internal rhymes determine the mood and atmosphere of the poem.
    vii.   It adds to the creativity of the poet.

SOUNDS

Description
Sound-patterning is a constructive activity. It is central poetic creativity and has been an old practice. Poems were traditionally composed to be performed, and it is only in the last few centuries that we have grown to become accustomed to silently reading poems as printed text. However, even in its printed form, readers are urged to scrutinize sounds effected in the poem as much as we do the sense that is communicated through the poems. In our everyday conversation, when we hear someone speak, we give much attention to the sense or intention behind what they say to us how the intention is structured for us. In studying poetry, we point to sound as an important aspect of poetry that supports or carries the meaning or sense the poet tries to communicate. We may identify the close relationship that exists between sense and sound though they are two different things in poetry and are assessed differently. And that brings us to an essential point. In the description of sound as an important aspect of poetry, it is not sound, generally, that we consider as important, but how sound is used in a particular poem. In that same basis, bear in mind that no sound segment or sound pattern has meaning per se. Any meaning or special effect that a sound may take is imposed on it by the linguistic context. In effect, it is possible for us to have a poet express sense without resorting to sound. Contemporary poets, for instance, generally shun any music of verse, even if that means producing work that is not so different from everyday speech. The issue raised here is that poets resort to sounds depending on the relevance of the sound and its overall effect on the structure and content of the poem. Go back to read on the sonnet.

Assonance, alliteration, consonance, are three of the most popular sound devices that help determine sound in a way that it carries meaning or shares a literary relevance. In doing sound analysis in poetry, we are interested in the sound and not the letter or spelling. For example, "great" shares sound equivalence with "mate" than "meat". If you have an instance where "great" and "meat" are positioned close enough to draw your attention, we might want to use the term eye-rhyme to describe them and not just rhyme because rhyme deals with similarity in sound while eye-rhyme deals with similarity in letters or spelling. Let us look at the three schemes of sound.

a.   **Assonance, Alliteration, and Consonance**
    1.   Assonance refers to the arrangement of words in close proximity so that the same or similar vowel sounds are repeated in the successive words while the consonant sounds in the words differ. Examples of assonance are;
       ii.   G**u**n, dr**u**m, tr**u**mpet, bl**u**nderb**u**ss and th**u**nder may j**u**st be enough.
       iii.   G**o** and m**o**w the lawn.
       iv.   "If I bl**ea**t when I sp**ea**k it's because I just got . . . fl**ee**"

With the examples above, attempt to pronounce the individual words with some underlined elements or try to read the sentences. You will hear that some words have similar vowel sounds in them. Example i. has the vowel sound /ʌ/ being repeated in the letter {u}; ii. has /əʊ/ repeated in "go" and "mow"; while iii. has /i:/ repeated in "bleat", "speak" and "flee". Note that in iii. for instance, the consonant sounds that surround the vowels in the respective words differ from each other: "bleat" has /b/, /l/, and /t/; "speak" has /s/, /p/, and /k/; and "flee" has /f/ and /l/. In other words, it is the repetition of the vowels in the respective words and the variation of the consonant sounds that allow us to describe the examples as assonance. If both the vowel and consonant sounds have been repeated, we would have experienced just repetition, and not assonance.

2. Alliteration is quite similar to assonance. With alliteration, it is the repetition of similar consonantal sounds at the initial positions of the words. That is, we may say that alliteration is the repetition of consonant sounds at the initial position of words that are in close proximity. Consider these examples;
    i. It is **tr**ied and **tr**ue.
    ii. He is **s**afe and **ps**yched.
    iii. **P**eter **P**iper **p**icked a **p**eck of **p**ickled **p**epper.

It is important you keep in mind the distinction between sounds and alphabetic letters. In example ii., the consonant sound that is alliterated is /s/ and it is expressed in the letters, {s} and {ps} respectively. You will also have to pay attention to the fact that the vowels that follow the repeated consonant sounds vary from each other.

3. The third is consonance. Consonance is regarded as the consonant sounds that is replicated at the beginning, middle, or final position of the word. What is deemed important is the repetition of the consonant sounds and a variation in the vowels of the words that fall within the pattern. In this discussion however, we take the second position in describing consonance: since alliteration typically refers to the repetition of sounds (usually consonant sounds) at the initial position of words in close proximity, we can limit consonance to include only instances where the consonant sounds repeated in either the middle or final positions of words in close proximity. It is not necessary that they occur only in the middle or at the final position, once there are repeated consonants in the words in close proximity, we classify such instance as consonance. Thus, consonance is the repetition of consonant sounds in the middle and/or final positions of the words in close proximity. Consider the examples;
    i. To**ss** the gla**ss** to Chri**s**, bo**ss**.
    ii. He thru**sts** hi**s** fi**sts** again**st** the po**sts** and **st**ill in**sists** he **sees** the gho**sts**.

The nature of the sound makes the poem a violent one or mild. It is assumed that the repetition of plosives such as /p, d, k, d, g/ (as in alliteration or consonance) reflect a cacophonous (violent or aggressive) while nasals, laterals, fricatives and rolls which are mild echo milder tones and subjects. Together with the vowels, the mild consonants produce euphonious sounds to indicate milder tone, mood and milder subjects. So the sound type could imbue a poet with a harsh tone, aggressive subject, gentle tone or soothing message.

Meter
Remember the beat, tick-tock, tick-tock, tick-tock. It is a beat we discovered from a tick-tick rhythm in clocks. It is also a beat we associate closely with our heart beat. That beat very much relates to meter and rhythm. The point being made is that as humans, we are instinctively in tune with rhythm and meter that draw us to things such as music and poetry. We mostly enjoy songs not just because of the words, but the beat or the rhythm in them gives us more pleasure and moves us

to respond. Rhythm is thus rooted even deeper in us than our love for musical repetition. It is related to the beat of our hearts, the pulse of our blood, the intake and outflow of air from our lungs. Everything that we do naturally and gracefully we do rhythmically. There is rhythm in the way we walk, the way we talk, the way we run, the way we pound fufu, the way we swing a cutlass. It cannot be helped therefore if a language highly rhythmical in nature holds a strong appeal for us.

R*hythm* refers to any wavelike recurrence of motion or sound. In speech, it is the natural rise and fall of language. We can consider all forms of language to hold some degree of rhythm as most languages involve some form of alternation of energy used in the production of syllables. That said, the way we use language differs from context to context, and that equally affects how we emphasize rhythm in our language use. In some forms of speech, the rhythm is so irregular and haphazard that we do not even notice the rhythm at all; in other instances too, the rhythm is strong and easily noticeable that we can flow with it and probably be tempted to tap our foot to it. *Meter* is the kind of rhythm we can tap our foot to.

