

ELA Enrichment Packet

Plouffe Academy

6th, 7th or 8th grade

Poetry

Poetry Unit Content and Language Objectives

By completing this unit you will be able to show that you can –

MAELA.RL.6.1 – Use evidence from a text or poem to support your analysis of it

MAELA.RL.6.6 - Identify and give evidence to support the point of view of the narrator.

MAELA.RL.6.10 - Read and understand a poem written at 6th grade level in English.

MAELA.L.7.5 - Demonstrate understanding of figurative language in a poem.

MAELA.RL.8.3 - Analyze how dialogue or actions in a poem reveal aspects of a character or situation.

MAELA.L.8.4.a - Use context to determine the meaning of a word or phrase.

MAELA.L.8.5.a - Interpret figures of speech and symbolic language in context.

Key Vocabulary

alliteration
assonance
assonance
hyperbole
internal rhyme
meter
metaphor
onomatopoeia
personification
rhyme
rhythm
simile
stanza

The Five Elements of Poetry

There are five key elements of poetry that you will review in this unit:

- 1) Figurative Language
- 2) Imagery
- 3) Voice
- 4) Ideas and Content
- 5) Word Choice

1) Figurative Language: Involves several ways to use words to create an image or emotion.

Alliteration: repeats the beginning consonant sounds in words

The **black birddog boldly began to bark.**
Five funny firemen found freckled fish.

Assonance: the repetition of two or more of the same vowel sounds in a word or the repetition of two or more of the same consonant sounds in a word

The **girl** started to **hurl** after going for a **whirl** on the merry-go-round.

Hyperbole: a greatly exaggerated statement that is obviously not true.

Her laugh was so obnoxious it made the windows in the room slam shut.

He ate a million hot dogs at the picnic.

Idiom: using words or phrases that could have more than one meaning.

A penny saved is a penny earned – Benjamin Franklin
It's a piece of cake

Metaphor: compares two different things saying the one is the other. A metaphor uses **is** instead of like or as

Her hair **is** a shimmering waterfall.

He is a giant!

Onomatopoeia: a word that sounds like the noise it describes

Snap your fingers, tap your toes, and buzz like a bee

Personification: describes something non-human with human qualities

The morning sun smiled down on the children.

The forest spoke to me.

Simile: compares using like or as

The engine purred **like** a contented cat.

She swims **like** a fish.

- 2) Imagery:** Good writers use imagery to create a picture or experience in a reader's mind. Poets engage a reader's senses of sight, smell, taste, touch and hearing by carefully choosing words that create an image.

I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud "Daffodils" by Walt Whitman

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

- 3) Voice:** Poems are meant to be shared and read aloud. They have a voice or sound to catch the listener's attention. They might use alliteration or repetition to create patterns and rhythm. They generate emotions that make the audience feel something.

Rhyme: a poem in which the ends of the lines have words that sound the same

The wind whipped the branches all **around**,
As the rain fell silently to the **ground**.

Internal Rhyme: when two or more words create a rhyme in the same line of a poem or verse

For the moon never **beams** without bringing me **dreams**
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never **rise** but I feel the bright **eyes**
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee - By Edgar Allan Poe

- 4) Ideas & Content:** Well written poems have a central idea or theme that the writer wants to communicate to the reader.

- 5) Word Choice:** Poems are usually short. Words and phrases are carefully chosen to create a picture or image in a person's mind.

Allusion: a reference that is made indirectly or implied using only a word or two

As the avalanche fell, Mark was swallowed up in the swirling snow like **Jonah**. He survived because he was located by the beeping of his GPS.

The reference to **Jonah** is the **allusion**. The reader sees Mark being swallowed by the snow as, Jonah was swallowed by the whale, in the story of Jonah and the Whale.

My Aunt Tilda is so tight with her money, that everyone in the family calls her **Scrooge**.

The reference to **Scrooge** is the **allusion**. The reference to Scrooge makes one think of someone who hoards their money like Scrooge in the Dickens' story A Christmas Carol.

Stanza: a group of lines forming the basic recurring metrical unit in a poem; a verse.

What is Poetry?

For centuries, poets, writers, and scholars have been trying to pin down a definition of this art form, but with little success or consensus. Wordsworth defined poetry as “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.” And Dylan Thomas said, “Poetry is what makes me laugh or cry or yawn, what makes my toenails twinkle, what makes me want to do this, that, or nothing.”

