

Poet's Cues

Poetic form: Recognizable structures (e.g., sonnets, ballads, haiku, limericks) cue the reader as to how the poem should be read. Poems written in "free verse" require the reader to use their own language instincts to find rhythm and pace.

Poetic structure: The structure or placement of words on a page cue the reader as to how the poem should be read.

Stanza: The space between stanzas is a cue to the reader to pause.

Rhythm: The poem's sounds (e.g., ordered and predictable, conversational) cue the reader as to how to pace the reading of the poem.

Rhyme: Lines ending in words that rhyme cue the reader to emphasize the rhyming sound to create rhythm and connection.

Repetition: Repetition of words or lines cues the reader that these lines are important to the meaning of the poem and should be given their own unique and predictable sound.

Punctuation: Punctuation cues the reader as to how long to pause or how to control the voice.

Line breaks: The length of a line will affect the time and attention the line's words are given.

Enjambment: One line continuing into another is a cue to make the pause between lines short.

Language: Formal language cues the reader to use an academic or historic voice.

Dialect: A poem in dialect provides important cues to the reader for rhythm, pace, and sound.

Alliteration: Repeated consonant sounds at the beginning of words cue the reader for rhythm.

Assonance: Repeated consonant sounds in a line or stanza cue the reader to soften the sounds.

Consonance: Repeated consonant sounds in a line or stanza cue the reader to stress the sounds.

Imagery: Words that together form an image cue the reader to read these words together.

Onomatopoeia: Sound words cue the reader to read with animation.

White space: Blank spaces cue the reader to create significant silences.