Meter is a kind of rhythm; it is simply the rhythmic pattern of stresses in verse. When looking at the meter, two things must come to mind: stress and syllables. A syllable is a unit of pronunciation that has one central vowel with optional consonants beginning or following the vowel, and stress is the prominence we put in pronunciation relative to the syllables in a word. For every word with more than one syllable, one syllable is stressed, and as such, given more prominence in pronunciation than the rest. This is nothing new especially in the English language; it is the normal process of the language. What stands important, however is that, although the use of stress and unstressed pattern is not unique to any form of speech, how it used or constructed may present two definitive forms of language   use: There   is   prose   and   verse.
In prose the accents occur more or less haphazardly; in verse the poet arranges them to occur at regular intervals. The word meter comes from a word meaning "measure." To measure something, we must have a unit of measurement. For measuring length, we use the inch, the foot, and the yard; for measuring time we use the second, the minute, and the hour. For measuring verse, we use the foot, the line, and (sometimes) the stanza. In metrical language the accents are arranged to occur at apparently equal intervals of time, and it is this interval we mark off with the tap of our foot. Metrical language is called *verse*. Non metrical language is *prose*. Not all poetry is metrical, nor is all metrical language poetry. Verse and poetry are not synonymous terms, nor is a versifier necessarily a poet.

Now that we are aware that the basic unit of a metrical language is the foot, let us attempt to examine it. In general, any regular single group of unstressed and stressed syllables is referred to as a foot (and feet if they are more than a single group). In each normal foot of English poetry, we find one stressed, and one or two unstressed syllables. Depending on the positioning of the stressed and unstressed syllable, we may have the following forms of the foot:
- The Iambus: A foot with an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable
- The Trochee: A foot with a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable
- The Anapest: A foot with an unstressed syllable immediately followed by an unstressed syllable and then a stressed syllable
- The Dactyl: A foot with a stressed syllable that is followed by two unstressed syllables

The secondary unit of measurement is the line or verse. A verse as the line of poetry is usually made up of several feet. Of course, it is possible to have a verse that is made up of just a foot (monometer). Depending on the number of the foot in the verse, we may have verse forms that are in a dimeter (two feet), a trimester (three feet), a tetrameter (four feet), a pentameter (five feet), or a hexameter (six feet). In essence, a poem that has five feet (a pentameter) within a single line, and each foot of the five has the pattern of iambus (unstressed-stressed syllabus) will be called iambic

pentameter (an usual trait of the lines of the English sonnet). We measure verses through scansion, a simple process of scanning the lines of a poem to determine its rhythm. It usually involves three things:

a. We identify the prevailing foot.
b. We then count the foot to name the number of feet in a line—if this length follows any regular pattern, and
c. We describe the stanza pattern — if there is one.

It is important to note that when we discuss meter or verse of poetry, we take interest in the repeated pattern, as we saw with parallelism. Meter very much operates with parallelism and repetition, a prominent device of a scheme.

Literary Relevance of Sound
There are much more things to still talk about when dealing with sound. There is movement, volume, stress, onomatopoeia and a host of others. But while limiting our discussion of sound, we can say that sound is very relevant to poetry as a medium that specializes in language use. We may say that;

a. Sound in poetry provides texture and structure to the poet's disposition, especially in lyric poetry.
b. Sound in poetry makes poems compact and very expressive of some emotional states.
c. Sound possesses a suggestive power that when triggered can suggest, in sound, a motion, a movement or sense of being described by the poet.
d. It can be used to enact meaning.

Typically, we can see that sound adds a form of rhythm to poetry, making it musical, appealing, and entertaining. It enhances the aesthetic appeal adds to the artistry that identifies with poetry.

Key ideas

- Schemes may be identified as phonological, graphological, formal (grammatical) or lexical patterning while tropes may be identified with formal or semantic deviation.
- Almost every form of scheme is created through two mechanical processes: repetition and parallelism.
- Rhymes are identical syllables of words which may appear successively in a line or in successive lines or alternating lines of two, three, four etc.
- There is a close relationship that exists between sense and sound though they are two different concepts in poetry.
- Rhythm refers to any wavelike recurrence of motion or sound
- Metrical language is called verse. Non metrical language is prose.

Reflection

- What is the close relationship that exists between sense and sound in poetry?
- How will I be able to identify schemes in poetry?
- What makes rhymes important in poetry?
- How is sound investigated in poetry and how relevant is it to meaning in poetry?

Discussion
- How unique are schemes in poetry?
- What is the difference between parallelism and repetition, the two mechanical processes of schemes?
- What is rhyme in poetry and how can one identify it in use?
- Refer to any poem and discuss the sound effect in it.

UNIT 6:   OTHER MODERNIST POEMS

Welcome to Unit 6 which looks at some basic concepts behind modern poetry. The unit is structured to give us an intuitive focus on the growth of poetry, what poetry meant as a medium of communication, the physical manifestations it took with time into how we now perceive, structure, and give form to poetry. We shall look at poetry as a genre of modern literature. This exploration is objectively set to arouse our appreciation of poetry as a medium of communication, a lyric or musical composition, and as an intrinsic oral art form as some of the poems discussed are linked to the traditional life of a people.

Learning outcomes:
By the end of the unit, the participant will be able to:
- Examine the concept of poetry from a modernist perspective
- Appreciate the unique traits of modernist poetry.
- Analyse a comprehensive comparison of the physical manifestations of poetic forms.
- Write an appreciation on any of the poetic forms.

SESSION 1: FREE VERSE, IMAGISM AND IMAGIST POETRY
Welcome to the first session of Unit 6. In this session, we will consider the concept of poetry as we examine free verse as a complex addition to the concept of poetry. We shall then look at what makes a poem a free verse. We shall then consider imagism and its relevance in poetry, by looking at an imagist poetry.

Learning outcomes:
By the end of the session, the participant will be able to:
1. Trace the development of free verse.
2. Examine free verse as a poetic form.
3. Discuss the features of free verse.
4. Trace the development of imagism.
5. Discuss the relevance of the concept of imagism to the development of poetry.

FREE VERSE

Introduction/Origins/ Proponents
The emergence of free verse came as a declaration of war on an entire civilization and tradition of poetry. Free verse emerged out of a world war among scholars across the globe. Such description is partly because the activities that shaped and gave birth to free verse can be traced as far back as 1908 into the First World War—it was more like a precursor to World War 1. But more so because the emergence of free verse meant abandoning a prosodic tradition of poetry that had been built and preserved for over 500 years, stretching from Chaucer through Shakespeare among others. To fully grasp the impact, meaning, and value of free verse to poetry, we may have to visit the 16th century. The 16th century marked a period in the history of the English language where a lot of efforts were made by English scholars and leaders alike to help make the English language more stable and accessible to the English men and women of the time. It was a time where social order and unity had become a top priority among the English. They wanted to have a united front. They wanted to be independent. The English language as a means of communication to all English men and women was expected to be symbolic of such unity and order. However, there were a lot of inconsistencies

in the use of the English language in the domains of communication. And so to have a language that was orderly and uniform, it meant developing the English language so that it could be used in all domains of communications. It also meant establishing rules for the use of the English language to check (in)consistencies in pronunciation, spelling, and writing. To do that, most scholars fell on Latin since it was the language of the learned; it was the language commonly used by people of different cultural and language background; it was advanced enough to be used in all domains of communication, be it in law, business, politics, and/or poetry. That is, scholars resorted to the orderliness of Latin to improve, structure, and give form and identity to the English language. Names like Richard Mulcaster and William Bullokar are household names to such endeavours in vocabulary building and establishment of the grammar of the English language.

