

Nor in hope the world can show
A fitter love for me;
But since that I
Must die at last, 'tis best
To use myself in jest,
Thus by feigned deaths to die.

John Donne (1572-1631)

I went to the Garden of Love,
And saw what I never had seen:
A Chapel was built in the midst,
Where I used to play on the green.

William Blake (1757-1827)

Go lovely rose,
Tell her that wastes her time and me
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Edmund Waller (1606-1687)

His Being Was in Her Alone

His being was in her alone
And he not being she was none.

They joyed one joy, one grief they grieved;
One love they loved, one life they lived.
The hand was one, one was the sword,
That did his death, her death afford.

Rhyme, Sound Devices and Rhythm

قافیه
تکرار صدا
وزن
the repetition of the last stresses
Rhyme - words also each other \Rightarrow late, fair / hollow, fall
 The poems most of us grew up with as children were rhymed poems—in fact, we call some of them nursery rhymes—so it is quite natural that when we think of poetry we tend to think first of RHYME*. Rhyme, in its broadest sense, refers to the repetition of sounds from word to word or line to line.

وزن و قافیه
 Hey diddle diddle,
 The cat and the fiddle,
 The cow jumped over the moon.
 The little dog laughed,
 To see such sport,
 And the dish ran away with the spoon.

Glossary

1. diddle : move with short quick movements
2. fiddle : violin

کاربرد
Rhyme
~~Poems need not rhyme to be good poems.~~ in previous chapters we have seen many that do not. But rhyme certainly is one of the most effective ways of binding a poem into a single unit, and it also gives pleasure in itself. Compare the following version with the original printed above and account for what has been lost.

Hey diddle diddle,
 The cat and the cello,
 The cow jumped over the moon.
 The little dog laughed,
 To see such sport,

forbidden.

Observe the interplay of alliteration and consonance in the following lines by Algernon Charles Swinburne:

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins;
The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins;

Consonance and alliteration, as we have seen, involve the repetition of consonant sounds. **Assonance** refers to the repetition of **vowel sounds**, as in the following line by John Milton:

Methought I saw my late espoused saint

The two halves of William Butler Yeats's line

The dolphin-torn, that gong-tormented sea—

show verbal repetition (*That*), alliteration (*t*), consonance (*t, n*), and strong assonance (*dol/gong; orn/orm*). Sea is the one word free of aural echo, an isolation that gives it emphasis. Below, in Thomas Gray's lines, the assonance moves from line to line, helping to bind the stanza into a whole. Listen especially to the variations on the *o* sound:

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

درویش بایسن آمد
شعرون باغورم های حسیته به
طوف خانه می آمد

The Aṣṣýr | ian came down | like the wól | f on the fôld,
And his có | horts were gléam | ing in púr | ple and góld;
And the shéen | of thêir spéars | was like stárs | on the
séa,
When the blúc | wáve rolls níght | ly on déep | Galiléé.

In Sterling A. Brown's lines below, the metrical pattern appears to wind down, the meter and the dog seemingly both asleep at the end:

Sò yòu cáin't | n'ev'v téll
Hòw fás' | ǎ dóg | cǎn rún
Whén yòu sée | him ǎ-sleeping,
in the sún.

Notice that at the close of the first and second lines above, you move with virtually no pause to the next line. Such lines are called **RUN-ON**,* and the effect of continuity they give is termed **ENJAMBMENT**.*

When the lines close on a strong pause, as in this passage by John Lyly, we call them **END-STOPPED**. * آخر خط های علامت

My Daphne's hair is twisted gold,
Bright stars apiece her eyes do hold;
My Daphne's brow enthrones the graces,
My Daphne's beauty stains all faces.

Following are a few examples to experiment with. In each, mark the stressed and unstressed syllables, use the single bar to mark off the feet, and use the double bar to indicate caesuras where appropriate.

Sweetest love, I do not go
For weariness of thee,

^uAgainst ^uan ^uelm ^ua ^ushéep ^uwas ^utíed,
^uThe ^ubúth^uer's ^uknífe ^uin ^ublóod ^uwas ^udýed;

Mark of the feet with vertical bars, and where a pause (caesura) occurs within the line, use the double bar to indicate it:

^xAgainst | ^xan elm || ^xa shéep | ^xwas tied,
^uThe búth | ^uer's knífe | ^uin blóod | ^uwas dýed;

Following this step-by-step process, try a simple exercise of scansion the passages below, by Alexander Pope and Lord Byron.

Be not the first by whom the new are tried;
 Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

She walks in beauty, like the night
 Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
 And all that's best of dark and bright
 Meet in her aspect and her eyes:

When you scan the brief poem by W. H. Auden that follows will discover that the feet are irregular, perhaps to match the discomf of the speaker;

^uÓver ^uthe | ^uhéath^uer | ^uthe ^uwét | ^uwínd ^ublóws,
^uI've ^ulíce | ^uin ^umy | ^utúníc | ^uand ^ua ^ucóld | ^uin ^umy ^unóse

These lines by Lord Byron seem to gallop along, simulating the motion of the Assyrians on horseback:

comparison:

Western wynde when wyll thow blow

Winds, whisper gently whilst she sleeps

And death shall have no dominion

A sweet disorder in the dress
Kindles in clothes a wantonness.

The sound must seem an echo of the sense.

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past

مروغ بی صدا به غیر از ناز و
انگیزش

CONSONANCE refers to the repetition of consonant sounds that are not confined to alliteration, though they may support a particular alliterative pattern. In the last of the passages above, by Shakespeare, the alliterative use of *s* is reinforced by similar internal sounds: sessions, remembrance, things, past. The preponderance of the *s* sound seems to create a hushed or whispering effect appropriate to the notion of "silent thought". On the other hand, John Milton opens *Paradise Lost* with emphasis on firmer, more precise consonants than the drawn-out *s*:

Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree ...

Alliteration brings together *first*, *fruit*, and *forbidden*, all key words in Milton's argument. Notice, too, how *first* edges into the *d* of *disobedience* and is resumed in *that* and *tree*; and how *disobedience* is reaffirmed in

In most poetry written in English, the **beat** comes out of a pattern of **stressed and unstressed syllables**. This basic pattern is called the **METER***. *what is meter?*

Hannah Bentry, in the pantry,
Gnawing at a mutton bone,
عاز زدن مچوین

How she grawed it,
How she clawed it,
When she found herself alone.

