

Figurative Language

Poetry is an art form in which human language is used for its aesthetic qualities in addition too, or instead of, its notional or semantic content. To better understand this it is important to understand the figurative language used when reading poetry.

ALLITERATION – The representing of the same beginning sound in more than two words.

Deep into that **darkness** peering,
long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams
no mortal ever **dared** to **dream** before

ONOMATOPOEIA – Words that sound like the object or actions they refer to.

Over the cobbles he **clattered** and **clashed** in the dark inn-yard
He **tapped** with his whip on the **shutters**, but all was locked and barred

PERSONIFICATION – When something not human is given human qualities.

Sad Moon, alone for centuries,
with awe has **watched Sun leave**, cerise.
while she, afar. . . how **cold she's grown!**
For centuries, **sad moon alone.**

SIMILE – Compared two things using the words 'like' or 'as'.

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester **like a sore**—
And then run?

METAPHOR – A comparison between two unlike things.

“Hope” is the thing with feathers—
That perches in the soul—
And sings the tune without the words—
And never stops - at all—