To our subject of poetry and free verse, in the same century (16th century) came a form of order and control on poetic compositions established as the prosody of English poetry. Prosody was/is viewed as a system of rhythmic organization that governed the construction and reading of a poem. The English metrical theory was born as a borrowed concept from Latin, particularly, from the foot-based theory of Latin. The foot-based theory required two prosodic elements, syllabic quantity, and boundary. In the case of Latin, it meant counting the syllables of a line of a poem and establishing the boundaries of the syllables across word boundaries or line boundaries. For the English prosody, there were further assimilations from Chinese prosody and Anglo-Saxon prosody. The bottom line is, for the subsequent years into the 16th century and further on, English poets explored and established the English metrical theory as a means of composing poems as well as reading them. The practice continued till the English metrical theory became recognized as the prosodic tradition of English poetry and was passed down from generation to generation, from the Chaucer through Shakespeare, having been polished at every turn of a generation. George Saintsbury by 1910 had written a monumental three-volume History of English Prosody which elaborated on the codified laws of verse established over the span of five hundred years.

There are four things you must bear in mind to this point: First is that the prosody of a poem is generally the tool that poets use in directing and controlling how a reader reads and temporally experiences a poem, especially when it has to do with directing the reader's attention to the experience. To create and control someone's attention demands organization or conventions, at least, one that can be recognized by the person. That convention or organization (of syllables into foot, lines, and stanzas) that directed the reader's attention within the poem constituted the prosody of the poem. Second, rhythm, in poetry, is to be regarded as the temporal distribution of the elements of language. The elements would include:

   i. Timbre—usually established through sound devices such as alliteration, assonance, and rhyme
   ii. Duration—a property of syllables
   iii. Pitch or intonation
   iv. Intensity or volume
   v. Boundary

The more attention is drawn to the rhythm in a literary piece, the more likely we will perceive it as organized. Rhythm, therefore, defines the prosody of a poem. Third, within the English metrical theory passed on from generation to generation, meter became equal to verse, verse to poetry, poetry equaled culture, and culture equaled a civilization. The English metrical theory was an established English system or convention with an orderly arrangement of possible description of poetry: A line of a verse in poetry was composed of metrical feet, with a stressed or unstressed pattern. The dominant pattern of foot gave the meter its name (be it an iamb or a trochee). It is important to take notice of the third point that within the established English prosodic system of poetry, poets achieved order and controlled the attention of the reader through the meter; the meter

directed the rhythm of the poem; as such, the metrical system was regarded as the prosody of English poetry. The last thing to bear in mind is that because it is difficult to tell exactly what poetry is from prose, the English prosody of the time resorted to the verse as a means to distinguish poetry from prose. A verse meant a single metrical line of a poem divided into feet. Every poet and theorist of the time stayed within the conventions described above.

Free verse emerged to provide a new dimension in studying literature. As a movement, free verse started with Walt Whitman, an American prosodist with T. S. Eliot contributing to its conception. In 1908, Ezra Pound popularized and engineered the revolution of free verse maintaining almost all the ideals of free verse introduced by Walt Whitman. The phrase, free verse, was coined from the French phrase, verse libre. The phrase had in itself, a contradiction that also stood against the established English system of poetry. We said that the English metrical theory was established to bring order to the prosody of the English poetry and that tradition had been maintained, transferred, and remodeled from generation to generation. It was a tradition that had become the heart of English poetry. The implication of accepting free verse as part of poetry was enormous. The English prosodic tradition of poetry distinguished verse from prose using its metrical patterning. Furthermore, poetry and verse were used synonymously. This basic approach at the center of the English prosodic tradition of poetry at the time meant that if free verse was a verse free from metrical patterning, then it wasn't a verse at all, but prose. Hence, to accept it meant to accept that there existed prose poetry and that was a contradiction to the tradition.

The second implication fell on the definition of poetry. Because of the challenge to define poetry to include everything that was poetry and exclude everything that was not, poetry was just defined as a verse. The effort was to give poetry an objective out-look since defining it as a verse gave poets, theorists, and readers alike the means of objectively measuring and identifying poetry through metrical patterning or scansion. That is since it was impossible to have a definite definition of poetry, defining it as verse distinguished poetry as a form of linguistic expression (organized using meter). Now, since free verse threatened the definition of verse as a metrical composition, it also meant the definition of poetry that had been established through a tradition of over 500 years was also threatened and had to be reconsidered. Free verse was therefore seen as a tool that some scholars had facilitated to wreak havoc on the effort of poets and theorists who had existed and functioned across the 500 years of the prosodic system of English poetry. Just imagine, if the metrical theory supplied the prosodic tradition of poetry the conventions that set the rhythm of poems, and directed the attention of readers, the emergence of free verse meant the breakdown of such prosodic convention. More so, it meant that the order that the poets and theorists had worked so hard to achieve was going to be pointless; this, for many of the English poets and theorists such as Saintsbury, was an attack on poetry in general. Since poetry was the pinnacle of civilized achievement, the emergence of free verse, thus, meant an attack on poetry, tradition, culture, and a civilization. The only way to deal with such a threat was to cut it off and so began the war among poets and literary scholars of the time. It was an intellectual war that could not be halted by World War 1. It lasted for 10 years stretching across World War 1 and Ezra Pound and his cohort emerged victorious.

Description of free verse
In the description of free verse, the challenge most poets, theorists, critics, and students face is the description of "free" and "verse" as individual terms and how each contributes to the description of "free verse". Does the "free" in "free verse" mean that poems name as such have no conventions or organization? If "verse" remains described as a metrical composition, does it remain a "verse" if it is free of the metrical patterning that identifies it? In effect, what makes free verse a verse of poetry? As a verse that does not lend itself to quantitative or numerical metrical patterning, how does it differ from prose? Why not use the term "prose verse" rather than "free verse" since prose

usually engages language use that is usually free of regular patterning or organization? As we attempt to address the concerns above, must note that Walt Whitman and Ezra Pound (late after Whitman's efforts) developed new prosodies that allowed free verse to be classified as part of the tradition of English poetry.

Let us attempt defining with free verse. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary primarily defines free as not under control; not restricted; not in a cage. It would mean that free in the phrase, 'free verse', associates to the phrase the idea of poems absolutely free of any restrictions, control, conventions, organization, or rhythm. However, free in free verse does not mean that poems of free verse are free from any prosodic convention, particularly rhythm. On the contrary, the free in free verse does not begin to include prosodic conventions or organization, rather it provides an approach or another way of looking at prosodic conventions of poetry. It particularly tells us that we can resort to other means to establish rhythm and organize poems other than using metrical patterning. Free, in this case then, is special. It means a form of poem that has rhythm and prosodic conventions other than that established from metrical patterning and the repetition of such patterning in a poem. "Free" is properly a synonym for "non-metrical" composition. It follows that poems of free verse have prosodic conventions and rhythmic organization, except that they are not numerical modes as with those established through metrical patterning.