The regular rhythmic pattern in the lines above is created by an alternation of strong and weak syllables. To describe meter, we use a set of signs that suggest how the line is to be read. Below is a list of the most common signs:

- mora*
' is used to indicate a strong or stressed syllable.
 - ictus* U is used for a weak or unstressed syllable.
 - | is called a *bar*, and is used to mark material divisions in a line.
- Each unit thus marked is called a **FOOT*** consisting (usually) of one stressed and one or two unstressed syllables. *(combination of stressed and unstressed syllables)*
- || indicates a **CAESURA***—A pause—in the line of verse. *Syllables*

The process of marking the meter is called **SCANSION***. To scan a line of poetry, first mark the accented, or strong, syllables:

Against an elm a sheep was tied,
The butcher's knife in blood was dyed;

2 things are important for scansion
1. kind of foot
2. number of foot
x x x x x x

Next, place a mark over the unaccented or weak syllables:

Glossary

1. sigh /saɪ/ : take a long deep breath that can be heard
2. blithe /blaɪð/ : happy and carefree
3. bonny /'bɒni/ : attractive; healthy-looking
4. converting /kən'veɜ:tɪŋ/ : changing
5. woe /wəʊ/ : sorrow; sadness

Before we move on to other sound patterns, read aloud the stanza below from Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven" and find instances of end rhyme, internal rhyme, masculine rhyme, and feminine rhyme.

Once upon a midnight dreary while I pondered weak and weary
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—
While I nodded, nearly napping suddenly there came a tapping
As of some one gently/rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
"Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door—
Only this and nothing more."

Sound Devices

came from

In reading poems, much of the pleasure we get derives not only from the kinds of rhymes we have been discussing, but from other repetitions of sound that produce echoes within and between lines. Such repetitions help unify the poem much as formal rhyme scheme may do and also contribute in complex ways, as we shall see, to the particular effect the poem has on the reader. These repetitions of sound are called **alliteration**, * **consonance**, * and **assonance**. * You can much better explain why a particular poem has a particular effect if you understand these three terms and make them a part of your vocabulary for discussing

reason may be physiological, stemming from some inner rhythm of our nature, such as our heartbeat or breathing; or it may be psychological, stemming from some need we have for evidence of order in things outside ourselves. Although in art we seem to resist too persistent a pattern, calling it tedious or monotonous; some pattern is essential to our enjoyment of music or dance, painting or poetry. Indeed, rhythm is more fundamental to poetry than the repetitions of particular sounds we have been discussing, for although there are many poems with no rhyme at all and scarcely any effect of consonance, assonance, or alliteration, rhythm is everywhere in poetry, as it is everywhere in life.

Read each of the following lines aloud and notice how they fall into strong but quite different rhythms: برای تشخیص وزن باید Stress را

stress

Down the Mississippi where the boats go push!

Oh brave Miss Pritchett!

Sometimes I feel like a motherless child.

Star light, star bright, first star I see tonight.

Here comes the judge!

I hit the man with a frying pan!

here is little Effie's head
whose brains are made of gingerbread

We can analyse poetic rhythm and, to some extent at least, account for the effect of rhythm in any particular poem. As in music, we look for the beat—a regular pattern of stressed and unstressed sounds. What is beat?

And the dish ran away with the knife.

Generally speaking a rhyme occurs when two or more words (or in some instances, phrases)² have matching sounds. It is sound, not spelling that determines rhyme.
? the positions of rhyme?

When rhyme occurs at the close of lines, it is called ^①END RHYME*:

Upon a Child That Died

Here she lies, a pretty bud.
Lately made of flesh and blood,
Who as soon fell fast asleep
As her little eye did peep.
Give her strewings, but not stir
The earth that lightly covers her.

→ end Rhym

Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

Glossary

1. bud /bʌd/ : flower which is not fully open
2. strewings : strew flowers

When the rhyme occurs elsewhere than at ends of lines, it is called INTERNAL RHYME*. In the following example from Samuel Taylor Coleridge, note the internal rhymes in the first and third lines:

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free:
We were the first that ever burst
into that silent sea.

ما اولین کسان بودیم که وارد آب ساکن شديم

poetry.

Perhaps the easiest to understand is **ALLITERATION**, which is the repetition of consonant sounds at the beginnings of words (bully boys; window on the world). In the following lines from Gerard Manley Hopkins's "Pied Beauty", note in the first line the repetition of the hard g sound (that is, g as in glow), and in the second line the hard c sound (as in core).

شکر و درویشی و زلف و دامن و دست به خا[☆] صر جیرهای رنگی[☆]
Glory to God for dappled things—
For skies of couple-color, as a brindled cow;[☆] آسمان را به رنگ ها آفرید[☆]

As you read the following lines aloud from Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Kubla Khan", note the repetition of the *m* and *r* and the effect such repetition produces:

Five miles meandering with a mazy motion^{confusing}
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,^{در} پنج دره های روزخانه حرکت می کرد[☆]
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,^{بنازیرن غیر قابل اندازه گیری است}
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean.

Glossary

1. mazy /'meɪzi/ : confused
2. dale /deɪl/ : valley
3. caverns /'kævənz/ : caves
4. tumult /'tju:mʌlt/ : uproar

To get a sense of the quite different effects that alliteration may produce, read again, aloud, first the two lines from Hopkins, with their hard g and c sounds, and then the lines from Coleridge with their softer and more flowing m and r sounds.

Below are some additional brief instances for study and

? Kinds of Rhym?

full rhyme

EXACT RHYME, the kind we have seen above, occurs when the accented vowel sounds, as well as any following consonants and vowels, are identical:

When Lovely Woman Stoops to Folly
 When lovely woman stoops to folly,
 And finds too late that men betray,
 What charm can soothe her melancholy,
 What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
 To hide her shame from every eye,
 To give repentance to her lover,
 And wring his bosom—is to die.

Oliver Goldsmith (1730-1774)

Glossary

1. folly /'fɒli/ : foolishness; foolish act
2. melancholy /'meləŋkəli/ : sadness

words which
 their endings
 are like
 each other

Poets, especially modern poets, often favour an **approximate rhyme** called **SLANT RHYME**, in which the sounds are similar but not identical. W. H. Auden's poem uses six end rhymes, each of which is a slant rhyme.

هائىلى تىبىم خوتىدود، بىش ترىا
 vowel

consonant
 سىروبا ردارم

That Night When Joy Began

That night when joy began
 Our narrowest veins to flush,
 We waited for the flash
 Of morning's levelled gun.

