

# Poetry: Patterns & Parts

We'll start with the *obvious*: the **title of a poem**. Many titles can help us **understand the topic or feeling(s)** to be expressed in a poem. Some titles can have **multiple meanings** or be **ironic** (saying *one thing* but meaning something *entirely different*). Many poems have *no titles*!

If **two or more lines repeat** at the beginning, that is called **anaphora**. Words *and* sounds can repeat through a poem.

Notice how each poem's **words** are often **arranged in lines**, and how those lines can be grouped together. Each group of lines is called a **stanza**.

A two-line stanza is often called a couplet. A 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8-line stanza is respectively called a **tercet**, **quatrain**, **quintet** (or **cinquain** or **quintain**), **sestet**, **septet**, or **octet**.

Many poems have **regular rhythms** (known as **meter**) and **rhyme** at regular points *within each stanza* – a **rhyme scheme**. Many poets do *not* use meter or rhyme.

Poems often have **imagery** – *verbal pictures*, like the **forest** and the **roads** in this poem. Such images can be **symbols** (*symbolic*) or **metaphors** (*metaphorical*), representing and saying *more than what they might seem to suggest* at first.

## The Road Not Taken

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
**And** sorry I could not travel both  
**And** be one traveler, long I stood  
**And** looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
**Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –**  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

*poem by Robert Frost*

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's **eyes**,  
I all alone beweep my outcast **state**  
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless **cries**  
And look upon myself and curse my **fate**,  
Wishing me like to one more rich in **hope**,  
Featured like him, like him with friends **possess'd**,  
Desiring this man's art and that man's **scope**,  
With what I most enjoy contented **least**;  
Yet in these thoughts myself almost **despising**,  
Haply I think on thee, and then my **state**,  
Like to the lark at break of day **arising**  
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's **gate**;  
For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth **brings**  
That then I scorn to change my state with **kings**.

*Sonnet 29 by William Shakespeare*

This kind of poem is called a **sonnet**, one of the most popular **poetic forms** over the *last few centuries*!

Sonnets often have **14 lines** written in **iambic pentameter** (5 *unstressed / stressed syllables* a line).

**Rhyming** in this poem happens nearly *every other line* (see the **words in bold**). The **rhyme scheme** for this poem can be written as **ABAB CDCD EFEF GG**.

The **last two rhyming lines** in this kind of sonnet are known as a "**heroic couplet**."

This is **haiku**, one of the *oldest yet most popular* poetic forms from Japan. Haiku are brief yet *very meaningful*!

Haiku poems traditionally have **3 lines** (5, 7, and 5 **syllables** respectively per line). Haiku are often about **nature** and can contain a **kigo** (words depicting a **season**, like summer).

An old silent pond...  
A frog jumps into the pond,  
*splash!* Silence again.

*haiku by Matsuo Basho*