WHAT IS POETRY?
Why do we need poetry?

• Language is to communicate information
• Language is an instrument of persuasion
• Says more and says it more intensely than does ordinary language
• Brings us a sense of life
• Brings us a perception of life
• Widens and sharpens our contact with existence
• Concerns with experience
Special Qualities of Poetry

1. STRUCTURAL DEVICES
   • Illustration
     a vivid picture by which a poet may make an idea clear
   • Repetition
     aiming at special musical effects
     a poet wants us to pay attention to something
   • Contrast
     two completely opposite pictures side by side
Repetition (Example)

Water, water everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion.

Thee for my recitative,
Thee in the driving storm ... 
Thee in thy panoply, ...

... Thy black cylindric body ...
Thy . . . .

The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner
(Coleridge)

To a Locomotive in Winter
(Whitman)
Special Qualities of Poetry

2. SOUND DEVICES
   • Alliteration
   • Onomatopoeia
   • Assonance
   • Rhyme
   • Rhythm
Allitération: the repetition of the same sound at frequent intervals

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew
The furrow followed free

Day after day, day after day

Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke-stack

... boundless and bare

The lone and level sands stretch far away
• **Onomatopoeia**: occurs in words which imitate sounds and thus suggest the object described

cuckoo    buzz    crash    tick-tack
hum       swish    jangle    z .. z .. z ..
Onomatopoeia (example)

Siesta of a Hungarian Snake
(Edwin Morgan)

S  sz  sz  SZ  sz  SZ  sz  Zs  zs  Zs  zs  zs  z
• **Assonance**: occurs when a poet introduces imperfect rhymes

wreck – rock    grind – ground    hole – road
speak – break    life – mile    hole – bowl
• **Rhyme:** occurs at line endings in poetry and consists of words which have the same sound.
  be  – sea  come – dumb  first – burst
  night – sight  fail  – hail  blew - flew

• **Rhythm:**
  - any wavelike recurrence of motion or sound
  - related to:  the beat of our heart
  the pulse of our blood
  the intake and outflow of air from lungs
Rhythm

Metre: the basic pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables

1. Trochaic: alternating stressed and unstressed syllables, beginning with a stressed syllable

/ / / / / / / / / / / / / / / Minnehaha, Laughing Water. . . .
2. Dactylic: alternating one stressed and two unstressed syllables, beginning with a stressed syllable

/        /        /
Take her up tenderly,

/        /        /
Lift her with care. . . .
3. Iambic: alternating stressed an unstressed syllables, beginning with an unstressed syllable

/       /       /       /       /       /       /       /       /

That time of year thou may’st in me behold...
4. Anapaestic: alternating one stressed and two unstressed syllables, beginning with two unstressed syllables

/                      /                    /                  /

The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold...
Feet: type of the line

- The safest way to divide a line into feet is by counting the stressed syllables

- Longer lines have more feet, shorter ones have less
# Feet

The customary names for line lengths are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>name</th>
<th>length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>monometer</td>
<td>one foot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dimeter</td>
<td>two feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trimeter</td>
<td>three feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tetrameter</td>
<td>four feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pentameter</td>
<td>five feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hexameter</td>
<td>six feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heptameter</td>
<td>seven feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>octameter</td>
<td>eight feet</td>
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</tbody>
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