To carry pure death in an carring, ^{end, exact, feminine} casket.
 A signet, a fan-mount, a filigree basket. ^{end, exact, feminine}

In order to talk about the pattern of end rhyme, called the **RHYME SCHEME**,* of stanzas or poems we use a simple shorthand system based on the letters of the alphabet. Lines with the same end rhyme are given the same letters, the first rhyme the letter *a*, the second rhyme the letter *b*, and so on. The first passage below, by Alexander Pope, has an *aa* rhyme scheme; the second, by William Wordsworth, has

این نوع قافیه بیشتر برای شعرهای است که در آن نوع قافیه نهاده شده است
 fixed But when to mischief mortals bend their will,
 How soon they find fit instruments of ill.
 از قافیه هم است

To her fair works did Nature link *a*
 The human soul that through me ran; *b*
 And much it grieved my heart to think *a*
 What man has made of man *b*

More complicated rhyme schemes require us to go beyond *a* and *b*.

Sigh No More, Ladies, Sigh No More

Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more, *a* ^{مردان آه و ناله نکنید خانم ها}
 Men were deceivers ever; *b* ^{مرد ها همیشه حقه بار بوده اند}
 One foot in sea, and one on shore, *a* ^{یک پا در این و در آن دراز کنند می بینید}
 To one thing constant never. *b* ^{همدرد به چیزی پاینده نیستند}

Then sigh not so, *c* ^{این قدر رنانه نکنید}
 But let them go, *c* ^{مرشان را رها کنید بروند}
 And be you blithe and bonny, *d* ^{خوشحال باشید}
 converting all your sighs of woe *c* ^{و همه ی غم و غصه را به تیرانه تبدیل کنید}

CHAPTER 6

Rhyme, Sound Devices and Rhythm

After reading this chapter, you will know:

- 1. what is meant by rhyme in poetry,**
- 2. How to explain the particular effects of such sound devices as alliteration, consonance and assonance,**
- 3. what the different kinds of rhythm in English poetry are and how they contribute to the meaning of a poem.**

Questions

1. Show the use of assonance in line 2 and 4. Find the same sound in other lines.
2. What alliterative effects seem especially prominent? Are any of these reinforced by consonance?

The sounds of certain words seem to imitate the sounds of what they describe. A few obvious examples are *buzz*, *drip*, *click*. The use of such words in poetry to reflect a particular sound—for instance, a horse galloping over cobblestones—is called **ONOMATOPOEIA**. * Very often onomatopoeia is heightened by alliteration, consonance, or assonance:

Over the cobbles he clattered and clashed

دندل فرستن تقاتل کولاق sounds echo meaning

The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmur of innumerable bees

ناله زمزمه می زبده رهای بی قند

I should have been a pair of ragged claws
Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.

حرکت کردن در کف دریا های ساکت حرکت کنم

Rhythm

You now have a vocabulary for talking about rhyme and a sense of the ways in which alliteration, consonance, and assonance contribute to the meaning and pleasure of a poem. Let us turn to another pattern in poetry, **RHYTHM** which may be defined as a pattern of recurring stresses and pauses.

Rhythms are all around us, in the ticking of a clock or the dripping of a faucet, the wheels of a train, rain on the roof, the pounding of a sledge hammer, the ocean surf. Why we respond to rhythm is not entirely clear, but there is no question that we do. The

But morning let us [△]pass,
 And day by day relief
 Outgrows his nervous laugh,
 Grown credulous of [△]peace.

As mile by mile is seen
 No trespasser's reproach,
 And love's best glasses reach
 No fields but are his own.

W. H. Auden (1907-1973)

Often exact and approximate rhyme are combined in the same poem. In the following lines from Theodore Roethke's "My Papa's Waltz", the rhyme in the first and third lines is exact, in the second and fourth lines, approximate:

The whiskey on your ^{★ - exact, ends, masculine}breath
 Could make a small boy ^{□ slant, end, feminine}dizzy;
 But I hung on like [★]death:
 Such waltzing was not [□]easy.

Roethke's lines serve also to illustrate another distinction that is often useful in talking about the effects of rhyme—the distinction between **MASCULINE RHYME*** and **FEMININE RHYME***. In a **masculine** [→]**rhyme** the accent or stress is always on the final syllable (*support/distort*); (report/report) or, in the lines above, (*breath/death*). In a **feminine** ^{استرس در بخش اول}**rhyme**, however, the **accented syllable** is followed by one or more unaccented ones: *burning/turning; attitude/latitude*. In Roethke's lines, *dizzy* and *easy* are a feminine slant rhyme, while in the following lines from Robert Browning we find feminine exact rhyme.

At a tranquil pace,
Under veils of white lace.

5

I shall go shod in silk,
And you in wool,
White as a white cow's milk,
More beautiful
Than the breast of a gull.

10

We shall walk through the still town
in a windless peace;
We shall step upon white down,
Upon silver fleece,
Upon softer than these.

15

We shall walk in velvet shoes:
Wherever we go
Silence will fall like dews
On white silence below.
We shall walk in the snow.

20

Elinor Wylie (1885-1928)

**Heaven-Haven
A Nun Takes the Veil**

I have desired to go
Where springs not fail,
To flies where flies no sharp and sided hail
And a few lilies blow.

And I have asked to be
Where no storms come,
Where the green swell is in the havens dumb,
And out of the swing of the sea.

Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889)

1. Underline each example of assonance, circle the instances of alliteration.
2. Mark the poem with signs for scansion and name the prevailing meter.
3. Mark the rhyme scheme. How does it seem to organize or give structure to each of the stanzas?

II. Consider the unexpected variations in meter and rhyme in William Blake's poem.

The Garden of Love

I went to the Garden of Love,
And saw what I never had seen:
A Chapel was built in the midst,
Where I used to play on the green.

And the gates of this Chapel were shut,
And "Thou shalt not" writ over the door;
So I turn'd to the Garden of Love,
That so many sweet flowers bore,

5

And I saw it was filled with graves,
And tomb-stones where flowers should be:
And Priests in black gowns were walking their rounds
And binding with briars my joys & desires.

10

William Blake (1757-1827)

1. Determine the poem's basic meter and rhyme scheme.
2. Explain the effect of the internal rhymes and the use of caesura in lines 11-12.
3. Explain the emphasis achieved by the stress pattern in line 6. Explain how the consonance in lines 5-6 contributes to that emphasis.
4. Notice that each line is end-stopped. What is the effect on the poem as a whole?

