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| **Poetry Term** | **Definition** | **Example** |
| **Alliteration** | When several words that begin with the same sound are next to each other or close together, it is called *alliteration*. In this example, the words *bubble, bays,* and *babble* create alliteration. The *b* sound in the middle of *bubble, babble*,and *pebbles* also adds to the alliterative effect. Tennyson has used alliteration here to create water-like sounds to strengthen his images of the brook. | I bubble into eddying bays,  I babble on the pebbles.  ***From “The Brook” by Alfred Lord Tennyson*** |
| **Capitalization and Punctuation** | The rules for using *capitalization* and *punctuation* marks are not always strictly followed in poetry. Some poets choose not to use capital letters or punctuation at all, as in the following example. | so much depends  upon  a red wheel  barrow  glazed with rain  water  beside the white  chickens  ***“The Red Wheelbarrow” by William Carlos Williams*** |
| **Contrast** | When two things are compared, the writer points out differences between them. Often, noticing the *contrast*, or difference, between two things helps readers ‘see’ what the poet is trying to show them. In this example, the poet contrasts a response to good and evil. | For the heart of a friend,  open up the wall;  For poison and daggers,  close up the wall;  ***From “The Wall” by Nicolás Guillén*** |
| **Couplet** | When two lines in a poem rhyme, they are called a *couplet*. (Notice that the term includes the word *couple* meaning ‘two’). This example has two couplets. | In Flanders Fields the poppies blow  Between the crosses, row on row  That mark our place; and in the sky  The larks, still bravely singing, fly  ***From “In Flanders Fields” by John McCrae*** |
| **Enjambment** | When a thought stops at the end of a line in a poem, we say the line has an *end stop*. When the thought continues from one line into the next, we call it *enjambment*. That’s probably why lines with enjambement are also called *run-on* lines. In this example, the first line has an end stop and the second has an enjambement. | I became the words I ate in you.  For better or worse  the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree.  ***From “Seeds” by Javaka Steptoe*** |
| **Invented Words** | *Invented words* are made up by the poet. You can usually guess what they mean by noting how they fit with the other words in the poem. What might *runcible* mean in this example? | He has many friends, laymen and clerical,  Old Foss is the name of his cat;  His body is perfectly spherical,  He weareth a runcible hat.  ***From “How Pleasant to Know Mr. Lear” by Edward Lear*** |
| **Metaphor** | A *metaphor* compares two things by presenting them as being almost identical. For example, a metaphor that compares snow to a white blanket would read: *This snow is a white blanket*. In this example, a farmer’s backbone is compared to iron and earth. | His backbone is forged  of African iron  and red George clay.  ***From “The Farmer” by Carole Boston Weatherford*** |
| **Onomatopoeia** | When a word sounds like the noise or sound that it stands for, it is called *onomatopoeia*. *Buzz* and *sizzle* are examples of onomatopoeia. In this example, the buzz of a bee is exaggerated to emphasize the onomatopoeia. | Just then a bee flew close to their rail: -  “Buzzzzzzzzzz zzzzzzzz zzzzzzzz ZZZZZZZ.”  ***From “Two Old Crows” by Vachel Lindsay*** |
| **Personification** | When a writer describes something that is not human as having qualities or capabilities that are human, it is called *personification*. In this example, the poet describes trees as if they have the human capacity to make preparations, have wisdom stand, and sleep. | Thus having prepared their buds  against a sure winter  the wise trees  stand sleeping in the cold.  ***From “Winter Trees” by William Carlos Williams*** |
| **Repetition** | When a poet uses the same word or words more than once in a line or poem, it is called *repetition*. Repetition can be used to emphasize a word or an idea in a poem. Repetition can also be used to create special sounds or rhythms in a poem. In this example, the repeating phrase “pile them high” echoes the opening words of the poem. It is used to emphasize the image of the number of men who die in wars. | Pile the bodies high at Austerlitz and Waterloo  Shovel them under and let me work –  I am the grass; I cover all.  And pile them high at Gettysburg.  And pile hem high at Ypres and Verdun.  ***From “Grass” by Carl Sandburg*** |
| **Simile** | A *simile* compares one thing to another by using the word *like* or *as*. There are four similes in this example | Youth like summer morn,  Age like winter weather;  Youth like summer brave,  Age like winter bare.  ***From “Youth, I Do Adore Thee!” by William Shakespeare*** |
| **Stanza** | A *stanza* is a group of lines in a poem. Usually, the lines in a stanza are related to each other in the same way the sentences of a paragraph ‘go together’. | Wayfarer, your footprints are  the pathway and nothing else;  wayfarer, there is no path,  the path is made as you walk.  As you walk the path is made  and when you gaze behind  you see the path where  you’ll never walk again.  ***From “Wayfarer, There is No Path” by Antonio Machado*** |
| **Symbol** | A *symbol* is a person, a place, an object, or an action that stands for something besides itself. A flag, for example, can symbolize a state or country. In this example, the rose and the carnation are symbols of goodness and peace. The colonol’s saber is a symbol of aggression and warfare. | “Knock, knock!”  “Who’s there?”  “A rose and a carnation…”  “Open up the wall!”  “Knock! Knock!”  “Who’s there?”  “The colonol’s saber…”  “Close up the wall!”  ***From “The Wall” by Nicolás Guillén*** |

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