Another thing to look at is the conception of meter as rhythm. Meter and rhythm are not the same. Quite the contrary, the meter is usually considered a broader concept of which rhythm is subsidiary; but that is not the case. Meter is an abstraction and rhythm is a concrete manifestation of language use. What we mean is that meter is not something we naturally use or see when we use language neither does it refer to the line of a poem. It is more of a rule that was just developed to help us measure and describe the lines of a poem. You should be able to appreciate this further when you consider the fact that meter or metrical patterning was developed at a certain point of time to help give form and order to poetic composition. Rhythm, on the other hand, is a variable of language in general. We use rhythm when we are talking, reading, or even writing. The very unique trait worth noticing of rhythm is the fact that it can be very organized or disorganized. It is what we see with beat; the more organized they are, the more we are able to follow, feel, and predict it. The less organized it is, the more we lose focus on it. It follows that meter is not rhythm, but a pattern imposed on rhythm and that there are other tools and patterns that can be used to establish a high sense of rhythm and make the rhythm regular.

Achieving rhythm in free verse, Whitman resorted to oratory, redundancy, and repetition. By that, Whitman realized fully the many possibilities of organization of poetry and went forth to create a new prosody for poetry in general. The basic principle he established with free verse was that the thought and the form of a poem must always exactly coincide. Of course, the principle entails that if the content needs metrical patterning to give it form, it must take a meter.

Let us look at the verse in free verse. We have seen that 'verse' refers to metrical composition and free in free verse refers to non-metrical composition. From such opposition, can we consider free verse a verse at all? Even more, we established that poetry is distinguished from prose using the concept of verse as a metrical organization. If free verse is non-metrical, what becomes of that as a distinction between poetry and prose? The answers are simple but winding. Yes, free verse is a form of verse, and two, the distinction still holds that we can distinguish free verse and poetry from prose by looking at the concept of verse. Now, let us elaborate. Like all other forms of poetry that existed before the emergence of free verse, their verses (lines) had two features that set them apart from prose, the metrical patterning of the lines, and lineation.

Bear in mind that through time, the verse has come to take on three forms of meaning apart from its direct reference to poetry. It was first referred to a line of poetry; it was later used to refer to a group of lines that form a unit (a stanza); then as a metrical composition. In effect, through history, the idea of verse existed and later came to acquire the additional meaning of a metrical composition in English poetry. Lineation was the first basic feature and it allowed us to differentiate a verse from prose on sight. "When the lines run all the way to the right margin, it is prose; when this fails to happen, it is [verse]" (Nemerov, 1980). From this premise, Charles Hartman defined verse as language in lines. What we are saying is that, inasmuch as free verse does discard the meaning of verse as a metrical composition, it does not (and cannot) discard lineation as a distinguishing feature of verse. It remains that free verse can be distinguished from prose as a form of verse of poetry.

Reference to lineation as a differentiation mechanism of free verse from prose cannot be overemphasized. This is because verse has in its meaning a sense of orderliness, organization, or convention. Lineation acts as a form of prosodic organization that very much allows us to identify free verse as a strong verse form. One reason is that unless one willfully ignores lineation, one pauses at the end of each line. Whatever else this pause may do, it forces the reader to slow down and pay more attention to what he is reading. If lineation helps to enforce attention, it serves as a prosodic device, whether the line is metrically organized. This reinforces the idea that free verse is not free of conventions except traditional metrical patterning. Even without meter, the poet can count on lineation as one of the primary concepts and conventions s/he may share with the reader. Lineation also draws in the concept of enjambment and caesura.

Although these concepts already existed before the emergence of free verse, Whitman treated them differently in his conception of free verse. Whitman observed that when people engaged in oral reading of poetry, they did not observe line-ends or terminal caesurae in verse unless they reflected a logical pause. To mimic that natural tendency, Whitman constructed his lines as "logical units" and that primarily characterizes free verse. Lines of free verse are mostly realized as flexible to allow forms of reading that run from one line to another or disrupt the syntactic structures of the lines. You would realize when you pick sonnet 18 of Shakespeare for instance, each line ends with a comma, semicolon, or full stop to signify a form of pause. More so, all the lines corresponded to a grammatical structure, mostly clauses. Free verse allows the disruption of such convention as long as it corresponds to the content the poet tries to communicate. In effect, although free verse is bound by the convention of lineation, it allows poets to create their own forms of prosodic conventions and rhythm to communicate their thoughts. The effect is that the reader must give full attention to every part of the poem to grasp the content of free verse. We may, thus, say that free verse possesses some measure of freedom of prose and the expectancy of verse.

Let us conclude on three points. The first is that the linguistic elements that the poet organizes prosodically to construct a poem are largely chosen for him by the conventions of his language. Each poetic tradition also dictates such conventions by establishing more-specific conventions of verse and what a poet may do with the elements of the conventions. When the mode of the organization or the convention is or depends on a numerical rule (which is mostly the case), we refer to that prosody as metrical. However, when the convention depends more on less on the content or experience the poet tries to communicate, then such prosody can be classified as free or non-metrical.

Second, "free verse" is "free" only in a special sense. Free verse is written in verse form so that the rhythm of the language is highlighted to contribute to the whole meaning of a poem—it turns rhythm into meaning. Free verse upholds individuality, originality, novelty, and spontaneity as against the uniformity, order, control, and adherence to metrical composition. Free verse frees the poet of the order or convention of metrical composition and only leaves the poet to grapple with the

conventions that define verse and govern language in general. Free verse can ultimately be described as an open form of poetry.

Third, on the reader, metrical patterning aids the reader with abstract patterns that the reader can use in detail to examine one poem after the other. Free verse neither aids nor distracts the reader. It possesses no abstract pattern nor a quasi-mathematical system that the reader can transfer from one poem to another poem. With free verse, the reader cannot account for its rhythms in abstract isolation as we are usually quick to do with sonnets. Free verse confronts the reader directly with the complex relation of rhythm to meaning. It forces the reader into the poem, to consider every aspect of the poem as a verse that is free from metrical organization but has conventions (established through punctuations, run-on-lines, repetitions, isochronicity, consonant clusters, spacing, etc) that focuses on communicating the experiences in the poem.

IMAGISM

Introduction
From session one, it becomes clear that the values that established free verse as a form of writing had in it a sense of rebellion against an old established system of writing poetry, i.e. metrical composition. We said in session one that although Whitman is usually pointed out as the source of free verse, Ezra Pound is often mentioned as the one who revolutionized free verse and as such the pioneer. How did Pound do it? He did it through imagism, a movement he established in 1912 which had at its core free verse. The movement came at a time when society had begun to question the way of doing things in society. People took an interest in acts that questioned all aspects of society and art or literature was no exemption. During the period, we see artists turn away from the traditional forms and structures of their field to recreate new forms of art. This resulted in significant growth in experimentation, innovation, and technique in style. Thus, poetry had changes in structure, rhythm (prosody), and subject matter. Imagism was formed out of such endeavors.