III. Elinor Wylie's poem below conveys an impression of quiet, tranquility, peace, an effect achieved largely by the use of assonance, alliteration, and end-stopped lines. Identify as many specific instances as you can.

Velvet Shoes

Let us walk in the white snow
in a soundless space;
With footsteps quiet and slow,

the number of feet in a line, we use the following terms:

MONOMETER: 1 foot in a line

Helen

Led 'em!

DIMETER: 2 feet in a line

The sea of the faith

TRIMETER: 3 feet in a line

Down to | a sun | less sea

TETRAMETER: 4 feet in a line

My heart is like a singing bird

PENTAMETER: 5 feet in a line

Are falling like a ton of bricks and bones

HEXAMETER: 6 feet in a line

Eye of the earth, and what it watches is not our wars.

Though poems tend to have a prevalent meter, few are written entirely in iambs or trochees, in anapests or dactyls. For one thing, such poems probably would very quickly lead us into an annoying or distracting singsong monotony. But there is a more important general point to be made about meter. Although, like four beats or three beats to a measure in a piece of music, a poem's metrical pattern may give us pleasure in itself (so long as it is *not* allowed to become merely monotonous), both that metrical pattern and any variations from it are finally inseparable from the meaning of the poem if the poem is successful. Indeed, our main purpose in having learned the

As all the rest, so now the stone
That tombs the two is justly one.

Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586)

Questions

1. Which of the four passages has the most regular metrical pattern? In which is the meter most varied?
2. Which of the four is most dependent on caesura? Explain the effect in that poem of the use of caesura.
3. In which of the four passages are the lines predominantly end-stopped? In which predominantly run-on?

5 kinds of feet? name + example

In the process of scanning, you have been dividing each line into a unit of measurement called the *foot*, consisting of two or three syllables, one of which is stressed. The four most common feet in English poetry are:

<i>IAMBIC</i> <i>مِيقَاتِي</i>	unstressed	example
name	sign	
CLIMB <i>IAMB</i>	u .	in <u>ven</u> t, to <u>day</u>
<i>trochee</i> <i>مِيقَاتِي</i> TROCHEE	. u	mo <u>tion</u>
ANAPEST	u u .	in <u>ter</u> rupt, in <u>ter</u> duce, fian <u>ce</u>
DACTYL	. u u	te <u>nde</u> rly, ye <u>ste</u> rday, com <u>pa</u> ny
The following feet occur less frequently:		
AMPHIBRACH	u . u	Al <u>as</u> ka, di <u>re</u> ctor
SPONDEE	. .	he <u>ar</u> tbr <u>ea</u> k, te <u>x</u> tbo <u>o</u> k
PYRRHIC	u u	so-so
	<i>unstressed</i>	

Remember that two or more one-syllable words may be thought of as joined ("He loves | to love") when we wish to identify a metrical foot.

important bearing on meaning. Consider, for instance, just the first foot in the first line in each of the two versions. Surely it is not *motion* (as in the first version) but the absence of motion, *no motion* (as in the second), that the poet wishes to stress. This impression of motionlessness is then reinforced when we come to rest at the caesura after *now*—a pause it is in fact hard not to make in reading the line aloud. (You might consider, as well, the effects of both assonance and alliteration in this line.)

Turning briefly to the second line: it seems unlikely that as readers we are meant to skip without any stress over *she* (the subject, after all, of the speaker's reflections) and simply emphasize *neither*, as in the first version. Read the line as scanned in the second line: how perfectly the last two (iambic) feet emphasize the key words, *hears* and *sees*.

Finally, consider just two more metrical features in Wordsworth's lines. One is in the first foot of the third line: read both versions of the line aloud and consider how much more effectively the first foot of the second version, a spondee, by slowing the reading of *rolled round* suggests the slow, massive turning of the earth (here, too, notice how alliteration and assonance work together with meter to help create the sense). The other notable feature is the effect of the two caesuras in the last line of the second version. The difference in the line when read with and without these pauses is almost astonishing; without them, the rhythm tends to be singsong, almost "jingly", certainly inappropriate to the gravity of the poem. With the pauses (which, in fact, the poet here indicates for us with commas that need not otherwise have been inserted), the line has a stateliness that accords with the serious theme.

Exercises

1. Study the following poem by Gerard Manley Hopkins:

The partial line, "Tó díe | in mý arm's", consists of two feet, one an iamb, the other an anapest; but no pattern is clear until we know the whole line: "Tó díe | in mý arm's | wás love | séréne". The dominant meter is thus iambic.

You may have noticed that the iamb and the trochee are reversals of each other, and the same may be said of the anapest and the dactyle. Many believe that the IAMBIC is the basic English metrical pattern and all other meters are variations of it. In any case, when words are joined into lines of verse, we assign distinct names to specify the meter that prevails. Below are examples of the four principal meters used in English poetry:

IAMBIC:

Hád wé | bút wórd | enóugh | and tíme,

TROCHAIC:

Láy yóur | sléeping | heád, mý | love,

ANAPESTIC:

Fór the móon | névēr béam | withóut bríngíng me dréams

DACTYLIC:

Júst fór á | hándfú or | sílvēr he | léft ús,
number of feet

Notice that in the examples we have just considered, each line has four feet. Such lines are said to be written in tetrameter (*tera*, meaning "four", plus *meter*), and as the instances above show, we may have iambic tetrameter, trochaic tetrameter, and so forth. When we wish to indicate

1. The last foot in this line, as in the dactylic line, is incomplete. Such omission of one or more syllables is called *catalexis** and is one of many devices by which poets achieve metrical variety.

fundamentals of meter (since this is not a book about how to write poetry) is to enable us as readers to examine the various ways in which a poem might be read so that we may arrive at the very best way, the one that comes nearest the meaning of the poem.

Consider for instance, the four lines that follow from a poem by William Wordsworth, in which the speaker mourns for a loved one now dead and buried. The basic meter is unquestionably iambic. But try reading the lines aloud, first in a *perfectly regular* iambic meter (strictly alternating unstressed and stressed syllables) and with *no pauses* (caesuras) within any of the lines. This is the way we have first marked (scanned) them. Then read the lines as they are scanned the second time, with a spondee (rather than an iamb) as the first and last foot of the first line and as the first foot of the second and third lines, and with the caesuras marked in the first and fourth lines. If necessary, try this comparison two or three times, until you feel you have a sense of the real difference between the two readings. You may even wish to have someone else read the lines aloud while you listen.

