The following Info-sheets have a dual purpose. They can be used for reference by teachers and students and some sheets can also be used as class worksheets. The poems used in these info-sheets were all submitted by students, NETs and local English teachers for either this publication or for the Hong Kong Budding Poets (English) Award (2005-6). Poems included on the CD - Readings of Selected Poems are marked with the following symbol:
# Types of Poetry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acrostic</strong></td>
<td>A poem in which certain letters, usually the first in each line, form a word or message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ballad</strong></td>
<td>A narrative poem that tells a story similar to a folktale or legend. Ballads often have a repeated refrain. Originally ballads were meant to be sung.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blank Verse</strong></td>
<td>A poem written in unrhymed lines usually in iambic pentameter—10 syllables each line—with an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable e.g. daDUM daDUM daDUM daDUM daDUM).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cinquain</strong></td>
<td>A five-line poem. Line 1 is one word (the title). Line 2 has two words that describe the title. Line 3 has three words that describe an action. Line 4 has four words that express feeling, and line 5 has one word which is usually a synonym for the title.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Couplet</strong></td>
<td>A couplet is a pair of lines of verse. Rhyming couplets have a very simple rhyme scheme (aa, bb, cc). Heroic couplets are in iambic pentameter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elegy</strong></td>
<td>A sad and thoughtful lyric poem about the death of someone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Epic</strong></td>
<td>A serious narrative poem that tells the story about a hero.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Free verse</strong></td>
<td>A poem written in rhyme or unrhymed lines that have no fixed metrical pattern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Haiku</strong></td>
<td>A three-line Japanese poem of five, seven and five syllables. Usually about nature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lyric</strong></td>
<td>A poem that expresses the thoughts and feelings of the poet. Usually in the form of a song.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Limerick</strong></td>
<td>An often humorous five-line poem. Lines 1, 2, and 5 have seven to ten syllables, rhyme and have the same rhythm. Lines 3 and 4 have five to seven syllables, rhyme and have the same rhythm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name</strong></td>
<td>A poem that tells about the name word. It uses the letters of the word for the first letter of each line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Narrative</strong></td>
<td>A poem that tells a story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ode</strong></td>
<td>A lyric poem of a serious nature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quatrain</strong></td>
<td>A four-line poem. Lines 2 and 4 must rhyme and have a similar number of syllables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rhyme</strong></td>
<td>A rhyming poem that repeats the same or similar sounds of two or more words, usually at the end of the line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shape</strong></td>
<td>A poem written in the shape of an object. A <strong>diamante</strong> poem is a special type of shape poem written in the shape of a diamond.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sonnet</strong></td>
<td>A lyric poem that consists of 14 lines and usually has a set rhyme scheme. English sonnets have a <strong>abab cdcd efef gg</strong> rhyme scheme.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sometimes interpreting a poem’s meaning can be quite difficult. Some poems which appear to be quite simple can in fact be quite complicated. The use of unfamiliar and/or figurative language may also make interpreting a poem quite difficult.

Following the steps below may help you to better understand poems.

1. **Read the poem silently.**
2. **Read the poem aloud.**
   - Can you identify the rhythm of the poem?
   - Are the line breaks ‘natural breaks’ or do you have to use the punctuation (commas, full stops)?
3. **Identify the speaker and the audience.**
   - Who is the speaker in the poem: the poet, a male, a female, a child or an object?
   - Is the speaker addressing a particular audience - him/herself, you or humankind?
4. **Identify the time and place.**
   - Does the poem have a special setting: Hong Kong, a city, near the sea or in a forest?
   - Is the poem set in the present, past or future?
5. **Consider the poem’s title.**
   - Does it give you a clue to the major theme of the poem?
6. **Consider the poet’s use of language.**
   - Are there any words you don’t understand? Try to guess their meanings. If you can’t do that, use a dictionary. (Remember that sometimes words in poems will have different meanings from their dictionary meaning!)
   - What 'sound' poetic devices has the poet used: rhyme, alliteration or onomatopoeia?
   - Has the poet used any figurative language: metaphor or simile?
   - What is the tone of the poem: humorous, thoughtful, sad, angry, anxious or bored?
7. **Summarise the poem.**
   - Write a summary of what you think is the main idea of the poem.

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### Interpreting meaning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>literal</th>
<th>Is the meaning of the poem obvious? Can the poem be understood just by reading the words and observing the punctuation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tone, mood</td>
<td>What is the writer’s tone? Is the poet concerned, angry, happy, upset, confused, disappointed, annoyed, friendly, mischievous, triumphant or sad? What is the mood of the poem: thoughtful, cheerful, angry, hopeful or anxious?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subject, theme</td>
<td>Can you identify the major theme of the poem - lost love, environmental degradation, the futility of war, lost youth, death, a loving family, education, friendship, growing up, love of nature or fear of technology?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intention</td>
<td>What is the writer’s purpose for writing this poem? Is the writing personal or does the writer want some sort of reaction from the reader?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moral</td>
<td>Is the writer trying to teach a lesson?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acrostics are fun poems which can be written by anyone. Acrostics can be about a wide variety of topics. Enjoy these poems written by students about their favourite food, their school, the seasons and friends. After reading the poems try to write an acrostic poem of your own.

**Ice Cream**
I love ice cream
Cold and spherical
Eaten when cold
Chocolate flavour is a good choice
Remember to lick it, not bite it
Excellent to eat on a hot day
Also can be eaten on a cold day
Melts if you don't eat it immediately
from Tsang Pik Shan Secondary School.

