**Features of Poetry**

**Structure**

* The structure of the poem has to do with the overall organization of lines and/or the conventional patterns of sounds. However, more modern poetry might lack an identifiable structure.
* Most poems are organized into stanzas, which are a series of lines grouped together and separated by an empty line from other stanzas. They are the equivalent of a paragraph in a story or essay.

**Types of Stanzas**

* Couplet - 2 lines
* Tercet – 3 lines
* Quatrain – 4 lines
* Cinquain – 5 lines
* Sestet – 6 lines
* Septet – 7 lines
* Octave – 8 lines

**Form**

There are many different forms of poetry, but here are the three most common types:

1. Lyric Poetry: This is any poem with one speaker who expresses strong thoughts and feelings. Most poems are lyric. This tends to be more personal and introspective.
2. Narrative Poem: This poem tells a story. It has a structure that resembles the plot line of a story.
3. Descriptive Poem: This is a poem that describes the world that surrounds the speaker. It uses elaborate imagery and adjectives. It is more outward focussed than lyric.

**Rhyme/Rhyme Scheme**

* Rhyme is the repetition of similar sounds. The most common type of rhyme in poetry is end rhyme, which occurs at the end of two or more lines.
* You can label rhyme by using lower case letters, and a new letter to identify each new end sound. See if you can identify the rhyme scheme of the following poem:

I saw a fairy in the **wood**.

He was dressed all in **green**.

He drew his sword while I just **stood**.

And I realized I’d been **seen**.

* Internal rhyme occurs in the middle of a line, as in these lines:

“In mist or **cloud**, on a mast or **shroud**.”

“Whiles all the **night** through fog-smoke **white**.”

* Most modern poems do not rhyme.

**Rhythm and Meter**

* Rhythm is not the same thing as rhyme.
* Meter: the systematic regularity in rhythm.
* Some types of poetry have a strict syllable count, or a regular meter.
* Irregularity: Many metered poems in English avoid a regular rhythm because it can be boring.
* Blank verse: Any poetry that does have a set metrical pattern, but does not rhyme.
* Free verse: This is a poem that has no rules about meter or rhyme whatsoever. Free verse typically does not have rhythm or rhyme.

**Speaker**

* The speaker is the person saying the poem.
* The speaker is not necessarily the same as the poet.
* However, much of poetry is autobiographical, so when writing about a poem, unless otherwise indicated, you can usually gender the speaker after the poet.