Poetry is important because it enriches, enhances, and elevates the written word. It develops understanding of how language can be used to influence, entertain, and motivate. Poetry often requires the upper level thinking skills of inference, and deductive reasoning, often by looking at what is said, as well as what has been left unsaid.

Types of Poetry

Acrostic: a poem developed by the letters of a word or name, which are used to begin the first word in each line of the poem

Example: H appy go lucky
 A lways helping others
 R eally a good baseball player
 O ver 250 batting average
 L ikes pizza with lots of cheese
 D oesn't like bullies

Lyric: paints a picture with words using literary devices. It often has a musical quality and expresses personal emotions or thoughts

Example: *The Night Has a Thousand Eyes* by Francis William Bourdillon
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJinK-IzSuc>

The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.
The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one.
Yet the light of a whole life dies,
When love is done.

Narrative: any poem that tells a story

Example: *Snowball* by Shel Silverstein. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJRgWwG8NFA>

I made myself a snowball
As perfect as could be.
I thought I'd keep it as a pet

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And let it sleep with me.
 I made it some pajamas
 And a pillow for its head.
 Then last night it ran away,
 But first it wet the bed.

Example: Oranges by Gary Soto

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptrICcPddcE>

The first time I walked With a girl, I was twelve, Cold, and weighted down With two oranges in my jacket. December. Frost cracking Beneath my steps, my breath Before me, then gone, As I walked toward Her house, the one whose Porch light burned yellow Night and day, in any weather. A dog barked at me, until She came out pulling At her gloves, face bright With rouge. I smiled, Touched her shoulder, and led Her down the street, across A used car lot and a line Of newly planted trees, Until we were breathing Before a drugstore. We Entered, the tiny bell Bringing a sales lady Down a narrow aisle of goods. I turned to the candies Tiered like bleachers, And asked what she wanted – Light in her eyes, a smile Starting at the corners	5 10 15 20 25	Of her mouth. I fingered A nickel in my pocket, And when she lifted a chocolate That cost a dime, I didn't say anything. I took the nickel from My pocket, then an orange, And set them quietly on The counter. When I looked up, The lady's eyes met mine, And held them, knowing Very well what it was all About. Outside, A few cars hissing past, Fog hanging like old Coats between the trees. I took my girl's hand In mine for two blocks, Then released it to let Her unwrap the chocolate. I peeled my orange That was so bright against The gray of December That, from some distance, Someone might have thought I was making a fire in my hands.	30 35 40 45 50 55
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Ballad: a type of **Narrative** poem, sometimes put to music, that tells a story in a number of short regular stanzas, often with a refrain

Example: Wild Horses

up in the high country the wild horses run free
they've done so for nigh on a century
not a saddle upon their backs
enabling them to gallop unchecked around its tract
in the Guy Fawkes National Park there is a harass of them
trotting through its blue hued wends
their days are numbered in the park
park authorities want to end their spirited lark
up in the high country the wild horses run free

Elegy: a poem about death or dying

Elegía: un poema sobre la muerte o la muerte.

Example: Elegy on His Cat by Joachim Du Bellay

I have not lost my rings, my purse,
My gold, my gems-my loss is worse,
One that the stoutest heart must move.
My pet, my joy, my little love,
My tiny kitten, my Belaud,
I lost, alas, three days ago.

Sonnet: a 14-line poem with a specific rhyme scheme, always ending with a couplet

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FnMDj1K0gks>

Example: Sonnet 18 by William Shakespeare

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 dimmed;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimmed;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest,
Nor shall death brag thou wanderest in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest.
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

Limerick: a five- line poem with a definite rhyme scheme and rhythm. The first, second, and fifth lines rhyme, as do the third and fourth. The meter, or rhythms are the same for the first, second, and fifth lines, while the third and fourth are shorter.

Example: There once was a man from Peru,
Who dreamed of eating his shoe,
He awoke with a fright,
In the middle of the night,
And found that his dream had come true! by Laura Black

Watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w9L2HQ7II04> for another example.

Haiku: a Japanese poem consisting of three unrhymed lines of five, seven, and five syllables that is about some aspect of nature.