Nó mó | tíon hás | shé nów, | nó fórcé;
 Shé néi | thér héars | nórr séés;
 Rolled róund | in éarh's | díur | nál cóurse,
 With rócks, | and stónes | and trées.

Nó mó | tíon hás | shé nów, || nó fórcé;
 Shé néi | thér héars | nórr séés;
 Rolled róund | in éarh's. | díur | nál cóurse.
 With rócks, || and stónes, || and trées.

A detailed analysis of these lines could yield many insights into the craft of poetry, but we need not make any such exhaustive study to appreciate some of the ways in which metrical considerations have an

CHAPTER 5

Figurative Language and Imagery

After reading this chapter, you will know:

- 1. why the language of poetry is figurative,**
- 2. what the definitions and functions of such figures of speech as simile, metaphor, metonymy, oxymoron, etc. are,**
- 3. what the various types of imagery are.**

Figurative Language and Imagery

Figures of Speech

When you hear such things as "He's all thumbs", "I'm at the end of my rope", "She doesn't know enough to come in out of the rain", you know that the speaker isn't talking about thumbs, rope, or rain. Something else is intended: he's graceless' I'm desperate ; she's dull. The speaker is using **FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE**,* that is, a means of indirect statement that says one thing in terms of another. The effectiveness of such usage can, of course, vary widely. It can seem tedious and uninteresting if the particular expression has too often been used; or it can seem foolish if it is simply showy or not specially appropriate. But as often as not the effect can be a liveliness of expression that manages to press very closely to the essence of an object or idea while also conveying a strong sense of the speaker's attitudes and feelings. For the poet, whose tendency is to see and think figuratively, the use of figurative language is virtually inescapable.

Though critics and scholars have identified well over two hundred **FIGURES OF SPEECH*** (the term used to refer to the various details of figurative language), we need to learn only a few at this point to enlarge our understanding and enjoyment of poetry. Among the most common is the **SIMILE**,* which is a figure that makes an explicit comparison between two entities using words such as "like" or "as". The elements being compared are essentially different in nature but come together in the poet's perception.

Her goodly eyes like Sapphires shining bright ...
Her cheeks like apples which the sun hath redded,
Her lips like cherries charming men to bite.

Edmund Spencer (1552-1599)

Glossary

1. goodly : beautiful
2. Sapphires /'sæfərəz/ : clear, bright blue jewel
3. hath /hæθ/ : has
4. redded : become red

I wandered lonely as a cloud

That floats on high o'er vales and hills.

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

Glossary

1. o'er : over
2. vales /veɪlz/ : valleys

For hopes grew round me, like the twining vine,

And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed mine.

Glossary

1. twining /'twainɪŋ/ : twisting
2. foliage /'fəʊlɪdʒ/ : all the leaves of a tree

Each of these passages clarifies one thing by taking for its simile an aspect of nature—sapphires, apples, cherries, clouds, vines. But the poet may draw as readily on any realm of awareness or experience. Adelaide Crapsey reverses the above pattern, clarifying a natural event by comparison with a supernatural one.

November Night

Listen ...

With faint dry sound,

Like steps of passing ghosts,

The leaves, frost-crisped break from the trees
And fall.

Adelaide Crapsey (1878-1914)

Glossary

1. frost-crisped : easily broken like frost

What in the condition of the leaves makes the simile appropriate?

Crapsey envisions ghosts, but Henry Vaughan sets himself the more difficult task of describing eternity as he apprehended it one night.

I saw eternity the other night
Like a great ring of pure and endless light,
All calm as it was bright.

The light is calm, unflickering, yet bright; it is endless and yet circumscribed within a ring. If the size of the ring ("great") is left open, it is presumably because it was not to be encompassed by the poet's merely human measurement.

METAPHOR, * like simile, involves a comparison of two unlike elements, but it omits the linking word ("like", "as"), thus creating a more thorough identification between the two and giving rise to further implications.

And the hands of the clock still knock without entering

A clock might also be identified with the brain or a procession of the universe in order to say something about rationality, inevitability, or entropy. When scientists speak of our "genetic clock", they are using a striking metaphor that suggests a greater certitude than would the simile "Our genes are like a clock".

Here are some other clear and expressive metaphors:

But at my back I always hear
Times's wingéd chariot hurrying near;

Andrew Marvell (1621-1678)

When the young man was flaming out his thoughts
Upon a palace-wall for Rome to see,

Robert Browning (1812-1889)

Consider the following lines, in which one metaphor is expanded
by another:

Once did my thoughts both ebb flow,
As passion did them move.

Anonymous

The metaphor in the first line identifies the speaker's thoughts with the tidal flow of a sea or ocean, and then the second line expands and fulfills the first metaphor with another, identifying his passion with the moon: his passion moves his thoughts as the moon controls the tides. The implication is especially interesting in this context because mental disorders were long associated with lunar effects (as can be seen in the common word "lunacy"). The poet seems to be implying, then, that the effect of his passion on his thoughts included at least a touch of madness.

EXTENDED METAPHORS* carry the figure of speech beyond the simple phrase or line of poetry:

Word

The word bites like a fish.

Shall I throw it back free

Arrowing to that sea

Where thoughts lash tail and fin?

Or shall I pull it in

To rhyme upon a dish?

Stephen Spender (b. 1909)

Questions

1. Is it "word" in general or a specific word that interests Spender?
2. What are the connotations of "sea"? of "dish"?
3. Explain how the "word", the "fish", and "thoughts" each inhabit the same "sea."

As we noted earlier, every metaphor or simile involves a comparison. In analyzing such figures, particularly extended metaphors and similes, it is helpful to distinguish between what are called the primary and secondary, or major and minor, terms. **Tenor*** refers to the abstract idea or the elusive or intangible notion the poet aims to clarify. **Vehicle*** refers to the more concrete and familiar element with which the tenor is being identified. In Spender's poem, "word" is the tenor or major term; "fish" is the vehicle or minor term. It is the minor term that the poet expands into a complex metaphor. In the following poem, Ted Hughes allows the minor term to determine the flow of the entire poem:

The Dove-Breeder

Love struck into his life

Like a hawk into a dovecote.

What a cry went up!
Every gentle pedigree dove
Blindly chattered and beat,
And the mild-mannered dove-breeder
Shrieked at that raider

5

He might well wring his hands
And let his tears drop:
He will win no more prizes
With fantails or pouters,
(After all these years
Through third, up through second places
Till they were all world beaters....)