The movement was officially set on course by Ezra Pounds and his friends, Hilda Doolittle (H.D.) and Richard Aldington. By the beginning of World War 1, the movement had received some attention and the discussion on the use of free verse was at full swing. Imagism as a movement underwent three stages before it finally broke down in 1917 and became just a tool or a way of writing poetry. The first stage was led by T. E. Hulme; the second stage was by Ezra Pound and the third stage by Amy Lowell. For understanding, let us categorize the first stage as the conceptual stage, the second stage as the theorization stage, and the third stage as the experimental stage. Now, let us move to consider them in detail while we look at the propositions to imagism.

Propositions to imagism concepts
As we have established, imagism as a movement underwent three stages before its final downfall in 1917. Based on the stages, several propositions were made and further developed as principles to aid and identify the poets who stood and acted in the name of imagism.

The first stage is set in the very early years of the twentieth century, around 1908. During the time, a small group of English and American poets had met to discuss a new form of writing to overthrow some traditional ways of poetic composition; among the traditions was one set by Romanticism. The activists of group were led by T. E. Hulme. The poets of imagism were against how Romanticism conceptualized poetry. Romanticism limited the subject matter of poetry to the glories of nature. The experiences they expressed were overly subjective—it was primarily a reflection of the experiences of just one person put in a poem for all to experience. Also, because the experiences they expressed were overly subjective, they used a lot of flowery language which was vague and

confusing in the description. They also used metrical composition which meant that they sometimes had to use excess words that did not necessarily contribute to the subject matter of their poems, but helped establish the metrical pattern they so desired. So for the first stage of imagism, the group moved to replace the vagueness and confusion in Romantic art with precision. They sought to present the subject matter more direct in poetry and use language efficiently. They also experimented with form. During this stage, although Hulme wrote imagist poetry, most of the members engaged themselves only in conversations and talks rather than writing poems to reflect their ideals; thus, we refer to this stage as the conceptual stage of imagism.

The second stage we referred to as the theorization stage was the stage Ezra Pound gave form to the movement. This was between 1912 and 1914. It began with him inventing the term "imagiste" which he used to characterize a collection of poems he had gathered from his friends and collaborators, Doolittle and Aldington, for publication. Pound described the poems of his friends as objective, direct with no excessive use of adjectives nor complex metaphors that won't lend themselves to examination. He judged the poems as straight talk. Most of the influence of that collection came from Hilda Doolittle and Aldington's research into Greek poetry, particularly that of Sappho who constructed her poems with a directness they had not identified with any poet of the time. From those early works, Pound along with Doolittle and Aldington established three propositions that would characterize imagism and imagist poetry. It was later passed as the imagist manifesto by Pound and Flint. They included:

     i.   Direct treatment of the "**thing**" whether subjective or objective.
    ii.   To use absolutely no word that does not contribute to the presentation.
   iii.   As regarding rhythm: to compose in the sequence of the musical phrase, not in sequence of a metronome.

Let us take a look at each of these tenets which announced the beginning of modern poetry. The first two points concern the nature of poetry in itself and its relation to the world. The first proposition borders on the content and how to generally handle the content of poetry.

You would realize that "thing" is highlighted. The use of "thing" to refer to the content of the poem does two things to our minds: The first is that the mention of "the 'thing'" forces an image in our head; second, we do not get a clear image of "the 'thing'" because we then realize "the 'thing'" can take any image at all. These are the exact things that Pound uses to explain the content and treatment of the content of poetry. According to the tenet, imagists were free to choose any subject matter they so desired as content, whether subjective or objective. They were however expected to present the subject matter through an image that the reader could remember/imagine and reproduce as "the thing" of the poem. To achieve that, the imagist was expected to use simple language to create an image that the reader could immediately recognize in his/her imagination. Creating such an image did not just rest on using simple language. One needed a language that was concrete and precise. For this, tenet A stresses the direct treatment of "the 'thing'"—the imagist had the responsibility to use words with great exactness to produce a precise image.

Pounds' interest in imagism led him to explore oriental poetry, particularly Chinese and Japanese poetry. The Chinese poetry provided him insight into a language that was direct, concrete, and metaphorical. From the Japanese poetic form, Haiku, he got the sense of "one image" poem—he expressed such an idea through the use of the definite article, "the", to modify "thing". For Pound, it was better to present one image in a lifetime than produce voluminous works. Thus, for the first tenet, the imagist was expected to produce a poem that presented a single dominant image of any subject and use a language that was direct, concrete, and metaphorical to present just that image.

The second tenet highlights the economy of expression in poetry. Focus is given to the "presentation" of images. As was highlighted, the imagist was expected to present one dominant

image as the "thing". The image gave the "thing" a pictorial view. The image was however given form through the words that the poet chose. Bear in mind that Pound did not say "representation" in the second tenet. He used the term "presentation". It goes without saying then that the words that the imagist employed were to be ones that were in themselves parts of the image being presented in the poem. There was no room to have additional words to help make clear or explain other words. That is, no word was to be used which did not contribute directly to the image. The language was to be concentrated and focused on the single dominant image. The second tenet is usually distinguished as a reaction towards the superfluous use of words and language by romantic poets who sought to represent series of their experiences of nature in a poem rather than present a single image of their experiences of nature. The second tenet was a means of highlighting the pictorial foundation of the New Poetry, imagist poetry.

The third proposition narrowed attention to the technicalities of verse structure. Particularly, it marked the revolution and official use of free verse. Because the first two propositions by Pound and his friends stressed the use of simple language that dealt directly with the content of an image and the use of words of exactness, it meant writing in the conventional meters was not going to be possible. Writing in the conventional meters most often forced poets to focus on words that could help them meet the patterns of the meter. For most poets, it meant using a lot of words that did not directly contribute to the content of the poem but contributed to meeting the pattern of the meter. In other words, most poets of imagism felt that the experiences they tried to communicate through their poems were experiences they got as a result of the way they came into contact with the objects and events that formed their experiences. Hence, if they wanted to share such experiences, they needed to be able to present the same patterns of the objects and events in words to help the reader have the same experience. These premises demanded non-metrical prosody; it demanded free verse. In the third tenet, Pound loosely equates metronome to the meter and musical phrase (which at the time meant writing outside metrical composition) to free verse. It is important to recognize the importance of free verse to the commission of imagism and modern poetry as a whole. Free verse allowed spontaneity, creativity, and novelty in verse structuring. It allowed a poet to create his or her prosody or rhythm based on the content of the poem. The situation was that it allowed the imagists to use language and rhythm that came naturally to the images they wanted to present without having to worry about the numerical formation of rhythm (counting the number of stressed and unstressed syllables and creating a pattern from such activity). That is, tenet three expressed the idea that if the poem of the imagist was to present a single dominant image using simple words that expressed the exact nature of the image with no excess, it needed a form of presentation and a rhythm that did restrain the poet, but allowed the poet to manipulate it to fit the content or experience. Free verse provided that and was made to be part of the three propositions that are still recognized to characterize imagism. Now, having probed into the three principles set by Ezra Pound to characterize imagism, let us consider the third stage of imagism.

