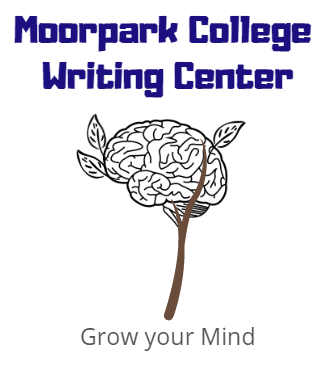
**Poetic Devices**



moorparkcollege.edu/writingcenter

**Common Poetic Devices**

1. **Allegory**: A story, poem, or other written work that can be interpreted to have a secondary meaning.
2. **Alliteration**: The repetition of sound or letter at the beginning of multiple words in a series.
3. **Allusion**: An indirect reference to something.
4. **Assonance**: The repetition of a vowel (vowels) in one or more words found close together.
5. **Blank verse**: Is poetry written without rhyme, particularly poetry that is written in iambic pentameter.
6. **Consonance**: The repetition of consonant sounds close together.
7. **Couplets**: A pair of lines in poetry.
8. **Diction**: The choice of words and style of expression that the author uses.
9. **Enjambment**: Is the continuation of a sentence beyond a line break, couplet, or stanza without a pause.
10. **Hyperbole**: An exaggerated statement that is not meant to be taken seriously.
11. **Iambic pentameter**: Is a specific type of meter that contains five iambic feet (iambic foot=unit of rhythm), which consists of one unstressed syllable followed by one stressed syllable.
12. **Irony (basic)**: When something said does not match the true meaning.
13. **Irony (situational)**: It can be described as an unexpected event that occurs, and the result often creates dark humor.
14. **Metaphor**: The author compares one thing to another.
15. **Meter**: The rhythm of a poem.
16. **Ode**: A short, lyrical poem that is often used in honor or praise of something.
17. **Onomatopoeia**: Words that describe its sound, like boom or moo.
18. **Personification**: An animal, plant, or inanimate object is given human-like characterizations.
19. **Pun**: A play on words used to make a joke.
20. **Repetition**: The process of repeating certain words or phrases.
21. **Rhetorical question**: Used to make a point rather than elicit an answer.
22. **Rhyme**: The repetition of syllables at the end of words.
23. **Rhythm**: The pattern of long, short, stressed, and unstressed syllables in writing that create a “sound.”
24. **Simile**: A comparison of one thing to another using like or as.
25. **Sonnet**: A strict fourteen-line poem that usually follows iambic pentameter.
26. **Stanzas**: Poems can be broken up into stanzas, which are a group of lines. Although stanzas can be irregular, they often have common features like length, rhyme, or rhythm.
27. **Tone**: The attitude or perspective of a writer towards a specific subject or audience. For example, the author can take a humorous or solemn tone.

**Citing Poetry**

* Less than three lines: “line/line/line” (Author line #-#).

Example: The poem goes on to say “And his big hairy paws/  
In the buttery dish” (Silverstein lines 11-12).

* If the lines extend to a new stanza, use a //: “Line/Line//line” (Author line #-#).

Example: Hughes directs the reader to think about deferred dreams, and he asks “Does it dry up/Like a raisin in the sun?//Or fester like a sore—“ (lines 2-4).

* If citing more than three lines, use a block quote and maintain the original structure.

Example: Hughes uses imagery to give a dream emotion:

What happens to a dream deferred?  
  
Does it dry up  
Like a raisin in the sun?  
  
Or fester like a sore--  
And then run?

**Tips for analyzing poetry**

| What do you think about the title? |  |
| --- | --- |
| Read the poem. |  |
| Reread the poem. |  |
| What is your initial reaction/thoughts? |  |
| Who is the narrator? |  |
| What is the mood or tone? How does it make you feel? |  |
| What is the message? |  |
| Reread the poem. Make sure to make annotations and write down questions or reactions. |  |
| What structure is it in? Does it rhyme? Is it freeform? |  |
| How does diction create images? Does the author appeal to the senses? |  |
| Are there any symbols? |  |
| How does the author’s background contribute to the message? |  |
| What is the message or significance of the poem? How is it conveyed? |  |

Getting started on a thesis:

What is the message/purpose?

How is it conveyed? What elements/devices are used?