

Reading Poetry

What Do I Look For?

The **title** helps you get at the poet's message.

Each **line** adds to the poem's meaning. A **stanza** is a group of lines. Like paragraphs, stanzas divide meaning into related chunks.

The **speaker** in a poem is the voice that talks to the reader. Like a narrator in prose, the speaker is not necessarily the poet.

Imagery is the words or lines that appeal to your senses of sight, smell, hearing, touch and taste.

Figures of speech like similes and metaphors make connections and suggest ideas that go beyond what the words say.

Sound devices like alliteration, onomatopoeia and repetition make the poem more interesting to read or listen to.

Rhythm is the pattern of beats or stresses in a poem. Say the line to hear the beats.

Rhyme is the repetition of sounds, usually at the ends of words.

Theme is the main message of the poem or what the poem is mostly about.

How Do I Read It?

Poetry Reading Strategies

Preview:

Read the title. Then glance at the form of the poem. Does the arrangement of the lines on the page help you know what the poem is about.

Visualize:

Use the descriptive words and images to see, hear smell, taste or feel what the speaker does.

Question:

Ask why each word was chosen. What special meanings or connections does each word have?

Connect:

Ask yourself how the poet's message relates to something or someone in your life.