The third stage of imagism was led by Amy Lowell, a rich brilliant woman who was disliked by Ezra Pound. The reign of Amy Lowell as the dominant force of imagism lasted for three years, between 1914 and 1917. During the said period, she extended the principles of imagism to six. We usually focus on the three principles Pound established as the defining principles of imagism since the additions and extensions that Lowell supervised can still be summarized into Pound's three principles or tenets. Even more, the extended principles were not always upheld by imagists. It is still worth noting since Amy Lowell tried to make the principles as clear and overt as possible. By 1917, the principles had been established as definitive of the activities of imagism. They required the imagist to:
   a. Use the language of common speech. The imagist poets were, however, expected to use exact words, not synonyms nor merely decorative words.

b. Create a rhythm to express new moods rather than replicate old rhythms, which merely echoes old moods. The imagist was however allowed to go beyond the limits of free verse.
c. Have absolute freedom to choose any subject for their poem. They were free to compose poems subjective or objective as their subject matter.
d. Present a single image (for which they bear the name "imagist"). Although they were not painters, poets of imagism were to present poems that rendered images exactly as they were, rather than surround it with a level of vagueness.
e. Produce poetry that was hard and clear, and never burred or indefinite.
f. Present a concentrated poem that would draw the concentration of readers.

During this period of Amy Lowell, Pound had dropped out of the movement of imagism and had taken interest in "Vorticism" and other new movements.

We must say that through these many propositions established as guiding principles for the movement of imagism, Pound's treatment of image remains classical. Pound did not just address the concept image in the imagist as just the presentation of a pictorial view of an idea. He presented it as that which was to present an intellectual and emotional complexity in an instant of time, the essence of spontaneity. For him, an image was a cluster or vortex of fused ideas that had within its energy to be perceived. He described it so that image reflected the idea of a plot. Thus, within the imagist poem, the image they presented was the plot of the poem. Today, imagism is now seen as a way of writing or a tool that most poets use to construct their ideas. As we pointed out, after 1917, imagism as a movement broke down due to several reasons, most of which came as critiques of the movement. Even Pound took a shot at imagism for breaking down her principles. We will end with two points. The first point which was captured in "Preface to Some Imagist Poets: "Imagism," does not merely mean the presentation of pictures. *Imagism* refers to the manner of presentation, not to the subject." The second is that imagism, although ended too soon, made free verse a discipline and legitimate poetic form.

IMAGIST POETRY

Introduction
Imagist poetry is characterized by two broad phenomena of poetry, imagism, and free verse. Addressed independently, we would say that imagism sets the manner of presentation of one's experiences or subject matter in imagist poetry, whereas free verse provides the form to achieve the demands of imagism. Of course, imagism was set to include free verse as a sub principle; so let us begin the discussion with the statement that imagist poetry is a manifestation of imagism, a way and manner of writing poetry. As has been pointed out already, imagist poetry was formally constructed, defined, and represented by Ezra Pound, H.D. Amy Lowell among others. Imagist poetry specializes in the presentation of imagery. It describes images with simple language and great focus. Unlike the traditional forms of poetry which describe the images in great detail with many words, imagist poetry does the description of images using very few, simple and precise words. Imagist poetry is further defined by its directness and brevity. Most importantly, imagist poetry only present images and does not include or express any ideas and themes in the poems. That is, in imagist poetry, the poet in presenting an image in the poem, does not talk about the themes beside the image. The image is set as the main focus of the poem and it carries the theme.

Characteristics of Imagist Poetry

The characteristics of imagist poetry reflect the principles of imagism. They include the following:
   a. It allows the treatment of any subject.
   b. It presents a single direct image.
   c. It does not express any form of idea or theme in association with the poem.
   d. The language is simple and precise to the point.
   e. It embraces free verse.

An example analysis

Poets who identified themselves as imagists include (but not limited to) Ezra Pound, Hilda Doolittle, Richard Aldington, D. H. Lawrence, Carl Sandburg, Amy Lowell, T.S. Eliot, F. S. Flint, James Joyce, William Carlos Williams, and T. E. Hulme. It is important to note that the concept of imagist poetry as we perceive it today largely spans from two imagist anthologies compiled by Ezra Pound and Richard Aldington. Now, let us consider some sample poems of imagist poetry:

> **Sample 1**
> **Ezra Pound's "In a station of the Metro"**
> The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
> Petals on a wet, black bough.

> **Sample 2**
> **Carl Sandburg's "Fog"**
> The fog comes
> on little cat feet.
> It sits looking
> over harbor and city
> on silent haunches
> and then moves on.

> **Sample 3**
> **D. H. Lawrence's "Green"**
> The down was apple-green,
> > The sky was green wine held up in the sun,
> The moon was a golden petal between
> > She opened her eyes, and green
> They shone, clear like flowers undone
> > For the first time, now for the first time seen.

   1. Look at punctuations and explain how they help the form to reveal.
   2. Identify the images and discuss how each develops the message of the poem.

Their language is simple everyday language. The words used are concise and straight to the point. The rhythm differs from one poem to another. Sample one has a semicolon, a comma, and a full stop. The brevity and use of the language and punctuation imitate that of the Japanese Haiku. Sample two has two full stops with a run-on-lines. The punctuation and run-on-line create a rhythm that echoes the movement of the cat who comes to a "full stop" to sit and look and the moves on (like moving on to the next line in run-on-line). Sample three has five commas spread over the poem to slow down the reading of the poem, and a full stop. The rhythm registers the awe-struck image the poet presents in the poem. These established use of language in the samples, in addition to other properties of the language, define the verse forms as free verse.

What sets them apart as imagist poetry is as follows: First, for each poem, the poet categorically identifies the image they present. In sample 1, it is the faces of people at the Metro; in sample 2, it is the movement of the cat; in sample 3, it is green. Second, recognize that no ideas are expressed about the images. They are just presented to us in the poem. It begs the question, "and so what?" Third, the image is presented as though it were a painting. Recognize that in painting, the paint is expected to evoke a sense of emotion in the one who looks at it. It is such an expectation that is carried out in imagist poetry. The poet only tries to invoke in the reader the moment of heightened awareness that inspired his poem; the poet tries to induce in the reader the same feeling they experienced at the moment of poetic composition.

Poets readily point to the inability to communicate ideas (especially philosophical ones) with imagist poetry as the cause of the fall of imagism. They had established that presenting images was the last purpose of writing poetry.

Key ideas

- Free verse upholds individuality, originality, novelty, and spontaneity as against the uniformity, order, control, and adherence to metrical composition.
- "Free" in free verse does not mean that poems of free verse are free from any prosodic convention, particularly rhythm.
- Imagist poetry is characterized by two broad phenomena of poetry: imagism and free verse.

Reflection

- What does "free" really mean in "free verse"? Does it mean presence or absence of verse?
- How important is free verse in the formulation of the principles of imagism?
- What is unique about imagist poetry?

Discussion

- Explain the concept of free verse to a learner.
- Explain the characteristics of an imagist poem.
- Discuss the three principles that govern imagism.

SESSION 2: HAIKU, VILLANELLE AND SESTINA

Welcome to Session 2 of Unit 6. We move beyond American and English poetic forms to consider other poetic forms that very much inspired a revolution of English and American Poetry. We look at Haiku, one of the oldest and influential poetic forms that emerged from Japan. We will look at its origin and central principles. We will then consider the villanelle and sestina as other poetic forms with unique characteristics. By the end of the discussion, we hope that you will be able to examine how these contributed to the appreciation of poetry in general.