10

Yet he soon dried his tears.

15

Now he rides the morning mist
With a big-eyed hawk on his fist.

Ted Hughes (b. 1930)

Glossary

1. dovecote /'dʌvkəʊt/ : small shelter with nesting-boxes for doves
2. fantails or pouters : Types of doves

Questions

1. What is the primary term? the secondary term?
2. What are the usual connotations of "dove" and "hawk"? To what extent do these connotations apply in the poem?
3. Paraphrase the last two lines.

4. Describe in your own words the dove-breeder's transformation.

Closely related to metaphor are two figures of speech that are similar in function, **SYNECDOCHE*** and **METONYMY**.* In *synecdoche*, the part is named for the whole: the line, "The hand that sways the King beguiles the state", refers to the power behind the throne by naming only one aspect, the hand. Shakespeare uses the same figure:

Nay, if you read this line, remember not
The hand that writ it.

In the following lines by Thomas Gray, "heart" (line 2) and "hands" (line 3) are synecdoches for the unknown person buried in the country churchyard who, the poet speculates, might have been inspired to great statesmanship or poetic achievement:

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fir;
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

In *metonymy*, an object, idea, or event is referred to by naming some attribute or quality associated with it. For instance, when we say, "The pen is mightier than the sword", "pen" and "sword" are metonymies for written ideas and military force. The following lines by William Collins isolate an admirable soldierly quality, bravery, to refer to those slain in battle:

How sleep the brave who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes blest!

PERSONIFICATION* is a figure of speech in which an abstract idea, inanimate object, or aspect of nature is described as if it were human. To say that "Time intrudes and steals my day" is to see time as a thief, that is, to see it as human. James Stephens personifies the wind, explaining its nature in terms suggestive of a violent man:

The Wind

The wind stood up, and gave a shout;
He whistled on his fingers, and

Kicked the withered leaves about
And thumped the branches with his hand,

And said he'd kill, and kill, and kill;
And so he will! And so he will

James Stephens (1882-1950)

T.L. Beddoes manages to concentrate three personifications in these lines:

... Despair has married wildest mirth
And to their wedding-banquet all the earth
Is bade to bring its enmities and loves.

Glossary

1. mirth /mɜ:θ/ : happiness
2. bade /beɪd/ : commanded

Another figure of speech, often found in connection with personification, is **APOSTROPHE***, in which the speaker of the poem makes a direct address to a person, thing, or idea:

With how sad steps, O moon, thou climb'st the skies.

Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586)

Busy old fool, unruly sun,

Why dost thou thus,

Through windows and through curtains call on us?

John Donne (1572-1631)

In the following poem, Donne both personifies and apostrophizes death in the first step of a strategy that will lead to the humbling and finally the death of death. Put another way, Donne must first give life to death in order to eliminate him.

Death, Be Not Proud,

Though Some Have Calléd Thee

Death, be not proud, though some have calléd thee

Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;

For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow,

Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.

From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,

Much pleasure; then from thee, much more must flow,

And soonest our best men with thee do go,

Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.

Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,

And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,

And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well

And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?

One short sleep past, we wake eternally

And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

John Donne (1572-1631)

Glossary

1. thee /ði:/ : you
2. thou art : you are
3. think'st : think
4. dost : do
5. canst : can
6. pictures : copies
7. poppy /'pɒpi/ : A kind of plant from which opium is obtained
8. swell'st : smell up with pride

We come, finally, to three figures of speech in which the element of play is important: the oxymoron, the pun, and the conceit. **OXYMORON*** is the joining of words with apparently opposing meanings to make a new union. John Keats, describing a lover's response, terms it "making sweet moan" in an effort to fuse the elements of pleasure and pain. When the speaker in William Blake's "The Tiger", addressing the animal, asks

What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

he is using an oxymoron (terror linked to beauty) to reflect his awe and bewilderment. William Butler Yeats more than a century later employs a similar oxymoron in the phrase "A terrible beauty is born", referring to the "new" Ireland born in rebellion against England during Easter of 1916.

George Herbert builds an entire poem upon oxymoron:

Bitter-Sweet

Ah my dear angry Lord,
Since thou dost love, yet strike;

Cast down, yet help afford;
Sure I will do the like.

I will complain, yet praise;
I will bewail, approve;
And all my sour-sweet days
I will lament, and love.

George Herbert (1593-1633)

A **PUN*** is a play on a single word that has two different meanings or sometimes on two words that have the same sound but different meanings. Lawrence Ferlinghetti's lines contain a pun on the name of St. Peter:

Him just hang there
on His Tree
looking real Petered out

Thomas Hardy puns when describing an architect as an "arch-designer", the context making clear that he means both a designer of arches and a cunning man.

Puns offer the pleasure of recognition, but they can also intensify the seriousness of a poem. John Donne, ill and perhaps fearful of imminent death, puns repeatedly on his own name in a poem seeking forgiveness of God:

A Hymn to God the Father

1

Wilt thou forgive that sin where I begun,
Which is my sin, though it were done before?
Wilt thou forgive those sins, through which I run,

And do run still: though still I do deplore?
When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
For, I have more.

5

2

Wilt thou forgive that sin by which I have won
Others to sin, and, made my sin their door?

Wilt thou forgive that sin which I did shun

A year, or two, but wallowed in, a score?

When thou hast done, thou hast not done.

10

For, I have more.

3

I have a sin of fear, that when I have spun

My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;

Swear by thyself, that at my death thy son

15

Shall shine as he shines now, and heretofore;

And having done that, Thou hast done,

I fear no more.

John Donne (1572-1631)

Questions

1. How does the punning in lines 5-6 and 11-12 relate to the stanzas in which they occur? What does "more" refer to?
2. How do the verbal changes in lines 17-18 (compared with lines 5-6 and 11-12) help to resolve the poem?
3. Explain the puns in lines 2 and 15-16.

4. Hymns are usually sung in unison. How, then, has Donne adapted the form? Is there possibly a pun on the word "Hymn"?

A **CONCEIT*** is a figure of speech that presents an elaborate, often ingenious, parallel between two things or ideas. Like metaphors and similes, conceits find resemblances between unlike objects or situations, but the conceit carries the comparison to unexpected extremes.

Cherry-Ripe

Cherry-ripe, ripe, ripe, I cry,
Full and fair ones; come and buy:
If so be, you ask me where
They do grow? I answer, there,
Where my Julia's lips do smile;
There's the land, or cherry-isle:
Whose plantations fully show
All the year, where cherries grow.