**Yenching**
You’re my happy place
Enjoy myself
Never forget my life here
Can have a lot of fun
Have my dreams here
Interesting studies
Never be sad in Yenching
Great for you
Cheng Hiu Ying (CCC Yenching College)

**The Four Seasons**
Spring is coming
Plants are growing
Rain is falling
Insects are hiding
Nights are shorter than days
Grasshoppers want to play.

Summer is coming.
Usually raining.
My mother is sweating.
My father is drinking soft drinks.
Eating ice-cream is cooling.
Remember to go swimming.

Autumn is coming.
Umbrellas always closing.
The leaves are falling.
Under the moonlight, playing.
Mid-autumn is fun.
Nights are lengthening.

Winter is coming.
I am shivering.
Nature is quiet and silent.
Temperatures are dropping.
Early morning is dark.
Remember to wear warm clothing.
Au Hoi Ting
(Oblate Father Primary School)

**An Alphabet Poem**
A poem? My teacher told me to write a poem!
But how can I write a poem?
Can I write about animals?
Dog – it is active and restless.
Eagle – it has very good eyesight.
Flamingo – it is a tall, tropical water bird.
Giraffe – it is an extremely tall African animal with a very long neck.
Hippopotamus – it has a wide mouth and dark grey skin.
I have written a poem for my teacher now.

Bo Bo Chu (Po Leung Kuk Ma Kam Ming College)

**Friends**
My dear, my dear Friend
Thank you for your Reliable hand
Helping me when I feel really sad
For Everything you have said
To me I will Never forget
Though Days can be long and full of regrets
With your Support I shall be able to move ahead
Carman Hui (CCC Yenching College)

**NETworking: Using Poetry in the English Classroom**
Haiku is a form of Japanese poetry. The topics in haiku are often about Nature and natural things. Haiku have a strict structure. They consist of three lines and seventeen syllables. The first line has five syllables, the second; seven and the third; five. Haiku often give the reader a clear indication of how the writer feels about the topic of the poem. Haiku can include rhyme, but they do not have to.

Read the following two haiku:

Winter
Trees droop sleepily
Leaves, so green, then gold, now brown
Such a gentle death
Betty Bhownath, NET, YWCA Hioe Tjo Yeong College

Homework
No more homework, please
Need to run, jump and climb trees
Need a life of peace
Betty Bhownath, NET, YWCA Hioe Tjo Yeong College

How does the writer feel about:
winter? ________________________________________________________________

homework? __________________________________________________________________

Can you find any examples of rhyme in the poems above? _________________________

Read these three haiku written by students from Tak Shing Shan Secondary School.

Summer
Summer is coming
Let’s go to the swimming pool
Swimming is such fun

Cats
My pet is a cat
It is cute and acts gently
It's a lovely cat

Swimming
Swimming in thesea
Swimming is real good for me
Swimming makes me sneeze

Check to see if the first lines all have five syllables, the second - seven, and the third - five.

Brainstorm as many words as you can about Nature.

rain  clouds  trees  sunshine  animals  cool breezes

Choose the words you like from the list above. Count the syllables (parts) of the words. Use these words and any others you want to write your own haiku.
Diamante Poems

A fun poem for you to write is a diamante poem. This type of poetry is in the shape of a diamond and uses nouns, adjectives, gerunds and phrases.

A common structure for a diamante poem is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>(topic)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjective, adjective</td>
<td>(describing topic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerund, gerund, gerund</td>
<td>(three –ing words about topic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four nouns OR a short phrase</td>
<td>(about beginning topic and end topic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerund, gerund, gerund</td>
<td>(three –ing words about end topic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjective, adjective</td>
<td>(describing end topic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun</td>
<td>(end topic)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some diamante poems also involve **opposites** as the beginning and end topics.

Now write your own diamante poem using the examples on this page as models.
Think of an animal.

How big is it?  
How does it move?  
What is it covered by?  
Where does it live?  
What does it eat?  

What colour is it?  
What sound does it make?  
What does it smell like?  
How does it act?  
Would it be a good pet?

Read the following poem:

An Elephant
An elephant is …
Big like a bus,
Grey like a storm cloud.
An elephant has …
Skin like old boots,
A trunk like a fire hose.
Tusks curved like bananas,
Ears like huge fans,
A tail like an old broomstick.
Strong as ten Tarzans
This is an elephant.

(thanks to Mary Roberts, NET, New Asia Middle School)

Use a similar pattern to write your own animal poem:

Think of an animal

Think of its * size
* colour
* shape
* covering

1. Start with a simple statement.
2. Make comparisons.
3. Use some adjectives.
4. Finish with another simple statement.
Class Animal Poem

Write a class animal poem! Each student selects an animal. Now write two adjectives which describe that animal. Next write an activity which the animal is good at doing.
All the student ‘stanzas’ are then collected and combined to form a class poem. Students could, each in turn, read their stanzas aloud.

If I could be any animal, I would be a/an (choose an animal) - (adjective), (adjective), (an activity which the animal would be good at doing).

If I could be any animal, I would be a lion - strong, brave, running fast through the hot, steamy jungle.
If I could be any animal, I would be a hamster - tiny, cuddly, always sleeping, eating or running on my wheel.

If I could be any animal, I would be a/an __________________ - __________________ , __________________ , ____________________________ .

