



LIFE·PAC®

Language Arts

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Alpha Omega Publications®

LANGUAGE ARTS 1105

POETRY

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POETRY

Poetry surrounds each of us every day. Any time that we sing a song, tap our feet in time to music, share someone else's sadness or joy, decide on an amusing or unusual way to say something, compare one thing with another in everyday speech, or hint at something without actually saying it, we are using some form of poetic expression.

Everyone has a little poetry in him. God recognizes that, for He devoted a large part of the Bible to poetry: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Solomon, and Lamentations. When we read those books, we see that they all have in common the expression of the deepest emotions of humanity—joy and sorrow, hope and despair, love and fear, fulfillment and futility. As good poets in all times have done, the poets of the Bible looked closely at common things and drew uncommon meanings from them. Few sights were more common in King David's time than sheep grazing in a pasture. Ordinary experience, however, is the basis for a poem of unmatched beauty and inspiration, the Twenty-Third Psalm.

In this LIFEPAC® you will study poetry as the treatment of common things in an uncommon way. You will see that poetry is not difficult to understand, but that it does demand attention. Because a poet writes about common human experiences, you may recognize your own feelings in some of the poems in this LIFEPAC. You may find sentiments with which you disagree, for the poet may see some things differently than you do.

If you already enjoy poetry and even write some yourself, the material in this LIFEPAC will help you to deepen your enjoyment, sharpen your insight, and develop your skills. If, for some reason, you think that you dislike poetry, put aside that dislike for awhile and approach the subject with an open mind. You will find an additional way in which God can sharpen your mind and you will develop an appreciation for the things and people around you. You will find that studying poetry and attempting to write verses will improve vocabulary and will stimulate your creativity.

OBJECTIVES

Read these objectives. The objectives tell you what you will be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFEPAC.

When you have finished this LIFEPAC, you should be able to:

1. Scan a poem to determine the dominant foot and the number of feet per line.
2. Identify specific musical effects in samples of poetry.
3. List five styles of poetry and cite characteristics of each.
4. List certain universal themes encountered in poetry and give examples of poems based on each theme.
5. Explain how poets use figures of speech and the connotations of words to enhance imagery.
6. Write a poem using rhyme, meter, musical effects, and figures of speech.

Survey the LIFEPAC. Ask yourself some questions about this study. Write your questions here.

I. MEASUREMENT AND FORM

Just as special terms have been created for the measurement of distance, weight, and volume, special terms are used by poets for the measurement of words or sounds. A poet's terms for measuring sounds fall into two general classes: words related to rhythm and *meter* and words for *musical techniques*.

In this section you will study the various metric feet used in English poetry and the effects created by each foot. You will also become familiar with the terms used by poets to indicate the number of feet in a line. Among the techniques used by poets to create musical effects that you will study in this section are *rhyme*, **alliteration**, **consonance**, **assonance**, and **onomatopoeia**. These odd names represent familiar practices and are not so difficult as they appear. In addition, you will discover that all poetry is not alike and that different poetic forms serve different purposes.

SECTION OBJECTIVES

Review these objectives. When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. Scan a poem to determine the dominant foot and the number of feet per line.
2. Identify specific musical effects in samples of poetry.
3. List five styles of poetry and cite characteristics of each.

VOCABULARY

Study these words to enhance your learning success in this section.

alliteration	consonance	iamb	pyrrhic
anapest	dactyl	onomatopoeia	trochee
assonance	dominant foot	spondee	

METRICAL FEET

To measure the sound of his poem, a poet uses a device called a *metrical foot*. In English poetry, the foot consists of a specific number of accented and unaccented syllables. By choosing a particular dominant foot and by consciously varying from it on occasion, the poet can create a particular tone and atmosphere that suit his subject. He can also create the emotional response that he wants from his reader. The wrong foot can spoil a poem.

Iamb. The **iamb** is the most common metrical foot in English poetry. Consisting of only two syllables, the iamb creates a 'da DUM' sound pattern. In this sound pattern the first syllable is unaccented and the second syllable is accented, as in the word *a bout*'. Words of more than two syllables also may have an iambic pattern. *A ban' don ment'* is an example. When the pattern of unstressed syllable and stressed syllable continues throughout a poem, the poem is iambic.

Many familiar poems use the iamb as their **dominant foot**. In the following lines the stressed syllables are marked with an accent mark [] and the unstressed syllables with a breve (˘).

Thát time ǒf ye ar thǒu ma yst ǐn m e bǐho ld.

Thě wo ods aře lo velǔ, da rk, aǎd de ep.

Thě wo rld iǔ to o mǔch wi th ũs; la te aǎd so on.

Mǔ lo ve iǔ lik e ǎ re d rǐd ro se.

Notice that the iambic pattern is not always perfect. Some stresses are more marked than others when the lines are read aloud.

➡ **Complete this activity.**

- 1.1 Read the following lines. Mark the stressed and unstressed syllables. Write *yes* in the blank if the line is iambic or *no* if it is not.
- a. How sweet I roamed from field to field _____
 - b. Go and catch a falling star _____
 - c. When fishes flew and forests walked _____
 - d. Through wood and dale the sacred river ran _____
 - e. Take me, Lord, to dwell with thee _____

Trochee. The **trochee** is a two-syllable foot that stresses the first syllable, as in the word pa' per. The trochee stress is the reverse of the iamb. Although the trochee is less common in English, it is not difficult to locate because of the first syllable stress.

The following lines are *trochaic*:

Whe n tĥe sta rs thrĕw dow n thĕir spea rs.

Li ttlĕ Lam b whŏ mad e theĕ?

Qu oth tĥe ra vĕn, "Ne vĕrmo re."

➡ **Complete these activities.**

- 1.2 Mark the trochees in the following line.

By a route obscure and lonely.

- 1.3 Write a phrase, a sentence, or a series of words in trochees. _____
- _____

Anapest. The **anapest** consists of three syllables, the first two unstressed and the last one stressed. Because the anapest produces a strong rhythm, it is often mixed with other metrical feet. The American poets, Poe and Longfellow, were particularly fond of anapests.

The following lines from Poe's "Annabel Lee" mix anapests and iambs:

And thi s wăś thĕ re a sŏn thăt lo ng ăgo
iamb anapest anapest iamb

In this kingdom by the sea.
anapest iamb iamb

Like many of Poe's works, "Anabel Lee" paints an imaginative picture of his wife Virginia Clemm, who died young.

Read the poem.

Annabel Lee

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and she was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than love—
I and my Annabel Lee;
With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her highborn kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulcher
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me—
Yes! that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we,
Of many far wiser than we;
And neither the angels in heaven above,
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;

For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
In the sepulcher there by the sea,
In her tomb by the sounding sea.



Complete these activities.

- 1.4 a. Mark the anapests in the first line.
b. What other foot is used? _____