Robert Herrick (1591-1634)

Rather than use a simple metaphor, "Her lips are ripe cherries", Herrick extends the possibilities by fabricating a "cherry-isle" on which "plantations" flourish; and because the cherries grow "all the year", we assume the season there is always summer.

Imagery

In literature, **imagery*** refers to words that trigger your *imagination* to recall and recombine **images**—memories or mental pictures of sights, sounds, tastes, smells, sensations of touch, and motions. The process is active, and even vigorous, for when particular words or descriptions produce images you are applying your own experiences with life and

language to your understanding of the works you are reading. In effect, you are re-creating the work in your own way through the controlled stimulation produced by the author's words. Imagery, in short, is a channel to your active imagination, and along this channel, writers—poets dramatists, and writers of fiction—bring their works directly into your consciousness.

For example, the word "take" may cause you to imagine or visualize a particular lake that you remember vividly. Your mental picture or image may be a distant view of calm waters reflecting blue sky, a nearby view of gentle waves rippled by the wind, a view of the lake bottom from a boat, or an overhead view of a sandy and sunlit shoreline. Similarly, the words *rose*, *apple*, *hot dog*, *malted milk*, and *pizza* all cause you to visualize these things, and, in addition, may cause you to recall their smells and tastes. Active and graphic words like *raw*, *swim*, and *dive* stimulate you to picture moving images of someone performing these actions.

CLASSIFICATION OF IMAGERY

SIGHT. Sight is the most significant of our senses, for it is the key to our remembrance of other impressions. Therefore, the most frequently occurring literary imagery is to things that we can visualize either exactly or approximately—**visual images***. John Masefield, in his poem "Cargoes", asks us to re-create mental pictures or images of ocean-going merchant vessels from three periods of human history. He speaks about a "quinquereme" (a ship with rows of five men pulling three tiers of oars) from the ancient Near East, associated with the Biblical King Solomon; then he turns to a "stately Spanish galleon" at the time of the Renaissance; finally he refers to a modern British ship caked with salt, carrying grubby and cheap things over the English Channel. His images are vivid as they stand, without the need for more detailed amplifications. In order to reconstruct them imaginatively, we do

not need ever to have seen the ancient Biblical lands or waters, or to have seen or handled the cheap commodities on a modern merchantship. We have seen enough in our lives both in reality and in pictures to *imagine* places and objects like these, and hence Masfield is successful in implanting his visual images into our minds.

SOUND. Auditory images* are images appealing to our experiences with sound. In Owen's poem "Anthem for Doomed Youth", which is about death in warfare, the speaker asks what "passing bells" may be tolled for "those who die as cattle". He is referring to the traditional tolling of a parish church bell to announce to the community that a parishioner has died. Such a ceremonial ringing suggests a period of peace and order, when there is time to pay ceremonial respect to the dead. But the poem then points out that the only sound for those who have fallen in battle is the "rapid rattle" of "stuttering" rifles—in other words, not the solemn, dignified sounds of peace, but the horrifying noises of war. Owen's auditory images evoke corresponding sounds in our imaginations, and help us experience the poem and hate the uncivilized depravity of war.

SMELL, TASTE, AND TOUCH. In addition to sight and sound, you will also find images from the other senses. An **olfactory image*** refers to smell, a **gustatory image*** to taste, and a **tactile image*** to touch. A great deal of love poetry, for example, includes observations about the fragrances of flowers. Images derived from and referring to taste—gustatory images—are also common, though less frequent than those to sight and sound. Tactile images of touch and texture are not as common because touch is difficult to render except in terms of effects.

IMAGES OF MOTION AND ACTIVITY. References to movement are also images. Images of general motion are **kinetic*** (remember that *motion pictures* are also called *cinema*), while the term **kinesthetic*** is applied to human or animal movement. Imagery of

motion is closely related to visual images for motion is most often seen. Masfield's British coaster, for example, is a visual image, but when it goes "Butting through the Channel", the motion makes it also kinetic. Whatever the topic of the visual image – a person in a woods, a prince in a room, a pounding surf – to the degree that there is motion, the visual image is also kinetic or kinesthetic.

When an image mingles two or more senses, using one sense to describe another, we call the device **SYNESTHESIA***. "Silken tones" and "sweet song" are examples. The following lines from Emily Dickinson's poem "I Heard a Fly Buzz—When I Died" provide another:

There interposed a Fly—

With Blue—uncertain stumbling Buzz—

Between the light—and me—

The speaker in Dickinson's poem, describing the approach of death, mixes up the senses of sight and sound, producing the effect of a more deranged sense perception.

Example of Analysis

In order to have a better understanding of the crucial function of imagery in poetry, let us analyse the images of John Masfield's poem "Cargoes".

Cargoes

Quinquireme of Nineveh from distant Ophir
Rowing home to haven in sunny Palestine,
With a cargo of ivory,
And apes and peacocks,
Sandalwood, cedarwood, and sweet white wine.

5

Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus,
Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-green shores,
With a cargo of diamonds,
Emeralds, amethysts,
Topazes, and cinnamon, and gold moidores.

10

Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke-stack
Butting through the Channel in the mad March days,
With a cargo of Tyne coal,
Road-rail, pig-lead,
Firewood, iron-ware, and cheap tin trays.

15

John Masefield (1878-1967)

Glossary

1. Quinquireme : Ancient ship with five rows of oars
2. galleon /'gælɪən/ : an old type of warship or trading ship
3. emeralds, amethysts, topazes /'emərəldz/, /'æməθɪsts/, /'təʊpæzɪz/ :
precious stones
4. cinnamon /'sɪnəmən/ : a sweet-smelling spice
5. moidores /,mɔɪ'dɔːz/ : gold coins
6. salt-caked : coated with salt
7. smoke-stack : chimney of ship
8. Butting /'bʌtɪŋ/ : Pushing with the head in the way a goat does
9. pig-lead : blocks of lead

Analysis

In the three-stanza poem "Cargoes", John Masefield develops imagery to create a negative impression of modern commercial life. There is a contrast between the first two stanzas and the third, with the first two idealizing the romantic, distant past and the third demanding

the modern, gritty grimmy present. Masfield's images are thus both positive and lush, on the one hand, and negative and stark, on the other.