If I could be any animal, I would be a/an __________________ - __________________ , __________________ , ____________________________ .
Rap poetry is a great way to introduce students to certain elements of poetry. Rap has a very strong sense of rhythm and usually includes rhyme (RAP = Rhythm And Poetry). An appealing aspect of using rap with our students is that rap is usually about contemporary topics. Also helpful for our students are the short line length and the use of repetition.

Complete the following short raps:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wicked rap is my thing</th>
<th>Hey! Rap is what you’ll find</th>
<th>Counting the beat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wearing my bling, bling, ______</td>
<td>If ever you look in my________</td>
<td>Living on the __________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m a rapper you should know</td>
<td>Rap is everything, Yo!</td>
<td>Life shouldn’t be __________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rap, rapping, don’t be ______</td>
<td>Just me hangin’ with my ______</td>
<td>Never, ever drop your guard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After reading the class rap below try and write your own class rap.

The 2A Rap

Gonna tell you a story
‘Bout a class I know
The boys are kinda crazy
And always on the go
They go to a school
Called Ma Duen Hey
So you know who I mean
There’s only one 2A
The classroom number is 405
Some come late
But they always arrive
When they do their homework
The teacher feels good
‘Cause she wants them to do
Just what they should
If you see this class
Please beware
They get kinda angry
So you’d better not stare
In Language Arts they’re number 1
They know how to act
And have a lot of fun
So thanks 2A you’re the best
In Language Arts
You’ve passed the test
Don’t give up
You’re smart and wise
If it’s up to me
You win first prize

Paul Brownlie (NET, Ma Chan Duen Hey Memorial College)
What is Poetry?

Poetry is something that can be enjoyed and understood using all our senses. Poetry is a way of looking beyond words and embracing feelings and concepts through our senses.

Read the first two statements below and then complete the others using references to our senses: **sight**, **sound**, **touch**, **smell** and **taste**.

- Not perfume, but the **scent** of perfume
- Not the sun, but the **warmth** from the sun
- Not an apple, but __________________________
- Not a bell, but __________________________
- Not a friend, but __________________________
- Not water, but __________________________
- Not the sea, but __________________________
- Not a dog, but __________________________
- Not sand, but __________________________

Poetry can also be a way of looking at something from a new perspective, through a different set of eyes. Poets sometimes provide a new perspective by writing using a different ‘voice’.

**I Miss Home**

Lying on my back, I sleep here all alone,
Gazing at the shining stars,
Wishing I was home.

I watched those flames burn up my nest,
And even as I cried,
Those flames kept burning up the rest,
I really could have died.

Deforestation, the humans call it.
It’s tragic to my ears.
Goodbye my lovely habitat.
The place I’ve lived for years.

Lying on my back, I sleep here all alone,
Gazing at the shining stars,
Wishing I was home.

I used to feel some hope in life,
But now, my dear, it’s changed.
What can a bird do about that?
All humans are the same.

*Karen Fenella Ma, St Paul’s Convent School*

Who wrote the poem? __________________ Whose ‘voice’ is the poet using? ________________

What is the message of the poem? ________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________
Repetition is a frequently used poetic device. Repetition of sounds is rhyme, alliteration, assonance or consonance. Repetition of patterns of accents is the basis of rhythm. Poems can also include repetition of key words, phrases and whole sentences.

If I Could
If I could,
I would protect you from the sadness in your eyes.
I would wipe out all the things that make you cry.
Yes I would.
If I could,
I would teach you all the things that I’ve learned.
I would help you cross the bridges that they’ve burned.
Yes I would.
If I could,
I would keep your pure heart till I die.
I would keep your dream till you can fly.
Yes I would.
If I could.

Tang Hiu Kwan, Anna (Yuen Long Merchants’ Association Secondary School)

Find two examples of repetition in the poem. _______________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Why do you think rhyme is used in so many poems? __________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

The first three stanzas contain rhyming couplets. Two of the couplets have full rhyme. The other couplet has a form of half or slant rhyme. What are these two words? ______________________

Why do you think the poet repeated ‘If I could’ at the beginning of each verse? __________
______________________________________________________________________________

Why do you think the poet ended the poem with If I could? ____________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

In the second stanza what does the line; ‘I would help you to cross the bridges that they’ve burned.’ mean to you? ______________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

In the third verse what does the line; ‘I would keep your dream till you can fly.’ mean to you?
______________________________________________________________________________

____________________

rhyme: repetition of end sounds: way, bay, stay, sway.
alliteration: repetition of initial consonant sounds: the biggest balloon in Beijing
assonance: repetition of vowel sounds (not consonants): my fleet feet never sleep
consonance: repetition of consonant sounds within words: certain/purple/curtain, pitter/patter
Rhyme is when two or more words on the same line, or nearly the same line, end with the same sound.

- mat rhymes with cat
- sun rhymes with gun
- though rhymes with go

Rhyme is one of the most commonly used poetic devices. In the poem below the last word of the first, second and fifth lines all rhyme with each other. The last words of the third and fourth lines don’t rhyme with any other last words. So the rhyme pattern of this poem is aabca.

**Dream**

Dreaming through the night,   a
Reality out of sight    a
Early in the morning,   b
Answering my mum’s call   c
Makes my dreams disappear in the light.   a

Naomi Cheung, St Paul’s Secondary School

Can you see something else special about the poem above? ________________________

What is the rhyme pattern of the following poem?

