

## Poetic Subject

The subject is the **topic of the poem (person or idea)** and is not to be confused with the grammatical subject, which is the agent of the action performed (the man walked, the dog barks).

### *Explore the title*

- What would you guess the poem is about?
- What do you associate with the title? ('The rising sun' = sunrise, colourful)

### *Read through the poem more than once*

- What subject you expected from the title?
- What is the actual subject of the poem?
- What is the difference?
- Positive or negative poem? (give reference as support)

**Poet is the person who wrote the poem. Speaker is the voice of the poem. When discussing poetry, always refer to the speaker!**

### *Read sentence by sentence*

- Ignore stanzas and lines; make sentences.
- Underline verbs.
- Identify grammatical subjects.
- Identify other elements.

### *Examine form and arguments*

- What is the setting of the stanza (section)?
- What is the subject of the stanza?
- What are the circumstances and attitude of the speaker?
- What is the relation of the subject between the stanza and poem (as a whole)?
- **Stanza, sonnet, couplet, tercet, quatrain**
- Take note of how different sections of the poem relate to one another.
- Are the circumstances and attitudes of the speaker the same in every section?
- Do the ideas expressed in the poem progress or shift?
- Do the different section sustain one another or contrast?

*The text contains three main sections falling into three stanzas of ten lines each, with a line blank between each.*

### *Exploring diction and mood*

- The division into sections often reflects divisions in the argument and treatment of the subject.
- Poem sections can be unified and held together by rhyme (quatrain and couplet).
- Identify words or phrases that suggest emotion.

## Poetic language

Poetic language is language that has been highly manipulated and deviates from the normal usage.

## Tropes

A word or thought might be used in a way that shifts its meaning from an ordinary understanding to some other sense.

- Simile – comparison using like or as
- Metaphor – comparison without using like or as
- Personification – giving inanimate objects human qualities
- Metonymy – something associated with the object represents the object “that hotel has an excellent table (food)”
- Hyperbole – exaggeration for humour
- Irony – Implies the opposite of what was said “I can’t wait for my detention on Friday”
- Oxymoron – two contradictory words next to each other “bitter sweet”, “angry relief”
- Understatement (euphemism) – making something seem less than what it is

## Schemes

The pattern in which words or phrases are arranged may be shifted from the ordinary to some other, striking pattern (the way in which words are arranged has been changed).

- Repetition –
- Anaphora –
- Alliteration – repetition of consonance “the snake slid soundlessly”
- Parallelism –
- Antithesis – compares and contradicts ideas within a sentence “he’s a mouse in stature, but a lion in strength”
- Ellipsis – “...” leaving out words to prevent repetition
- Parenthesis – brackets used as an explanation or to add information (like this)

## Sound and Rhythm

Represent rhymes with alphabet letters (a,b...).

There are **four** main metrical feet:

1. Iambus – a rising rhythm of two syllables (emphasis is on second syllable)
2. Trochee – a falling rhythm of two syllables (emphasis is on first syllable)
3. Anapest – a rising rhythm of three syllables (emphasis on third syllable)
4. Dactyl – a falling rhythm of three syllables (emphasis on first syllable)

**A line of five metrical feet is called a pentameter.**

Iambic pentameter is used, often, in sonnets. The metre creates special effects to suit the mood of the poem, can give a physical effect and is able to convey movement.

**A sonnet consists of fourteen lines.** The Elizabethan (Shakespearean) sonnet consists of **three quatrains** (four lines that rhyme [abab]) and a **rhyming couplet** (cc). It uses **iambic pentameter**. The Petrarchan (Italian) sonnet is divided into an **octave and a sestet**. The octave conveys the problem and the sestet conveys a solution. The octave follows the “abbaabba” rhyme scheme and the sestet varies.

The ode is an address or tribute in praise of something. It is, generally, lyrical.