Examples: Blowing winter winds
Cold and brittle, swirling high
Freezing trees and air

Lush pretty blossoms
Their sent perfumes the summer
Pink and blue flowers

Free Verse: a poem that does not follow a specific rhythm or rhyme scheme

Example: *I Dream'd in a Dream* by Walt Whitman <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=shRfDCfQDgs>
I DREAM'D in a dream I saw a city invincible to the attacks of the
whole of the rest of the earth,
I dream'd that was the new city of Friends,
Nothing was greater there than the quality of robust love, it led the rest,
It was seen every hour in the actions of the men of that city,
And in all their looks and words.

What is Rhyme Scheme?

Rhyme scheme is the arrangement of rhymes in a poem or stanza. The rhyme scheme is determined by the same letter assigned to the rhyming words at the end of each line. For example, the limerick has the unwavering rhyme scheme of a a b b a. Notice the rhyme schemes below:

Alligator Pie By Dennis Lee <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3eypsqkcUY>

Alligator pie, Alligator pie, **a**
If I don't get some, I think I'm gonna die. **a**
Give away the green grass, give away the sky, **a**
But don't give away my alligator pie. **a**

Alligator stew, alligator stew, **b**
If I don't get some I don't know what I'll do. **b**
Give away my furry hat, give away my shoe, **b**
But don't give away my alligator stew. **b**

Alligator soup, alligator soup, **c**
If I don't get some I think I'm gonna droop. **c**
Give away my hockey-stick, give away my hoop, **c**
But don't give away my alligator soup. **c**

Note: Be sure to look at the hyperbole in line 2, 'I think I'm gonna die'.

The Year's At The Spring by Robert Browning <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p2RyL8VRj2Y>

The year's at the spring **a**
And the day's at the mourn; **b**
Morning's at seven; **c**
The hillside's dew-pearled; **d**
The lark's on the wing; **a**
The snail's on the thorn: **b**
God's in his heaven – **c**
All's right with the world! **d**

What is Rhythm in Poetry

Rhythm can be described as the **beat and pace** of a poem. Rhythm is created by the pattern of **stressed and unstressed syllables** in a line or verse. Rhythm can help to strengthen the meaning of words and ideas in a poem. When we speak in ordinary conversation, we pronounce different parts of words, or syllables, separately. For example:

Table has two beats, or syllables = **ta** / ble

Chair has only one syllable = **chair**

Some syllables seem to have a long or short sound when they are pronounced. For example, 'table'. The first part of the word is emphasized when we say it **ta** / ble. The second part of the word sounds shorter.

We can call this different syllable emphasis **stressed** or **unstressed**. In the word 'banana', for example, the central syllable is longer, or stressed, when you say it naturally – ba / **na** /na. Try saying it out loud to hear where the natural emphasis falls.

Poets make use of these natural stresses in language in order to create rhythm in poetry. It can be helpful to think of rhythm in poetry as being like a beat in music.

Watch this video to see how you can use clapping to help you hear the rhythm of a poem
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psUPYR235O8>

Syllable and Stress Practice

What Is Word Stress?

In English, the individual sounds of a word (i.e. syllables) aren't pronounced with the same weight. **One syllable receives more emphasis than the others.** A syllable is a unit of pronunciation that has one vowel sound. A word might have one syllable (like "an" or "can") or more, such as "po/lice" (two syllables), "com/pa/ny" (three syllables), "ne/ce/ssa/ry" (four syllables), etc.

Syllables aren't the same as letters, they are sounds made by groups of letters. For example, "scratch" has seven letters but one syllable, while "umami" has five letters but three syllables (um/am/i). All syllables have a single vowel sound. To hear the pronunciation of most English words you can visit <https://forvo.com/>

English has rules about stress and syllables. Here are a few below:

1. Nouns and adjectives with two syllables - When a noun (a word referring to a person, thing, place or abstract quality) or an adjective (a word that gives information about a noun) has two syllables, the stress is usually on the first syllable. There are a few exceptions.
table = **ta**/ble scissors = **sci**/ssors
pretty = **pre**/tty clever = **cle**/ver
2. Verbs and prepositions with two syllables - When a verb (a word referring to an action, event or state of being) or a preposition (a word that comes before a noun, pronoun or the "-ing" form of a verb, and shows its relation to another word or part of the sentence) has two syllables, the stress is usually on the second syllable.
present = pre/ **sent** export = ex/ **port**
aside = a/**side** between = be/**tween**
3. Three syllable words ending in "er" and "ly" - Words that have three syllables and end in "-er" or "-ly" often have a stress on the first syllable.
orderly = **or**/der/ly quietly = **qui**/et/ly
manager = **ma**/na/ger
4. Words ending in "ic," "sion" and "tion" - When a word ends in "ic," "sion" or "tion," the stress is usually on the second-to-last syllable. You count syllables backwards and put a stress on the second one from the end.
creation = cre/ **a**/tion commission = com/**mi**/ssion
photographic = pho/to/**gra**/phic
5. Words ending in "cy," "ty," "phy," "gy" and "al" - When a word ends in "cy," "ty," "phy," "gy" and "al," the stress is often on the third to last syllable. Similarly, you count syllables backwards and put a stress on the third one from the end.
democracy = de/**mo**/cra/cy photography = pho/**to**/gra/phy
logical = **lo**/gi/cal psychology = psy/**cho**/lo/gy