---

**The Wall**

Take my hand and lead the way, ___
Tell me all I want you to say. ___
Whisper softly in my ear, ___
Promises I want to hear. ___
Hold me tight and touch my skin, ___
Bring out passion deep within. ___
Pull me close and grasp me near, ___
Remove all my pain and fear. ___
In the darkness of the night, ___
Be a lamp and make it bright. ___
In the brightness of the sun, ___
Show me you will never run. ___
Give me wings so I can fly, ___
I can soar with you nearby. ___
Break down my heart’s prison wall, ___
Time for us to watch it fall. ___

Yanmmy Tang, St Paul’s Secondary School

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**Challenge!** Can you think of a word which rhymes with each of the following words?

- comb __________
- dough __________
- gauge __________
- sign __________
- serene __________
- hinge __________
Two words that rhyme can be called a couplet. Tick the couplets from the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>snake</th>
<th>son</th>
<th>hair</th>
<th>loose</th>
<th>surprised</th>
<th>shoe</th>
<th>star</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>steak</td>
<td>nose</td>
<td>wear</td>
<td>choose</td>
<td>speed</td>
<td>threw</td>
<td>are</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two consecutive lines in poems which rhyme can be called rhyming couplets. Complete the following by creating rhyming couplets:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I wish I could be</th>
<th>I live in Hong Kong</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>One dark and stormy night</strong></td>
<td><strong>All students love to play</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Limericks are five-line poems which contain couplets. The rhyming pattern of a limerick is usually **aabba** or **aabb**c. Read the limericks below completing the second poem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>There once was a girl called Pat</th>
<th>There was a boy from Wanchai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who had an enormous cat</td>
<td>Who swallowed a big, juicy fly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When chasing a mouse</td>
<td>It lived in his belly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It shook the whole house</td>
<td>He fed it green _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So Pat got rid of that cat</td>
<td>Then he got on a train to Tai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other forms of poetry also contain couplets. Read the following poem. Underline and then circle the alternate couplets.

**Orpheus Blues**

Orpheus, son of the great Apollo,  
Wherever he goes, crowds are likely to follow.  
Handsome and charming, witty and smart  
And the music he plays will capture your heart.

With his rugged good looks and his hair neatly curled  
He’s the grooviest swinger in the ancient world.  
His father’s a god and his mother’s a muse  
And man, he can play the Orpheus blues.

With the gift of music he’ll go far,  
A kind of mythological super-star!  
He plays a few riffs on his magical lyre  
And sets all the ladies’ hearts on fire.

Orpheus is really cool  
Orpheus can make you drool.  
Orpheus will make you swoon  
Every time he plays you a tune.

*David Johncock  (NET, Marymount Secondary School)*
Rhythm is the recurring stress patterns in poetry. In some forms of poetry there is a fixed rhythm. Even in free forms of poetry, rhythm is always present. Rhythm in these forms of poetry is similar to the rhythm of speech.

Meter in poetry is the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of verse.

Limericks are fun poems to write and read aloud because they are often quite funny, have rhyme and a strong rhythm.

There once was a boy who loved rhyme
da DUM da da DUM da da DUM
Who thought that his poems were just fine
da DUM da da DUM da da DUM
Indeed quite the poet
da DUM da da DUM
Though some didn’t know it
da DUM da da da DUM
Please help me to finish in

What would be a good word to finish the limerick above?

Now write your own limerick!

To get started, choose a boy’s or girl’s name that has one syllable. Bob, Bill, Fred, Ken, Joe, Jill, Jane, May, Jan and Sue are all fine to use.

Use a simple frame like the one below and put your chosen name at the end of the first line.

There once was a young ______ called ______

Make a list of words that rhyme with the last word in the first line.

Who ______ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______

Check that the last words in the first two lines rhyme and that both lines have three stressed beats.

For lines 3 and 4 you need to change both the rhyme and the rhythm (two stressed beats).

Now go back to your list of rhyming words to find one that can end the poem. Remember that the rhythm of the last line needs to be the same as the first two lines.

Well done - you’ve written a limerick!

Now try another one!
Alliteration is when two or more words in the same sentence begin with the same consonant sound. Tick the example of alliteration below:

| bad boy | naughty boy |

The following sentences also contain alliteration:

*See the six students sitting silently. It’s the biggest, blue balloon in Beijing.*

Try complete the following phrases using alliteration:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>funny fathers</th>
<th>seven slithering babies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ten teachers</td>
<td>babies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nurses napping</td>
<td>men milkshakes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Poetry often uses sound devices such as alliteration to make the writing more interesting. Mark the examples of alliteration you can find in the following poem:

**Hunting**

There was a colorful chameleon and a crafty old toad,  
One on a camellia branch, the other sitting by the road.  
Both contemplating what to eat.  
The chameleon’s camouflage makes it totally invisible  
While the toad is cunning and cruel.  
Both really want to capture the cricket  
That carelessly comes past.  
The chameleon strikes fast  
With its cannon ball tongue  
And catches the cricket.  
The toad croaks in dismay.  
‘How crispy the wings,  
How creamy the guts’,  
Thinks the chameleon.

Chloe Fong, St Stephen’s Girls’ College

A fun use of alliteration is in tongue twisters. Try to say the following tongue twister.

**Betty Botter**

*Betty Botter bought a bit of butter.*  
The butter Betty Botter bought was a bit bitter  
And made her batter bitter.  
But a bit of better butter  
Would make her batter better.  
So Betty Botter bought a bit of better butter,  
Which made Betty Botter’s bitter batter better.

