Directions: *Read, highlight, and annotate the mentor text below…*

Figures of Speech

Figures of speech, or figurative language, are ways of describing or explaining things in a non-literal or non-traditional way. For example, a metaphor describes something by likening it to something else: "His touch was a lightning strike."

Descriptive Imagery

Imagery is something concrete, like a sight, smell or taste. Imagery describes what the poet sees, hears or otherwise senses, be it a literal image or one that exists in his mind. Visual imagery, which describes what the poet sees, is the most common type of image in poetry. It creates a picture that the reader or listener can see in his mind.

Punctuation and Format

The punctuation and format of the poem deal with how it is arranged on the page and how the author intends for you to read it. For example, if a poem has frequent line breaks and short stanzas, it forces you to read it in a different rhythm than if it were arranged in longer stanzas with fewer breaks. To better understand this concept, read poetry aloud instead of in your head; when you read poetry, or listen to the poet read his own work, you see the impact of the format.

Sound and Tone

Poets use different sounds and tones throughout poetry to change the way it sounds. For example, the poet may use alliteration, which is when multiple consecutive words start with the same letter. For example, he may write, "Pretty pugs playfully prance on the promenade." The poet may choose his letters to give the poem a soft or sharp sound, as well. For example, choosing words that use "soft" consonants like f, m and w produces a different sound than words with "hard" consonants like d, k, t and z.

Choice of Meter

The meter of a poem is the rhythm or pattern of speech with which you read it, and it doesn't happen by accident. Poets use different meters to give their poetry different rhythms, which have technical names like iambic pentameter or spondaic heptameter. These names function like measurements for poetry -- a poem's rhythm and meter can be broken down and analyzed according to measurements like these.

Structure

Traditionally, poems followed rigid guidelines concerning rhyme, rhythm and meter. Sonnets, for example, contain a certain number of syllables per line and rhyme every other line, among other features. Certain kinds of poems contain a given number of stanzas, or paragraphs. Contemporary poetry usually throws convention to the wind and ignores structural patterns. Also known as free verse, many poets prefer this approach to poetry writing because it offers greater artistic freedom.

Content

Often people describe poetry as an expression of emotion, but a poet can write about any topic. Sonnets and odes are, by convention, emotional poems, but epics detail heroic deeds and battles, which may or may not include emotional digressions. Limericks convey humor, and haikus paint images with words.

Aesthetic Experience

Readers who look for a code to decipher a poem are missing the point. The purpose of a poem is to offer a pleasurable experience for the reader. Poetry is meant to be experienced and enjoyed. By nature, it encourages reflection, but poems are not required to convey a message or point. Like a painting on a wall, a poem offers something for the imagination to ponder and mull over. This is the defining feature of a poem.

Read more : <http://www.ehow.com/info_8635237_features-poem.html>

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