Practice

Directions: Let's practice recognizing syllables and stresses in English words. **Break each of the words below into syllables. Circle the syllable that should be stressed.**

alliteration

assonance

clap (verb)

comparing

exaggerate (verb)

meter

personification

poem

rhyme

rhythm

simile

stanza

thinking

writing

Pattern Poetry Practice

Scoring Guide for Assessing a Pattern Poem – use for your poems

Heading: title of poem, author, and date 1 – 4pts	student	instructor
4 – formatted, spelled, capitalized, punctuated correctly		
3 – mostly formatted, spelled, capitalized and punctuated correctly		
2 – some correct formatting, spelling, capitalizing, and punctuating done correctly		
1 – very little or no formatting, spelling, capitalization or punctuation		
Is poem completed 1 – 4pts	student	instructor
4 – poem is complete		
3 – mostly completed		
2 – at least half of the poem is complete		
1 – very little if any poem written		
Poem shows good use of vocabulary and is descriptive 1 – 4pts	student	instructor
4 – excellent use of vocabulary and very descriptive		
3 – descriptive but could have used better vocabulary		
2 – somewhat descriptive some use of vocabulary		
1 – not descriptive and used common words		
Illustrations show the content of the poem 1 – 4pts	student	instructor
4 – excellently illustrates the content of poem		
3 – Does a good job of illustrating contents of poem		
2 – some evidence of illustrations according to content of poem		
1 – very little or no evidence of illustrations and not showing the content of the poem		
Poem is legibly written, easy to read, and neat 1 – 4pts	student	instructor
4 - excellent presentation of the poem, easy to read very neat		
3 – good presentation, mostly easy to read and neat		
2 – somewhat difficult to read, could be neater		
1 – difficult to read and not neat		
Points: 20 – 16 = A 15 – 11 = B 14 – 10 = C 9 – 5 = D 4 – 0 = F		
	Student points 20 – 0	
	Instructor's points 20 – 0	
	Final Grade	
Comments:		

Acrostic Poem

An acrostic poem is a poem that uses the writer's name or the letters of a key word to describe interesting things about them.

Two examples for the name MARY:

M usical

A lways on time

R ed hair

Y oung

M y favorite thing to do is go to the mall

A nd meet my friends for a soda

R arely in a bad mood

Y et my brother gets on my nerves

INSTRUCTIONS: On the next page, write an Acrostic poem using your name. You may use your first name or your whole name. When you finish you may illustrate your poem.

STEPS FOR WRITING THE ACROSTIC POEM:

1. Brainstorm things about yourself that you would like to put in your poem
2. Look at the scoring guide so you know what the expectations are.
3. Write your name vertically on a sheet of paper and write your poem
4. Review your poem for spelling, grammar and vocabulary errors.
5. Write your final poem as neatly as possible
6. Illustrate your poem
7. Self-evaluate your poem on the scoring guide and save both to turn in.

Acrostic Poem
Write your own!

Letter

Sentence

**** Extension**** Find an example of an acrostic poem written by someone else. Copy it on and explain what you learned about the person or word it describes. **

Couplet Poem

A **couplet** consists of two rhyming lines that have the same meter to form a unit alone or as part of a poem. A poem written using couplets can be about any subject and any length. Shakespeare was famous for writing in couplets and ended Sonnet #18 in a couplet that was used earlier in this unit as an example of a sonnet.

Examples of couplet poems:

Sisters

My sister really is no **fun**,
She always has me on the **run**.

I try to stop and talk to **her**,
It fruitless, this I know for **sure**.

My Kitten

I have a kitten who gently **purrs**,
My friend wishes it were **hers**.