*bitter*: an unpleasant taste  
batter*: a mixture of flour, eggs, milk and butter used to make pancakes

*See if you can find some other fun tongue twisters in books or on the Internet.*
Onomatopoeia is a complicated word for a very simple idea. It means when a word sounds like the noise of the thing or action that it is describing.

What sound does a bee make? buzz What sound does falling in water make? ________
What sound does a bell make? ________ What sound does the wind make? ________

The words you have written above are examples of onomatopoeia.

Match the following phrases to the onomatopoeia that describes them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The sound of ............</th>
<th>onomatopoeia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A glass breaking on a hard floor</td>
<td>tinkle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A gun being fired</td>
<td>meow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ring of a very small bell</td>
<td>smash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A light switch being turned on</td>
<td>purr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A happy cat</td>
<td>bang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An unhappy cat</td>
<td>click</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Poetry involves using our sense of hearing (sound) so onomatopoeia is often found in poems.

Red like flowers
Green like eyes
Silver showers
Golden skies
People scream
Fireworks whoosh
Crackers bang
And rockets swoosh
Parents smile
Children cheer
It’s time to say
Happy New Year!

Tina Engelbogen (NET, Yu Chun Keung Memorial College No.2)

How many examples of onomatopoeia can you find in the poem above?

Onomatopoeia is found in many comic books.

Wham! Bang!

Draw a frame from a comic which includes at least two examples of onomatopoeia.
Imagery: Metaphor, Simile

Imagery is a term that often refers to the figurative language, in particular metaphor and simile, used in poetry. There is very little difference between metaphors and similes.

Read the following three sentences:

Time is a river.
Time flies.
Time is like the breeze.

Each sentence above is an example of imagery. The first two are metaphors while the third is a simile. Can you see the difference?

In a metaphor two things which are normally unrelated are compared with each other – time and a river – time and flying.
A simile is a direct comparison often using the words like or as.

What do the following metaphors mean?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You are my life.</th>
<th>That man is a giant.</th>
<th>She is an angel.</th>
<th>He is such an airhead.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

What do the following similes mean?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>He eats like a pig.</th>
<th>She’s as busy as a bee.</th>
<th>My teacher is as wise as an owl.</th>
<th>I’m as fit as a fiddle.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Use a metaphor to describe someone who is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>quick (fast)</th>
<th>He is lightning.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>beautiful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>getting angry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>silly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use a simile to describe someone who is:

| very quiet | He is as quiet as a __________. |
| good at swimming | She __________ like a __________ . |
| very strong |                                |
| silly       |                                |
Personification - 1

**Personification** is when human qualities and characteristics are given to objects, ideas, animals and nature. Can you guess the names of the four sisters referred to in the poem below?

**Daughters of the Season**
Four sisters dancing,
Hand in hand.
They never weary,
Forever they glide.

*From: Daughters of the Season*
Wendy Ma, St Paul’s Convent School

**Read the poem and guess what a girl’s best friend is!**

**A Girl’s Best Friend!**

My best friend’s face is sweet
The kind you like to meet
I talk to her every day
So what do you think?
I tell her everything
She even has a ring
That changes every day
So what do you think?
My best friend loves to meet up
She tells all my secrets, but
She’s very close to me
So what do you think?
My boyfriend loves her too
But that doesn’t make me blue
This surely gives you a clue
So what do you think?
My best friend’s cute and small
But that’s not all
She’s shiny and pink
So what do you think?

Tina Engelbogen, NET, Yu Chun Keung Memorial College No.2

A girl’s best friend is _______________________. This is another example of **personification**.

**Tick the examples of personification below:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The weather has been kind today.</th>
<th>My computer refuses to work.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have a dog for a pet.</td>
<td>Darkness wrapped its arms around me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My computer is broken.</td>
<td>My bedroom door is closed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I really like watching fish swim in the sea.</td>
<td>Hong Kong, the city that never sleeps!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chocolate cake was saying, ‘Eat me!’</td>
<td>The microwave timer said dinner time!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Personification is when human qualities or characteristics are given to objects, ideas, animals and nature. Two examples of personification are: ‘the weather has been kind today’ and ‘my computer is my best friend’.

The following poem is also an illustration of personification as it gives human qualities and characteristics to the moon.

**Ode to the Moon**

When darkness falls  
And the sky is blacker than a crow’s feathers  
You decide to come dancing by  
You and the sky, together.

You brighten the sky  
With streaks of your radiant light  
You fascinate me  
With your milky colour, so smooth, so white.

You are a diamond amidst a puddle of oil  
Sparkling and looking so graceful, yet so small  
You are one’s most loyal helper  
Offering your light to us all.

I watch you through the night  
With excitement and admiring eyes  
And when the dawn arrives all too soon  
I witness your disappearance into the skies.

When the sun takes over your coveted position  
My excitement will slowly decrease  
Go quietly my friend, my moon –  
Go quietly in peace.

Alison Hung (King George V School)

When the poet wrote ‘You decide to come dancing by’, she was using personification as the moon doesn’t have the abilities to make decisions or go dancing.

Can you find three more examples in the poem where the poet has given human qualities or characteristics to the moon?

Do you think the poet enjoys daytime or night time best? 

Do you know another word that means the same as ‘dawn’? 

What type of position do you think a ‘coveted’ position is? 