Learning outcomes:
By the end of the session, the participant will be able to:
1. Discuss the features of the Haiku.
2. Examine the structure of Haiku.
3. Trace the origin of Villanelle.
4. Discuss the features of the Villanelle.

5. Discuss the effect of the Villanelle on a story.
6. fIdentify the structure of the Sestina.

HAIKU

Introduction/Origin
We established in previous sessions that in the early 20th century, there was a lot of effort being made to move from the traditional forms of literature governed by strict conventions. The effort inspired a high degree of experimentation and exploration. Thus, poets visited literary traditions outside the scope of English and American literature in search of inspiration. Thus, Haiku and other foreign poetic forms became well-known forms in modern and contemporary American and English poetry. Some trace the origins of Haiku as far back as the 8th century. However, Haiku is a Japanese creation, generally considered to have emerged in the 15th-16th centuries and it is associated with the deeds of Zen Buddhist monks. It is said to have achieved its rigid perfect form 200 years after its emergence. Four poets are identified as the master brains behind the growth: Basho, Buson, Issa, and Ihara Saikaku.

Whereas Basho is credited for the form that Haiku takes, Buson highlighted the idea that the subject of haiku is most often human or nature. Issa was well known for how he perceived and captured nature in a childlike form. The use and number of syllables define the rhythm of haiku. We established when dealing with the free verse that even if a poet was free of all traditional rule of poetic composition, the poet was still bound by some natural traits and laws of the language they used in their compositions. The poetic form of Haiku exemplifies the claim. Unlike the English language that has stress and accentuation as part of its prosodic tools, the Japanese language does not have such language phenomenon or prosodic tools. It, however, has syllables. Consequently, whereas the use of English language allows the poet to explore the stress patterns of syllables (to form metrical compositions in poetry), that of the Japanese language gives no such room for the poet since it doesn't use stress at all. For such reasons, the poet is forced to depend on syllable count. The Japanese haiku is therefore constructed to appeal to the eye rather than the ear—even the images they present are usually visual rather than aural.

Description of Haiku
Traditionally, a haiku presents two contrasting images; one is usually a clear sensory image while the other is a surprise or insight. Over the years, Jane Reichhold, an outstanding poet of haiku, identified twenty-three other techniques to writing haiku. They include but not limited to the technique of association (rather than contrast), riddle, sense switching, narrowing focus, metaphor, simile, and wordplay. These techniques provide the internal structure of haiku. Haiku as a poetic tradition does not subscribe to subjective thoughts and emotions. Like the imagist poetry, it takes the form of painting in words, and as such, does not allow the poet to comment or explain the ideas behind their images. The subject matter is usually nature and it presents a moving or fleeting image that necessarily takes place in a natural physical place. Within the traditional form, there are three basic elements: time, place, and object. All the traditional forms of haiku possess these elements.

The poet of haiku is expected to choose picture-making words that would induce in the reader the same feeling that the poet felt at the moment of poetic inspiration. One of the distinguishing features of haiku is that it must contain a season word called a "kigo" which refers the reader to the season in which the poem is set. A haiku, thus, gives an objective, suggestive, concise, and fleeting picture of its subject hoping that the reader catches on to the message the image is expected to present.

In terms of its form, Haiku is the shortest poetic form (even shorter than the couplet), generally written in three lines with seventeen syllables. The first line is necessarily structured to have 5 syllables, the second 7 syllables, and the third would also have 5 syllables. The form is structured in a way that it is compact, yet profound and evocative. They use words that are exact while avoiding synonyms and unnecessary metaphors or similes. The words are evocative enough to present a fleeting picture in the imagination of the reader. Although we may not describe haiku, in general, using punctuations, it uses punctuations to set the tone of the words in the poem so that the poem is profound enough to leave an impression on the reader. The punctuations contribute to the reflective nature of the poem.

Let us be aware that in English and American haiku, the poem does not always have a seventeen-syllable structure. It may be less. The strict form of haiku that relies on the short, uniform, and unstressed syllabic structure of the Japanese language is extremely difficult to capture in English. Hence, most poets who attempt to capture the haiku in English lose the rule for the number and patterning of the syllable. This means that it is possible to see a haiku that does not conform to the 5-7-5 syllabic structure. Some people write haiku in a line. What is made to count most in English and American haiku is the authenticity and the experience or image occurring in a physical natural scene. English and American haiku also allow all sorts of subject matter to be presented.

It is important to note that haiku greatly influenced Ezra Pound and other imagists who set out to reproduce both the brevity and the precision of the image in the Japanese original haiku. And just like the English depended on Italian sonnets to develop the English sonnets, the imagist poetry was developed from the Japanese haiku.

Characteristics of Haiku poetry
From the above, let us summarize the characteristics of the Haiku:
   a. A haiku has simple language and structure.
   b. Haiku is highly concentrated, concise, and straight to the point.
   c. Haiku reflects nature though it is not a poetry of nature.
   d. Haiku is based on experience, especially an aesthetic experience in nature which induces a level of illumination or a moment of mystical revelation.
   e. All forms of haiku include at most three images that are concrete and from real life. Usually, the third image would illuminate the previous two.
   f. Haiku poetry is quick and direct.
   g. Haiku presents common subjects of interest with a common language to reveal very deep ideas.
   h. A haiku poem is visual rather than aural; it uses visual rather than auditory images.

Two examples of Haiku

1. An old silent pond...
   A frog jumps into the pond,
   Splash! Silence again. (Matsuo Basho)

2. The spring lingers on
   In the scent of a damp log
   Rotting in the sun. (Richard Wright)

Examine each of the poems by the features we have discussed above and share your views with your class. Don't hesitate to draw attention to any new feature you discover. It will help in our growing study of the Haiku.

VILLANELLE

Introduction
Villanelle is traced to 16th century France. To that point, "Villanelle" or "Villanesque" written in France between 1553 and 1627, did not have any established rhyme scheme, length, and syllable count. They did not have any form, let alone a fixed pattern to allow them to be classified as belonging to the same poetic form. In most cases, each poem of the villanesque resembled an actual musical "villanelle" or "villancico". The villanella and the villancico (from *Villano* or peasant) were at that time Italian and Spanish dance-song forms. In effect, the French poets adopting the title "Villanelle" or "Villanesque" was probably to indicate that their poems spoke of simple, often pastoral or rustic themes.

The sixteenth-century poets in England who composed such types of poems used the term "Neapolitan" or "Napolitane" (and, later, the term "canzonetta") rather than the term "villanella". However, although the terms were different, in both France and England, it was strongly associated with music and with the oral poetic tradition of improvising lyrics to a preexisting tune. In other words, villanelle came as lyrical as a lyric poem could be. Structurally, villanella had no rule except that it usually had a refrain, which was a single refrain and not an alternating one like it later became. Since then, it evolved to have a recognizable form.