Its fur is golden, its eyes are **blue**,
Its so tiny it fits in my **shoe**.

INSTRUCTIONS: Write a poem consisting only of couplets. You may have as many couplets in your poem as you like. To better understand the couplet, look for examples song lyrics and poems you might know in your home language.

STEPS FOR WRITING THE COUPLET POEM:

1. Read several couplet poems
2. Brainstorm topics to write your poem on
3. Look at the scoring guide so you know what the expectations are and how it will be assessed
4. Begin writing your couplets. You must have at least two couplets in your poem.
Four or more would be best.
5. Review your poem for spelling, grammar and vocabulary errors.
6. Write your final couplet as neatly as possible
7. Illustrate your couplet
8. Self-evaluate your poem on the scoring guide and save both to turn in.

Couplet Poem Assignment

Name: _____

Title: _____

Score: _____

Noun Poem

This pattern poem is written around a noun. It uses adjectives to describe the noun and is a fun way to practice nouns and adjectives.

CHIPS

Chips,	Spicy, tasty, Frito chips,
Chips,	Mouth burning pepper chips,
Chips	Corn chips too.
Potato chips,	Ridged chips,
Dorito chips,	Kids chips,
Warm, crispy, restaurant chips,	Don't forget computer chips.
Round, salty, pretzel chips,	Last of all,
Those are just a few.	Best of all,
Scooping chips,	I like chocolate chips!
Dipping chips,	

STEPS FOR WRITING THE NOUN POEM:

1. Read the example noun poem and consider the pattern of the poem, the types of adjectives, and the little twist at the end.
2. Brainstorm interesting nouns and adjectives for your poem and pick your favorites.
3. Study the blank noun poem pattern.
4. Look at the scoring guide to learn the expectations for this assignment.
5. Write your poem using the pattern.
6. Revise your draft checking grammar, spelling and vocabulary.
7. Correct your first draft.
8. Write and illustrate your final noun poem.
9. Self-evaluate your poem on the scoring guide and save both to turn in.

Noun Poem Practice

1. (noun) _____
2. (noun) _____
3. (noun) _____
4. (adjective) _____ (noun) _____
5. (adjective) _____ (noun) _____
6. (adj) _____ , (adj) _____ , (adj) _____ (noun) _____
7. (adj) _____ , (adj) _____ , (adj) _____ (noun) _____
8. Those are just a few.
9. (adj) _____ (noun) _____
10. (adj) _____ , (adj) _____ , (adj) _____ (noun) _____
11. (adj) _____ , (adj) _____ , (adj) _____ (noun) _____
12. (adj) _____ (noun) _____ too.
13. (adj) _____ (noun) _____
14. Don't forget (adj) _____ (noun) _____
15. Last of all, best of all,
16. I like (adj) _____ (noun) _____

** Copy over and illustrate your poem on the next sheet without noting adjectives and nouns **

Noun Poem Assignment

Letter Poem

A Letter Poem - is developed around a letter of the alphabet. The letter is then described alliteratively. This is a good way to practice vocabulary, you should use a dictionary or thesaurus to write one of these poems.

STEPS FOR WRITING THE LETTER POEM

1. Read the example poem titled "M" and notice how almost all of the words begin the same.
2. Brainstorm letters that have some meaning or significance then choose your favorite one
3. Look at the scoring guide to learn the expectations for this assignment
4. Write the first draft of your poem – make it at least 10 lines long
5. Revise your draft paying attention to grammar, spelling and vocabulary
6. Write and illustrate your final poem
7. Illustrate your poem
8. Self-evaluate your poem on the scoring guide and save both to turn in.

"M"

"M" means manhood to me
And "M" is much joy
"M" is manners
A major desire
A magical marriage
Barely managing
"M" is magnified emotion
A meaningful life
A merry attitude

"M" is massive sympathy
A merciful society
A monument to brotherhood
But mainly "M" means my mom Melody
...
The main reason I will someday become a Man

