

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Types of Poetry

**Ballad** ~ a short narrative poem with stanzas of two or four lines and usually a refrain. The story of a ballad can originate from a wide range of subject matter but most frequently deals with folk-lore or popular legends. They are written in straight-forward verse, seldom with detail, but always with graphic simplicity and force. Most ballads are suitable for singing and, while sometimes varied in practice, are generally written in ballad meter. (i.e., alternating lines of iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter, with the last words of the second and fourth lines rhyming.)

**Cinquain** ~ a cinquain or quintain is a five line stanza, varied in rhyme and line, usually with the rhyme scheme ababb.

**Elegy** ~ was originally used for a type of poetic metre (Elegiac metre), but is also used for a poem of mourning, from the Greek elegos, a reflection on the death of someone or on a sorrow generally. In addition, an elegy (sometimes spelled elegie) may be a type of musical work, usually in a sad and somber attitude.

**Epic** ~ an Epic is a long narrative poem celebrating the adventures and achievements of a hero ... epics typically deal with the traditions, mythical or historical of a nation.

**Free Verse** ~ a term describing various styles of poetry that are not written using strict meter or rhyme, but that still are recognizable as 'poetry' by virtue of complex patterns of one sort or another that readers can perceive to be part of a coherent whole.

**Haiku** ~ is an unrhymed Japanese verse consisting of three unrhymed lines of five, seven, and five syllables (5, 7, 5) or 17 syllables in all. Haiku is usually written in the present tense and focuses on nature (seasons).

**Limerick** ~ a Limerick is a rhymed humorous or nonsense poem of five lines which originated in Limerick, Ireland. The Limerick has a set rhyme scheme of : **a-a-b-b-a** with a syllable structure of: **9-9-6-6-9**.

The rhythm of the poem should go as follows:

Lines 1, 2, 5: weak, weak, STRONG, weak, weak, STRONG, weak, weak, STRONG, weak, weak

Lines 3, 4: weak, weak, STRONG, weak, weak, STRONG, weak, weak

This is the most commonly heard first line of a limerick: "There once was a man from Nantucket."

**Lyric** ~ is a form of poetry that does not attempt to tell a story, as do epic poetry and dramatic poetry, but is of a more personal nature instead. Rather than portraying characters and actions, the lyric poet addresses the reader directly, portraying his or her own feelings, states of mind, and perceptions.

**Narrative** ~ is poetry that tells a story. In its broadest sense, it includes epic poetry; some would reserve the name narrative poetry for works on a smaller scale and generally with more direct appeal to human interest than the epic.

**Ode** ~ an Ode is a poem praising and glorifying a person, place or thing.

**Quatrain** ~ a Quatrain is a poem consisting of four lines of verse with a specific rhyming scheme.

A few examples of a quatrain rhyming scheme are as follows:

#1) abab

#2) abba -- envelope rhyme

#3) aabb

#4) aaba, bccb, cddc, dddd -- chain rhyme

**Sonnet** ~ the term sonnet is derived from the Provençal word sonet and the Italian word sonetto, both meaning *little song*. By the thirteenth century, it had come to signify a poem of fourteen lines following a strict rhyme scheme and logical structure. The conventions associated with the sonnet have changed during its history.

Traditionally, English poets usually use iambic pentameter when writing sonnets. In the Romance languages, hendecasyllable and Alexandrines are the most widely used metres.

**Examples of a rhyming scheme:**

#1) abab cdcd efef gg

#2) abba cddc effe gg

#3) abba abba cdcd cd

**Iambic pentameter** ~ is a meter in poetry. It refers to a line consisting of five iambic feet. The word "pentameter" simply means that there are five feet in the line; iambic pentameter is a line comprising five iambs.