



POETRY

The Nature of Poetry

- “Poetry focuses more on connotative, emotional, or associate meaning and conveys meaning more through suggestion, indirection, and the use of metaphor, symbol, and imagery than prose does” (*MLM* 131).

The Elements of Poetry

- Speaker and Tone
- Diction and Syntax
- Figures of speech
- Sound, rhythm, and meter
- Theme

Identify the *Speaker* and *Tone*

- The voice we hear in a poem is often a “persona”—a mask that could be the poet’s real voice or a complete fiction.
- Look at the speaker’s *tone*—the attitude. Sarcastic? Serious?

Be Aware of the Complexities of *Diction* and *Syntax*

- *Diction*—choice of words. Connotation—use imagery and figures of speech.
“Love.” Denotation—dictionary meaning.
“Love.”
- *Syntax*—the order of words

Major Figures of Speech Include *Metaphor* and *Symbols*

- *Metaphor*—comparison without “like” or “as.” *Simile*—comparison with “like” or “as.”
- *Symbols*—suggest general ideas. Rarely point in one direction.

Sound, Rhythm, and Meter

Work Together To Give a Poem a Psychological Force

- Ways to enforce the *sound*: Free verse—poems do not use rhyme. Alliteration—repetition of consonant sounds.
Assonance---repetition of vowel sounds.
- *Rhythm*—beat of the poem
- *Meter*—way of scanning poetry

Don't Expect a Poem's Theme to be Straightforward



**If You Argue a Point, Make
Sure You Have Evidence**

