

Poetic Devices

The Sounds of Poetry

Onomatopoeia

When a word's pronunciation imitates its sound.

Examples

Buzz

Hiss

Beep

Fizz

Clink

Vroom

Woof

Boom

Zip

Repetition

Repeating a word or words for effect.

Example

Nobody

No, nobody

Can make it out here alone.

Alone, all alone

Nobody, but nobody

Can make it out here alone.

Rhythm

When words are arranged in such a way that they make a pattern or beat.

Example

There once was a girl from Chicago
Who dyed her hair pink in the bathtub
I'm making a pizza the size of the sun.

Hint: hum the words instead of saying them.

Rhyme

When words have the same end sound.

Happens at the beginning, end, or middle of lines.

Examples

Where

Fair

Air

Bear

Glare

Alliteration

When the first sounds in words repeat.

Example

Peter Piper picked a pickled pepper.

We lurk late. We shoot straight.

Consonance

When **consonants** repeat in the middle or end of words.

Vowels: *a, e, i, o, u*, and sometimes *y*.

Consonants: all other letters.

Examples

Ma**mm**als na**mm**ed Sa**mm** are cla**mm**y.

Cur**se**, ble**ss** me now! With fier**ce** tear**s** I prey.

Practice Quiz

I'll put some lines of poetry on the board.
Write down which techniques are used:

*Alliteration, consonance, rhythm, rhyme,
repetition and onomatopoeia.*

Some poems use more than one technique.

1

**The cuckoo in our cuckoo clock
was wedded to an octopus.
She laid a single wooden egg
and hatched a cuckoocloctopus.**

2

**They are building a house
half a block down
and I sit up here
with the shades down
listening to the sounds,
the hammers pounding in nails,
thack thack thack thack,
and then I hear birds,
and thack thack thack,**

3

very little love is not so bad

or very little life

what counts

is waiting on walls

I was born for this

I was born to hustle roses down the

avenues of the dead.

4

The whiskey on your breath
Could make a small boy dizzy;
But I hung on like death:
Such waltzing was not easy.

5

Homework! Oh, homework!
I hate you! You stink!
I wish I could wash you
away in the sink.

Answers

1. Repetition, rhythm, rhyme, consonance, and light alliteration.
2. Onomatopoeia, consonance, repetition
3. Alliteration, repetition
4. Rhythm, rhyme, light alliteration
5. Repetition, rhyme, rhythm