Form the established history, it would seem that what we describe as the form of the villanelle is entirely English in origin and that could be traced to the nineteenth century. Villanelle became vibrant because of its aesthetic relevance. It was also a medium that most poets considered very effective in communicating very complex and subjective experiences. More so, the success of villanelle could be tied to the emergence of New Formalist, a movement that started in the late 20th century. The movement rose to particularly push for the return to formal versification as well as the return to more popular kinds of poetry. Villanelle was one of the poetic forms they endorsed.

Description of Villanelle
Villanelle is generally characterized as a lyric poem. Like most lyric poetic forms, it is presented as a song-like poem that focuses on presenting the emotional experiences of the poet. The villanelle is composed of 19 lines. The lines are divided into six stanzas of five tercets (a three-line stanza) and one quatrain (a four-stanza poem). I hope you remember what tercet and quatrains are. The first and third line of the first tercet are repeated in an alternating pattern: The first line of the first stanza or tercet is repeated as the third line of stanzas two and four while the third line of the first stanza or tercet is repeated as the third line of stanzas three and five. The two repeated lines are combined to form the last two lines of the last stanza, the quatrain. It has a rhyme scheme of aba aba aba aba aba aba abaa. It is written in iambic trimeter, tetrameter or pentameter.

Structure of a Villanelle
The structure of the villanelle is quite interesting. Externally, it is just a poem with six stanzas; five tercets and a quatrain. The internal structure, however, draws on repetition, metrical patterning, as well as end rhymes. The lines are composed in verse forms allowing the poet to vary emphasis on syllables as well as foreground them. It has a rhyme scheme of aba aba aba aba aba aba abaa. The repetition of the rhyme scheme patterns the poem internally so that the lines and ideas are related closely to each other. Even more, the repetition of lines further adjusts the structural relations the rhyme scheme creates among the lines. The repetition of the lines is accounted for in the rhyme scheme. With the repeated lines beginning and ending the first stanza, it becomes clear that the first

stanza introduces the subject matter of the poem. It becomes obvious that their repetition as the last lines of the quatrain sets the last stanza as the conclusion of the poem. That which is unique is the repeated "a" we encounter from stanza two to five. For each stanza, there are two "a", one from a repeated line, and the other from a novel line. Thus, structurally, the "a" performs two functions: it introduces sub-themes or ideas and echoes them in the subject matter already introduced in the first stanza through repetition and it constitutes the refrain in all the stanzas. The strain of the story is formed with the "b". Villanelle is therefore structured to have its themes woven into the subject matter through the rhyme scheme and refrains.

An example analysis
Let us read the poem below and examine the structure and pattern:

Thomas Dylan's **"Do not go gentle into that good night"**
Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.
Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.
Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.
And you, my father, there on the sad height,
Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Discuss your observation in the light of the structure mentioned above. From the story line of the "b", discuss the story and deduce the message of the poem.

SESTINA

Introduction/Origin
The Sestina is another poem with a fixed structure and intricate internal arrangement and re-arrangement for both aesthetic and thematic effect. The sestina dates back to the 12th century Provence and the troubadour Arnaut Daniel. This poetic form is still practised by contemporary poets today because of the aesthetic pleasure which results from difficulty of interpretation. The structure and interpretation of Sestina is described by Stephen Fry in The Ode Less Travelled as "repetition and recycling of elusive patterns that cannot be quite held in the mind all at once" (p.238). The repetition and recycling of the key words in stanza one is the key feature. The fixed poetic form of sestina owes its structure to the reordering of the last words in the lines of each stanza as we move from one stanza to the next.

Structure of a sestina

The sestina consists of seven stanzas, with the first six stanzas, each consisting of six lines and the seventh, a three-line stanza called a tercet. While there is not necessarily a rhyming scheme, at the end of each line, the last words of the lines of stanza one is repeated and re-arranged as the last words of the subsequent stanzas to give the sestina its structure. The tercet (or half-stanza) consists of three lines has the six words re-arranged, two words in each line. Each line contains two of the arranged/permuted words with one of these words ending each of the lines. Initially, this followed the grouping of words 2–5, 4–3 and 6–1 although not all poets writing in the sestina form conform to this rule. Let's examine the poem below in the light of the description above.

An example analysis

Elizabeth Bishop's **Sestina**

September rain falls on the **house**.
In the failing light, the old **grandmother**
sits in the kitchen with the **child**
beside the Little Marvel **Stove**,
reading the jokes from the **almanac**,
laughing and talking to hide her **tears**.

She thinks that her equinoctial tears
and the rain that beats on the roof of the house
were both foretold by the almanac,
but only known to a grandmother.
The iron kettle sings on the stove.
She cuts some bread and says to the child,

It's time for tea now; but the child
is watching the teakettle's small hard tears
dance like mad on the hot black stove,
the way the rain must dance on the house.
Tidying up, the old grandmother
hangs up the clever almanac

on its string. Birdlike, the almanac
hovers half open above the child,
hovers above the old grandmother
and her teacup full of dark brown tears.
She shivers and says she thinks the house
feels chilly, and puts more wood in the stove.

It was to be, says the Marvel Stove.
I know what I know, says the almanac.
With crayons the child draws a rigid house
and a winding pathway. Then the child
puts in a man with buttons like tears
and shows it proudly to the grandmother.

But secretly, while the grandmother
busies herself about the stove,

the little moons fall down like tears
from between the pages of the almanac
into the flower bed the child
has carefully placed in the front of the house.

Time to plant tears, says the almanac.
The grandmother sings to the marvelous stove
and the child draws another inscrutable house.

What is your observation? If you have a different pattern revealing, share with the class.

Thematic Issues
I am going to pose questions to guide us into arriving at some suggestions. I am doing this because I want you to identify the possible thematic issues and discuss them.

Do you observe that the key words (bold) in stanza one form the end words of the next five stanzas? What happens to the words in the seventh stanza? Find the meaning of the words and determine their meaning in the context of the poem. Does the last stanza suggest meaning in the poem? Does the almanac suggest time? Is time a crucial factor in the poem? Look at the relationship between the child and the grandmother. Which one will you associate with innocence and experience respectively? Think of September as a season; raindrops, tears vapour on the tea kettle as metaphors; identify personifications etc. Now, have tried to find responses to the questions, will you associate these with the poem? That
1. the innocence of children is not affected by elders' grief. Only with the passage of time and age comes awareness of the sorrow in the world.
2. the outside world can be cold and harsh, but there is a flicker of warmth and hope when one is with loved ones.

Try to explain these suggestions in the light of the content of the poem

Key ideas

- Haiku as a poetic tradition does not subscribe to subjective thoughts and emotions.
- The villanelle is composed of 19 lines. The lines are divided into six stanzas of five tercets (a three-line stanza) and one quatrain (a four-stanza poem).
- The sestina consists of seven stanzas, with the first six stanzas, each consisting of six lines and the seventh, a three-line stanza called a tercet.

Reflection

- What are some of the unique features of the Haiku?
- What makes the villanelle or sestina unique in poetry? Which specific examples can I draw from the course to support my position?
- How does the structure of the sestina complicate the message?

Discussion
- How does the structure of the villanelle help the story to develop?
- Refer to any poem and discuss the features of any of the three poems studied in this course.

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