Letter Poem Assignment

Name: _____ Score: _____

Title: _____ Letter: _____

Figurative Language

Review the following key vocabulary on pages 5-6:

simile

metaphor

onomatopoeia

hyperbole

alliteration

personification

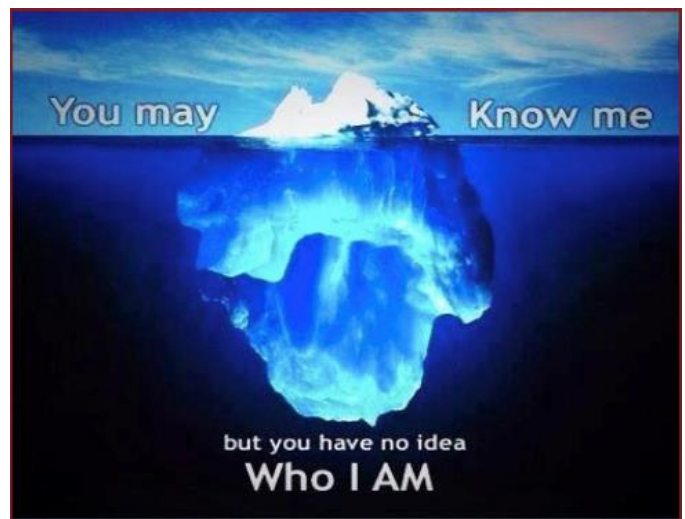
analogy

imagery

Watch this video on Flocabulary to help you remember them:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fvj3IZTPKE>

We use *figurative language* all of the time. Figurative language uses words and phrases to create an image in a reader's mind. For example, we could compare you (or any student) to an iceberg. What we see on the outside is how you look, behave, what language you speak, where you are from, the "surface" of who you are. Every day we make assumptions about people based on that small percentage of what we see or hear about them. But who you really are.....that is the massive part of the iceberg that other people cannot see. What you feel, think, want, hope, dream – it is all the giant part of the iceberg hidden under the ocean. We don't know about it unless you share and communicate this information. I just used a form of figurative speech (metaphor – you as an iceberg) to show how figurative language can help communicate ideas and feelings.



Watch this silly video to help you remember these ideas

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=ufPVIQ46z3k

Let's look at "Harlem," by Langston Hughes, who asks what happens to a dream deferred? (Deferred means to postpone or put off to a later time). It considers how people who have high hopes and dreams react when their dreams don't come true.

Harlem by Langston Hughes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79YjXKYeWck>

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun? Or fester like a sore - And then run? Does it stink like rotten meat? Or crust and sugar over -	like a syrupy sweet? Maybe it just sags like a heavy load. <i>Or does it explode?</i>
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1. Underline the five **similes** in the poem - explain what one of them means:
2. The last line is a metaphor – for what?
3. Can you find an example of alliteration?
4. Can you find a hyperbole?
5. Do you think this is a positive, happy poem? Why or why not? Give examples from the poem to support your ideas.

This poem uses a combination of **similes** and a metaphor to describe the loss of hope. In each **simile**, a deferred dream is compared to something unpleasant or with a negative connotation. The **similes** seem to represent individually negative aspects of a lost dream: the withering of the grape to a raisin instead of becoming a rich wine; the uncared-for sore, an open wound now infected and oozing; the butchered meat fetid and putrefying; the candy, left out, abandoned, hardening into an inedible, oversweet, unshapely mass; the body bending, unfree, under a burden. None of these is pleasant and some of them are quite dangerous, with the final line using a metaphor to imply a riot or violent clash.

Let's look at a happier poem – When Daddy Fell into the Pond by Alfred Noyes. This is a lyrical poem. It is focused on creating a mood (silly, happy) rather than telling a story.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NPpA-xfnSMU>

Everyone grumbled. The sky was grey.
We had nothing to do and nothing to say.
We were nearing the end of a dismal day.
And then there seemed to be nothing beyond,
Then
Daddy fell into the pond!

And everyone's face grew merry and bright,
And Timothy danced for sheer delight.
"Give me the camera, quick, oh quick!
He's crawling out of the duckweed!" Click!
Then the gardener suddenly slapped his knee,
And doubled up, shaking silently,
And the ducks all quacked as if they were daft,
And it sounded as if the old drake laughed.
Oh, there wasn't a thing that didn't respond
When
Daddy Fell into the pond!

1. Using the letters A and B, write the rhyme scheme at the end of each line.
2. Can you find two examples of onomatopoeia?
3. Can you find an example of personification?
4. Is there any hyperbole? Give an example.
5. Can you find two examples of alliteration?

Poetry Analysis

Let's take a look at a poem by Francisco X. Alarcón, an award-winning poet who wrote for both children and adults. Born in Los Angeles, California, he considered himself "bi-national," having spent time as a child in both Mexico and the United States. This poem is called Las Canciones de Mi Abuela / My Grandma's Songs. Read the poem out loud – first in English and then in Spanish. Underline the words that are interesting or important to you.