The most evocative and pleasant images in the poem are in the first stanza. The speaker asks that we imagine a "Quinquereme of Nineveh from distant Ophir" (line 1), an ocean-going, many-oared vessel loaded with treasure for the Biblical King Solomon. As Masfield identifies the cargo, quoting the King James Bible directly, the visual images are rich and romantic (lines 3-5):

With a cargo of ivory,
And apes and peacocks,
Sandalwood, cedarwood, and sweet white wine.

Ivory suggests richness, which is augmented by the exotic "apes and peacocks" in all their exciting strangeness. The "sandalwood, cedarwood, and sweet white wine" evoke pungent smells and tastes. The "sunny" light of ancient Palestine (line 2) not only illuminates the imaginative scene (visual), but invites readers to imagine the sun's warming touch (tactile). The references to animals and birds also suggest the sounds that these creatures would make (auditory). Thus in this lush first stanza, images derived from all the senses are introduced to create impressions of a glorious past.

Almost equally lush are the images of the second stanza, which completes the poem's first part. Here the visual imagery evokes the royal splendour of a tall-masted, full-sailed galleon (line 6) at the height of Spain's commercial power in the sixteenth century. The galleon's cargo suggests great wealth, with sparking diamonds and amethysts, and Portuguese "gold moidores" gleaming in open chests (line 10). With cinnamon in the second stanza's bill of lading (line 10), Masfield includes the gustatory image of a pleasant-tasting spice.

The negative imagery of the third stanza is in stark contrast to the

first two stanzas. Here the poem draws the visual image of a modern "Dirty British coaster" (line 11) to focus on the griminess and suffocation of modern civilization. This spray-swept ship is loaded with materials that pollute the earth with noise and smoke. The smoke-stack of the coaster (line 11) and the firewood it is carrying suggest the creation of choking smog. The Tyne Coal (line 13) and road rails (line 14) suggest the noise and smoke of puffing railroad engines. As if this were not enough, the "pig lead" (line 14) to be used in various industrial processes indicates not just more unpleasantness, but also something more poisonous and deadly. In contrast to the lush and stately imagery of the first two stanzas, the images in third stanza invite the conclusion that people now, when the "Dirty British coaster" butts through the English Channel, are surrounded and threatened by visual, olfactory, and auditory pollution.

The poem thus establishes a romantic past and ugly present through images of sight, smell, and sound. The images of motion are also directed to agree with this view: In stanzas one and two the quinquere is "rowing" and the galleon is "dipping." These kinetic images suggest dignity and lightness. The British coaster, however, is "butting", an image indicating bull-like hostility and stupid force. These together with all the other images, focus the poem's negative views of today's consumer-oriented society. The facts that life for both the ancient Palestinian's and the Renaissance Spaniards included slavery (of those men rowing the quinquere) and piracy (by those Spanish "explorers" who robbed and killed the natives of the isthmus) should probably not be emphasized as a protest against Masfield's otherwise valid contrasts in images. His final commentary may hence be thought of as the banging of his "cheap thin trays" (line 15), which makes a persuasive climax of the oppressive images filling too large a portion of modern lives.

Exercises

I. The following poem depends almost entirely on simile for its effect.

"It was wrong to Do This," Said the Angel

"It was wrong to do this, " said the angel.

"You should live like a flower,

Holding malice like a puppy,

Waging war like a lambkin."

"Not so," quoth the man

Who had no fear of spirits;

"It is only wrong for angels

Who can live like the flowers,

Holding malice like the puppies,

Waging war like the lambkins."

Stephen Crane (1871-1900)

1. Point out three similes in stanza I and indicate how they are related to each other.
 2. Describe the effect of repeating the same similes in stanza 2.
 3. From the nature of the similes, infer what it was the man did.
- II.** The following passages contain many of the figures of speech discussed in this chapter. Analyse each passage, identifying the figures of speech and explaining each in the context of the passage.

Fear no more the frown o' the great

Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;

Care no more to clothe and eat,
To thee the reed is as the oak.
The scepter, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

Old age is
a flight of small
cheeping birds
skimming
bare trees
above a snow glaze

William Carlos Williams (1883-1963)

III. Concentrate on the use of personification in the following poem,
which was written to commemorate those who had died the
previous year in defence of England.

Ode Written in the Beginning of the Year 1746

How sleep the brave who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes blest!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mold,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Francy's feet have ever trod.

5

By fairy hands their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There Honor comes, a pilgrim gay,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay,
And freedom shall awhile repair,

10

To dwell a weeping hermit there!

William Collins (1721-1759)

1. Find four instances of personification. Which of the four is most developed? which least developed?
2. Explain the function each personification serves in the development of the poem.
3. Explain the distinction between a pilgrim and a hermit as it applies in this poem.
4. Do you agree that lines 7-8 fall short of true personification? Justify your answer.

IV. In the following poem, the poet uses images to introduce a place many of us have never seen. Read all of "Caribbean" to get a general idea of the poem.

CARIBBEAN

Montego Bay
in this quick curve
listens
to the plane, waiting
for the cross of silver to
soften down.
in the air, above.
past the frail
wing and the gauze
glint of the propellers,
we see the thick

5

10

curve of the green:
the aqua-
marine!

This is the Caribbean
Sea, and the Bay

which gathers into
its shallows all

measures of green,

until in the sun, the

patches declare

communities of depth, from

bright to sombre.

Touch them.

Donald Hall (b. 1928)

To see if your impression of the scene is in keeping with the images the poet uses, read the poem in sections, answering the following questions as you go.

Montego Bay
in its quick curve
listens
to the plane, waiting
for the cross of silver to
soften down.

1. Describe the shape of Montego Bay as seen from the plane.
2. How does the this shape resemble a listening position?
3. What sound is heard?
4. Explain the phrase "cross of silver".

5. What words indicate that the plane might descend?

in the air, above.

past the frail

wing and the gauze

glint of the propellers,

10

we see the thick

curve of the green:

the aqua-

marine!

6. Are "we" on the ground or inside the plane?

7. Does the flying plane seem light and delicate or heavy and powerful?

8. Why would looking through moving propellers be like looking through gauze?

9. What do "We" see beyond parts of the plane?

This is the Caribbean

15

Sea, and the Bay

Which gathers into

its shallows all

measures of green,

until in the sun, the

20

patches declare

communities of depth, from

bright to sombre.

Touch them.

10. What colour is the water that Montego Bay collects?

11. How does the sunlight help to show where the water is shallow and where it is deeper?

12. What could you reach out and touch, especially if the plane were descending?

13. What general impression of Montego Bay does the poet give you?