This poet is obviously quite fascinated by the moon. What element of nature fascinates you the most? Why?
**Tone - Mood**

**Tone** reveals the writer’s **attitude** to the subject of the poem. In poetry, **tone** gives an emotional feel to the poem. Read the four poetry extracts below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seasons</th>
<th>The Wonders of the Seasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer is always hot and wet. You may go shopping with a hat. You may want to swim in the deep blue sea. But I would like a cup of tea. Lin Siu Cheong Alex, YCH Law Chan Chor Si Prim.Sch. (am)</td>
<td>Then comes the age of ice-cream, When sun shines and children beam. Bees buzz and cicadas hum, Butterflies dance and crickets come. Lam Cho Kiu, St Paul’s Co-educational College</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Seasons**

Hence, summer cooks the world, searing into its deepest depths, Hot, scorching, unforgiving oven, Silent nights, with only the sound of rain: pitter patter, Until autumn embraces summer, Summer withers and weeps.  
Peiwen Ma, King George V School

**Daughters of the Season**

Wild summer, She warms us all. Enfolding us, In the sunlight bright.  
Wendy Ma, St Paul’s Convent School

Which poet do you think is happiest during summer? ________________________________________
What makes you think this? ____________________________________________________________
Which poet do you think likes summer the least? ___________________________________________
What are the words she/he uses to express dislike? ________________________________________
Which poet has a similar attitude towards summer as your own? ____________________________
What are some words that you would use to express your own feelings about summer?

---

**Mood** is the **atmosphere** created by the poet’s choice of words. **Mood** and **tone** are very closely related. Sometimes mood can be created effectively by the poet’s decision not to use many words.

**Memory**

It’s difficult to Forget about yesterday. If I could, I would.  
Crystal Chan Pui Yin Diocesan Girls’ School

What is the mood of this poem? ____________________________________________________________

**Colour each of the above mood words with an appropriate colour.**
Literal/metaphorical meaning

Literal meaning is when words and expressions have meanings that are the same as their dictionary meaning. Metaphorical meaning is the result of using figurative language. This means a word or expression can have layers of meaning.

The statement ‘the weather is cold’ has literal meaning.
The statement ‘her cold welcome’ has metaphorical meaning.

Sometimes it is hard to assign a meaning to a metaphorical expression as in the statement:

When I first saw her my heart skipped a beat.

The above could indicate many emotions including fear, love, surprise, shock and desire.

It must also be remembered that even literal meanings can change over time. This can be illustrated by the word wicked which once only meant immoral or sinful but now increasingly has positive meanings.

Decide whether the following statements have literal or metaphorical meaning:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literal</th>
<th>Metaphorical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The business deal had a fishy smell.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The garbage smelt fishy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That animal is a tiger.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That man is a tiger.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I couldn’t digest anything the doctor told me.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She can’t digest any wheat products.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Poets use metaphors in poems as they can create strong imagery. The following four stanzas are taken from poems written by student poets from SKH Bishop Baker Secondary School. Read them and see what ‘images’ they create through the use of metaphor.

One Day
The moon is a big, round lamp
It gives out light
And leads the child
Not to get back home alone.
Chan Wing Yee Yvonne (2A)

Hong Kong Festival
New Year is a lovely, beautiful girl
Because we need to decorate her.
That day everywhere will be red
Because she likes red.
Chow Cho Wing (2C)

Christmas
Christmas is a romantic girl,
She likes to decorate her clothes with gifts.
Christmas is Santa Claus,
He likes to give me a surprise.
Chan Wai Man (2C)

Dreams
Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die,
Life is a broken-winged bird
That can never fly.
Wong Mei Ying (2C)
What do you think is the major theme of the poem?

- sailing overseas and travelling to many different countries is fun
- the possibility of loneliness after chasing your personal dreams
- the importance of living a full life
- trying to be the best person that you can

The first line of the poem, ‘I’m all for re-marking boundaries’, reveals something about the poet’s attitude. Which of the following statements do you think the poet would agree with?

- people should accept things just the way they are
- people should try to experience new and different things
- soccer players need to re-mark the football field after each game

What is the closest meaning for the third line of the poem, ‘For sailing far beyond the pale’?

- it’s fun sailing a boat a long way out to sea then around a bucket
- there should be at least one pail on every boat
- going further, experiencing more than what is normal or expected

‘Scale’ can have many meanings. What does ‘scale’ mean in the first line of the second stanza?

What does the second stanza say about the poet’s commitment to achieving the goals expressed in the first stanza?

In the last stanza, which of the following words would be a synonym for ‘trailed’?

- drew
- travelled
- followed
- loved
- trained
- saw

How does the poet’s attitude to life compare with your own?

Out on the Limb
I’m all for re-marking boundaries
And being the best that one can be
For sailing far beyond the pale
Across the uncharted sea.
And I’d scale unconquer’d mountains
Every sinew I would strain
Pant unto my dying breath
Shed the last drop in my vein.
But when I’ve slain my dragons
Who’ll carve on my headstone
He trailed a star that led afar
And died a life alone?

Carlton R. Pujadas
(NET, Tin Shui Wai Methodist College)
Have you ever had difficulty communicating with your father, your mother or other members of your family?

This poem illustrates how poetry can allow poets and readers to look at situations from more than one perspective.