Las canciones de mi abuela

compartian
el ritmo
de la lavadora

consolaban
las sillas
patas arriba

alegraban
los retratos colgados
de la familia

arrullaban
las sabanas
en el tendedero

les daban sabor
a los frijoles
de olla

las canciones
que cantaba
mi abuela

eran capaces
de hacer salir
a las estrellas

convertir
a mi abuela
en una joven

que de nuevo
iba por agua
al rio

y hacerla
reir y llorar
a la vez

My Grandma's Songs

would follow
the beat of
the washing machine

consoling
the chairs placed
upside down

delighting
the family portraits
on the walls

putting to sleep
the sheets
on the clothesline

giving flavor
to the boiling pot
of beans

the songs
my grandma
used to sing

could make
the stars
come out

could turn
my grandma
into a young girl

going back
into the river
for water

and make her
laugh and cry
at the same time

1. Who is the poem about? What image does Alacrón create of her?
2. Is this a happy poem or a sad poem? How do you know?
3. Why do you think his lines so short, without punctuation?
4. This poem uses different senses to create an experience – describe lines that use
Sight -

Hear -

Smell -

Taste -
5. The poem does not make reference to the sense of touch. What could he have included to do so?

Watch Alarcón talk about writing poetry as a bilingual author
<https://www.colorincolorado.org/video/poet-francisco-alarc%C3%B3n>

Here is another poem about his grandma.

My Grandma is an Angel by Francisco X. Alarcón

Mi abuela es una angel por Francisco X. Alarcón

I learned
Spanish
from my grandma

Mexico's mountains
deserts
ocean

el español
lo aprendí
de mi abuela

la montaña
el desierto
el mar de México

mijito
don't cry
she'd tell me

in her eyes
I'd see them
in her braids

mijito
no llores
me decia

en sus ojos
yo los veía
en sus trenzas

on the mornings
my parents
would leave

I'd touch them
in her voice
smell them

en las mañanas
cuando salían
mis padres

yo los tocaba
con su voz
yo los olía

to work
at the fish
canneries

one day
I was told:
she went far away

a trabajar
en las canerías
de pescado

un día
me dijeron:
se fue muy lejos

my grandma
would chat
with chairs

but still
I feel her
with me

mi abuela
platicaba
con las sillas

pero yo aún
la siento
conmigo

sing them
old
songs

whispering
in my ear
mijito

les cantaba
canciones
antiguas

diciéndome
quedito al oído
mijito

dance
waltzes with them
in the kitchen

les bailaba
valeses en
la cocina

when she'd say
niño barrigón
she'd laugh

cuando decía
niño barrigón
se reía

with my grandma
I learned
to count clouds

con mi abuela
aprendí
a contar nubes

to recognize
mint leaves
in flowerpots

a reconocer
en las macetas
la yerbabuena

my grandma
wore moons
on her dress

mi abuela
llevaba lunas
en el vestido

If you'd like to hear Francisco X. Alarcón read this poem, go to this link and fast forward to 47:25
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngYK4A-jMBY>

1. Is this poem similar to the first one? How? Why would he make two poems in a similar style?
2. How does he feel about his grandmother? How do you know?
3. Why does he compare her to an angel? Where did she go? How do you know?
4. What do you think the last two stanzas of the poem mean?
5. Alarcón writes in free verse, meaning that his poems do not rhyme, but they definitely have a specific rhythm. What can you say about the rhythm of this poem?

Special Person Poem

Think of a special person in your life. Write down some ideas you have about the person –

Sight – what do you see with him/her?

Hear – how does he/she talk or sound?

Touch – how does he/she feel?

Smell – is there a special scent or smell you associate with this person?

Taste – is there a special taste you associate with this person?

Write a poem about him/her that will help your reader know this person and how special he/she is to you.

You decide on the number of lines and on the specific form of the stanzas in your poem.

Instead of writing something like this:

I like how my grandmother looks.

I like how my grandmother sounds.

I like how my grandmother's hands feel.

You can make your poems much more interesting by comparing one of the sounds or sights or feelings to something else. For example: My grandma's hands are soft as silk when they caress me.

Use comparisons in your poem. While writing your poem take another look at the things you see, hear, feel, smell, and taste. Then try to find more interesting ways to describe those things.

Special Person Poem