Reading On The Move

Poetry: Rhyme, Repetition, and Rhythm

*Rhyme* is the repetition of similar sounds in two or more words. In poetry these words are usually at the end of a line and help create a certain rhythm.

**Example:** *tree, me, see, be, flee* all rhyme because they *end* with the same sound.

Match the rhyming words below. The first one is done for you.

1. squeak  
   shuttle  
2. pray  
   stray  
3. sharpen  
   hour  
4. phone  
   boat  
5. empower  
   peak  
6. helpful  
   stone  
7. strange  
   open  
8. motion  
   range  
9. puddle  
   cupful  
10. note  
   lotion
Here is an example of a poem that uses rhyming:

*Fire and Ice*

*Robert Frost*

Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice.
From what I've tasted of desire
I hold with those who favour fire.
But if it had to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate
To say that for destruction ice
Is also great
And would suffice.

The words fire and desire rhyme, as well as the words ice, twice, and suffice. Also, hate and great rhyme.

**Rhyme Scheme** is the pattern in which rhyming happens.

Example: There once was a big fat cat, a
That liked to eat cute little mice. b
All day he watched while he sat, a
For those mice that tasted so nice. b

*Cat* and *sat* rhyme, as well as *mice* and *nice*.
So, the rhyme scheme is *a, b, a, b.*
If the poem went like this:

There once was a big fat cat,  
That liked to eat cute little mice.  
All day he watched while he sat,  
Licking his lips in anticipation.

**Cat** and **sat** still rhyme, however, **mice** and **anticipation** do not.  
So, the rhyme scheme would be **a, b, a, c**.

Now that you know the words that rhyme in the poem *Fire and Ice*, label the rhyme scheme on the lines to the right. The first rhyme is labeled for you.

*Fire and Ice*  
*Robert Frost*

Some say the world will end in fire,  
Some say in ice.  
From what I've tasted of desire  
I hold with those who favour fire.  
But if it had to perish twice,  
I think I know enough of hate  
To say that for destruction ice  
Is also great  
And would suffice.

The rhyme scheme of this poem is:

**Assonance** is the repetition of vowel-sounds within non-rhyming words.

**Example:** Here is an example from Edgar Allan Poe’s poem, *Annabel Lee*:

And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling, my darling, my life and my bride.

The repetition of the *i* sound in both lines is assonance because it is a repetition of a vowel sound.

**Consonance** is the repetition of consonant sounds within words, but not at the start of a word. Often times, consonance refers to the end sound (like “nk” in *sank* and *think*)

**Example:** Ladder and bitter
Spelled and scald
Dress and boss

There is a repetition of the *consonant sounds* at the *end* of each of these examples.

20. Circle the pairs of words that show assonance.

  boast, broom
  coat, hole
  fare, part
  night, fire
  silver, pillar
Underline the consonance in each sentence below.

21. Roger and his brother wander by the river.
22. It is a treat to watch her feet tapping to the beat.
23. Dan ran ten miles.
24. These are Tom’s sisters, Jess and Tina.
25. Doug had a mug of fig juice.

**Alliteration** is the repetition of beginning sounds of words. “Tongue twisters” often use alliteration.

**Example:** Sally sells seashells by the seashore.
Arthur already answered questions about the account.
Bob boasted about his beautiful bride.

There is a repetition of the *beginning sounds* of words in these sentences.

Try to read the tongue twister out loud as fast as you can. You may need to read it many times before you can say it all without any mistakes.

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
Did Peter Piper pick a peck of pickled peppers?
If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,
Where’s the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?
26. Try another one!

How much wood would a woodchuck chuck
If a woodchuck could chuck wood?
He would chuck, he would, as much as he could,
And chuck as much as a woodchuck would
If a woodchuck could chuck wood.

Now, underline the alliteration in the tongue twister.

Repetition in poetry can refer to the repetition of syllables, sounds, words, or phrases. Repetition in sounds, such as rhyming and in syllables, such as rhythm, help to create a flow throughout the poem. Repetition of words and phrases helps the poet to emphasize an important aspect of the poem. Often times, when phrases are repeated, it creates a more emotional experience for the reader. The example on the next page uses many types of repetition.
Example:

**Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening**  
Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.  
The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.  
And miles to go before I sleep.

Repetition of syllables:  
Each line has 8 syllables.

Repetition of sounds:  
The rhyme scheme of the first 3 stanzas is a, a, b, a.  
The third line of each stanza rhymes with lines one, two, and four of the following stanza.  
Each line in the last stanza rhymes.

Repetition of words:  
The author repeats the last two lines, “And miles to go before I sleep.”
**Rhythm** of a poem is how the words flow within each meter and stanza. Writers create rhythm by repeating words, phrases or even whole lines and sentences in a poem. Rhythm in poetry might mean that certain words are said more forcefully than others, or certain words are held longer. This produces a rhythmic effect which stresses specific parts of the poem. The word rhythm comes from the Greek, meaning "measured motion."

The music you listen to on the radio isn’t that much different from the poetry of long ago. The music you listen to is written in **lyrics**, which is basically poetry written to music. Whether the words are from today or from long ago, we hear the rhythms and feel the emotions that are common to all human beings.

One easy way to hear meter and rhythm is to read the poem out loud. Pretend you are performing a song much like your favorite music artist. Make sure there is a difference between stressed and unstressed syllables.

Read the poem on the next page silently to yourself. You may want to read it more than once. Next, read the poem out loud. Try to feel the meter and rhythm of the poem by tapping your foot or clapping your hands to the beat. Answer the questions that follow.
In the Garden
Emily Dickinson

A bird came down the walk:
He did not know I saw;
He bit an angle-worm in halves
And ate the fellow, raw.
And then he drank a dew
From a convenient grass,
And then hopped sidewise to the wall
To let a beetle pass.
He glanced with rapid eyes
That hurried all abroad,—
They looked like frightened beads, I thought;
He stirred his velvet head
Like one in danger; cautious,
I offered him a crumb,
And he unrolled his feathers
And rowed him softer home
Than oars divide the ocean,
Too silver for a seam,
Or butterflies, off banks of noon,
Leap, splashless, as they swim.
27. What is the narrator doing in this poem?
   a. Rowing a boat on the ocean.
   b. Watching a bird in the garden.
   c. Trying to catch a bird in the garden.
   d. Swimming in a pool in the garden.

28. How many syllables does each line have?
   a. 6
   b. 8
   c. 10
   d. 12

29. What is the rhyme scheme of the first 8 lines?
**Answer Key**

1. squeak  
2. pray  
3. sharpen  
4. phone  
5. empower  
6. helpful  
7. strange  
8. motion  
9. puddle  
10. note  
11. shuttle  
12. stray  
13. hour  
14. boat  
15. peak  
16. stone  
17. open  
18. range  
19. cupful  
20. lotion

11. a  
12. b  
13. a  
14. a  
15. b  
16. c  
17. b  
18. c  
19. b

20. You should have circled: coat, hole; night, fire; silver, pillar
21. Roger and his brother wander by the river.
22. It is a treat to watch her feet tapping to the beat.
23. Dan ran ten miles.
24. These are Tom’s sisters, Jess and Tina.
25. Doug had a mug of fig juice.
26. How much wood would a woodchuck chuck
   If a woodchuck could chuck wood?
   He would chuck, he would, as much as he could,
   And chuck as much as a woodchuck would
   If a woodchuck could chuck wood.

27. b
28. a
29. a, b, c, b, d, e, f, e