Conversations between a Mother and a Daughter

**Mother:**
Every morning I watch
As you stomp out the front door
In your spaghetti-top and blue mascara.
Not a ‘goodbye’ slipping
Past those glossed lips.
I want to run after you
And say, “I love you, honey.
Even though he doesn’t.”
Yet, who will listen?

**Daughter:**
You sit there, reading *The Economist*
An untouched mug of coffee balancing
On the sofa.
Not a word from you
As I bang the door shut.
I want to turn back
And shout, “See ya mum!
I’ll miss ya!”
Yet, who will understand?

**Mother:**
Back then
We spent happy times together.
Barbecues, Barbies, bagels,
Even boring soap operas
Could keep us entertained the whole afternoon.
Where did those things all go?

**Daughter:**
Back home.
I sling my backpack on to the sofa.
Your cracked lips
Choke on a ‘hello’,
Your jet black eyes,
Cold pebbles
Urge me to reply.
I say, “Whatever”.

**Mother:**
I’m beginning to wonder:
Was that all my fault?
Was it my fault that Richard went away
And left two of us behind?
Is it my fault, that you’re
Not talking to me anymore?
*I gave you all that money could buy.*
Someday, *someday* you’ll understand.

**Daughter:**
I can’t bear this silence.
You listen to your Baroque, me my Green Day.
Hard beats banging against the slow music.
But not a word passes in between.
I push aside my Twelfth Night and pre-calculus,
Slowly step towards your room.
“Mum, can we talk?”

Fan Wing Sum Jennifer, St Paul’s Convent School
Tick the statements below which you believe are the major themes of the poem:

- Students should never wear make-up.
- Sometimes it is very difficult to express how we really feel to those we love.
- Families should watch more soap operas together.
- You should always say goodbye when you leave home.
- It can be difficult but it is important to try to communicate with family members.
- Listening to Green Day is very helpful when you are doing homework.

In the first stanza the mother watches her daughter ‘stomp’ out the front door. What sort of walking is ‘stomping’? _________________________________________________________

When the mother in the first stanza refers to a ‘he’ who could the ‘he’ be? __________________

Why did the daughter ‘bang the door shut’ in the second stanza? _______________________

When the daughter wishes she could say ‘See ya mum!’ what is her mother thinking? _______

___________________________________________________________________________

Why do you think the poet chose to have the mother say ‘you’ while the daughter says ‘ya’?
___________________________________________________________________________

In the third stanza the mother thinks of ‘back then’. What time is she thinking of? __________
___________________________________________________________________________

In the third stanza, the third line reads; ‘Barbecues, Barbies, bagels,’. What poetic device is the poet using here? __________________ Is this effective in this poem? ______________

In the fourth stanza, when the daughter arrives home, her mother chokes on a ‘hello’. Why do you think the mother choked on a ‘hello’? _________________________________________

In the fifth stanza the mother tries to think of the reason for her and her daughter’s poor communication. Which of the words in the boxes would best complete the sentence below:

*The mother felt __________ about the current situation.*

| surprised | worried | pleased | guilty | angry |

Why do you think that the poet chose to write the following line in *italics?*

*I gave you all that money could buy.*

___________________________________________________________________________

The word Baroque is used in the last stanza. What do you think Baroque is? ______________

Does the poem finish with a positive or negative tone? ________________________________

Is the technique of looking at a very complex issue from two different perspectives effective? Why?___________________________________________________________________________________
**Types of Poetry: Crossword**

**Across**

1. a humorous poem which has five lines (8)
2. a poem that tells you more about the name word (4)
3. certain letters in this poem form a special word or message (8)
4. a three-line poem of five, seven and five syllables (5)
5. a lyric poem of a serious nature (3)
6. ______ verse is written in unrhymed lines and usually in iambic pentameter (5)
7. a four-line poem in which lines two and four rhyme (8)
8. a poem written in the shape of an object (5)
9. a lyric poem of fourteen lines with a set rhyming pattern, often ending with a couplet (6)
10. a poem that expresses personal thoughts and feelings, often in the form of a song (5)

**Down**

2. a story poem about a hero (4)
3. a five-line poem in which the first and last lines are single words, often synonyms (8)
4. a sad poem about death (5)
5. a long poem which tells a story and often has a refrain (6)
6. a poem written in the shape of an object (5)
7. 8. a poem written in the shape of an object (5)
Poetic Devices: Crossword

Across
6 an imaginative comparison of two things to highlight certain qualities (8)
8 when two or more words end with the same sound (5)
9 ________ meaning is when the words mean the same as their ordinary dictionary meaning (7)
11 the feeling or atmosphere that is created by the writer’s choice of words (4)
12 repetition of beginning consonant sounds (12)
14 repetition of vowel sounds (9)
15 the style, opinion and attitude of the writer (4)

Down
1 an expression describing two things as being similar usually using like or as (6)
2 ________ meaning is the result of using figurative language – the words have meanings different from their ordinary dictionary meanings (12)
3 the recurring stress patterns in a poem (6)
4 two consecutive lines in a poem that rhyme (7)
5 when a word sounds like the noise of the thing or action that it is describing (12)
7 when human qualities and characteristics are given to objects, ideas, animals and nature (15)
10 repetition of the consonant sounds within words (10)
13 the pictures created in your mind by the use of figurative language (7)
Crossword solutions
Rhyme Pattern (Page 38):

comb, home, phone, alone  
gauge, cage, page, sage  
sign, mine, fine, combine  
serene, clean, spleen, mean  
dough, go, know, pillow  
hinge, binge, cringe, fringe

Couplet (Page 39):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>snake</th>
<th>steak</th>
<th>hair</th>
<th>son</th>
<th>nose</th>
<th>wear</th>
<th>loose</th>
<th>choose</th>
<th>surprised</th>
<th>speed</th>
<th>shoe</th>
<th>threw</th>
<th>star</th>
<th>are</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alliteration (Page 41):

bad boy ✔ naughty boy

Onomatopoeia (Page 42):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The sound of ............</th>
<th>onomatopoeia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A glass breaking on a hard floor</td>
<td>tinkle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A gun being fired</td>
<td>meow</td>
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<tr>
<td>The ring of a very small bell</td>
<td>smash</td>
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<td>A light switch being turned on</td>
<td>purr</td>
</tr>
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<td>bang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An unhappy cat</td>
<td>click</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Imagery: Metaphor, Simile (Page 43)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You are my life.</th>
<th>You are very, very important to me.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That man is a giant.</td>
<td>That man is a very, very large man.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She is an angel.</td>
<td>She is very well behaved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He is such an airhead.</td>
<td>He isn’t very intelligent. (He is dumb.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>He eats like a pig.</th>
<th>He is a very messy eater.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She’s as busy as a bee.</td>
<td>She is very, very busy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teacher is as wise as an owl.</td>
<td>My teacher knows a great deal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m as fit as a fiddle.</td>
<td>I am very fit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personification - 1 (Page 44)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer</strong></td>
<td><strong>Autumn</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The weather has been kind today.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a dog for a pet.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My computer is broken.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I really like watching fish swim in the sea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The chocolate cake was saying, ‘Eat me!’.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personification - 2 (Page 45)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Looking so graceful</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are one’s most loyal helper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering your light to us all</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literal/metaphorical meaning (Page 47)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Literal</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The business deal had a fishy smell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The garbage smelt fishy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That animal is a tiger.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That man is a tiger.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I couldn’t digest anything the doctor told me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She can’t digest any wheat products.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Poetry Appreciation (Page 48)

| sailing overseas and travelling to many different countries is fun |
| the possibility of loneliness after chasing your personal dreams | ✓ |
| the importance of living a full life |
| trying to be the best person that you can |
| people should accept things just the way they are |
| people should try to experience new and different things | ✓ |
| soccer players need to re-mark the football field after each game |
| it's fun sailing a boat a long way out to sea then around a bucket |
| there should be at least one pail on every boat |
| going further, experiencing more than what is normal or expected | ✓ |

Through ‘different eyes’ (Page 50)

| Students should never wear make-up. |
| Sometimes it is very difficult to express how we really feel to those we love. | ✓ |
| Families should watch more soap operas together. |
| You should always say goodbye when you leave home. |
| It can be difficult but it is important to try to communicate with family members. | ✓ |
| Listening to *Green Day* is very helpful when you are doing homework. |

**Stomping**: walking with very heavy steps usually because of anger

*The mother felt _____________ about the current situation.*

| worried | guilty |

**Baroque**: a style of European music that was written in the 18th century
I've written some poetry I don't understand myself.
Carl Sandburg

Poetry is the rhythmical creation of beauty in words.
Edgar Allan Poe

Poets utter great and wise things which they do not themselves understand.
Plato

Poets aren't very useful
Because they aren't consumeful or very produceful.
Ogden Nash

Poetry is when an emotion has found its thought and the thought has found words.
Robert Frost

Poets have been mysteriously silent on the subject of cheese.
G.K. Chesterton

Genuine poetry can communicate before it is understood.
T. S. Eliot

The only problem with Haiku is that you just get started and then
Roger McGough

A poet can survive everything but a misprint.
Oscar Wilde

Even when poetry has a meaning, as it usually has, it may be inadvisable to draw it out.... Perfect understanding will sometimes almost extinguish pleasure.
A.E. Housman
Poetry Websites

http://www.poetry4kids.com
For younger students.
Popular poet Kenn Nesbitt’s website. Lots of funny children’s poems, poetry lessons, discussion forums and a rhyming dictionary.

http://www.gigglepoetry.com
For younger students (very similar to the website above).
Lots of resources including Poetry Class, Poetry Theatre, Ask the Poet and How to Write Nursery Rhymes and Limericks.

http://www.poetryzone.co.uk
Lots of information including Poetry Gallery, Interviews, Poetry Reviews and a Teacher Zone. Has a great links page to other poetry websites.

http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/silverstein.htm
Shel Silverstein is a very well-known poet, author and song writer. This site is well worth a look.

http://www.childrenspoetrybookshelf.co.uk
An excellent site. Lots of fun things to do, the latest news about poetry books and a place to send student poems for publishing.

www.prose-n-poetry.com
Lots and lots of stories, poems and recipes. A dual website—one for younger readers/writers and another for older.

http://www.webenglishteacher.com/poetry.html
This section of the website has a poetry collection, lesson plans on poetry forms and figurative language and information about celebrated poets.

http://www.poets.org
A site maintained by the Academy of American Poets. Lots of useful information for teachers and higher-level students.

http://www.poetryresource.org
An Australian resource for students of poetry. Poets of all nationalities are included.

http://www.poemhunter.com
A poetry database/search engine containing more than 160 000 poems. A great way to find that poem that you can just about remember.

http://www.readwritethink.org
A website providing teachers with high-quality resources in reading and language arts education.