**English Poetry Terms**

**Accent**  
The prominence or emphasis given to a syllable or word. In the word poetry, the accent (or stress) falls on the first syllable.

**Allegory**  
Allegory is a narrative having a second meaning beneath the surface one.

**Alliteration**  
The repetition of the same or similar sounds at the beginning of words such as tongue twisters like 'She sells seashells by the seashore'

**Analogy**  
Analogy is a likeness or similarity between things that are otherwise unlike.

**Anapaest**  
A metrical foot of three syllables, two short (or unstressed) followed by one long (or stressed). The anapaest is the opposite of the dactyl.

**Antithesis**  
An example of antithesis is "To err is human, to forgive, divine." by Alexander Pope is an example of antithesis with words and phrases with opposite meanings balanced against each other.

**Apostrophe**  
A figure of speech in which someone absent or dead or something nonhuman is addressed as if it were alive and present and could reply

**Archetype**  
Archetype is the original pattern from which copies are made.

**Assonance**  
The repetition or a pattern of similar sounds, as in the tongue twister "Moses supposes his toeses are roses."

**Blank verse**Blank verse is in unrhymed iambic pentameter which is a type of meter in poetry, in which there are five iambs to a line.

**Cacophony**  
Lewis Carroll makes use of cacophony in 'Jabberwocky' by using an unpleasant spoken sound created by clashing consonants.

**Consonance**  
Consonance is the repetition, at close intervals, of the final consonant sounds of accented syllables or important words.

**Couplet**  
Shakespearean sonnets usually end in a couplet and are a pair of lines that are the same length and usually rhyme and form a complete thought.

**Doggerel**  
Doggerels are a light verse which is humorous and comic by nature.

**Enjambment**  
Enjambment comes from the French word for "to straddle." Enjambment is the continuation of a sentence form one line or couplet into the next and derives from the French verb 'to straddle'. An example by Joyce Kilmer is 'I think that I shall never see/A poem as lovely as a tree'.

**Envoy**  
The shorter final stanza of a poem, as in a ballade.

**Euphemism**  
Euphemism is the use of a soft indirect expression instead of one that is harsh or unpleasantly direct. For example 'pass away' as opposed to 'die'

**Feminine rhyme**  
A rhyme that occurs in a final unstressed syllable: pleasure/leisure, longing/yearning.

**Figure of speech**   
A verbal expression in which words or sounds are arranged in a particular way to achieve a particular effect such as alliteration, antithesis, assonance, hyperbole, metaphor, onomatopoeia and simile.

**Form**  
Form is the generic term for the organising principle of a literary work. In poetry, form is described in terms elements like rhyme, meter, and stanzaic pattern.

**Heroic couplet**  
A stanza composed of two rhymed lines in iambic pentameter.

**Hyperbole**  
Hyperbole (overstatement) is a type of figurative language that depends on intentional overstatement.

**Iamb**  
A metrical foot of two syllables, one short (or unstressed) and one long (or stressed). The lamb is the reverse of the trochee.

**Iambic pentameter**   
Shakespeare's plays were written mostly in iambic pentameter, which is the most common type of meter in English poetry. It is a basic measure of English poetry, five iambic feet in each line.

**Imagery**  
Imagery draws the reader into poetic experiences by touching on the images and senses which the reader already knows.

**Irony**  
Irony is a situation, or a use of language, involving some kind of discrepancy. An example of this is ''Water, water everywhere but ne'er a drop to drink'.

**Litotes**  
A litote is a figure of speech in which affirmative is expressed by the negation of the opposite. "He's no dummy" is a good example.

**Metaphor**  
A metaphor is a pattern equating two seemingly unlike objects. An examples of a metaphor is 'drowning in debt'.

**Meter**  
Meters are regularized rhythms. An arrangement of language in which the accents occur at apparently equal intervals in time. Each repeated unit of meter is called a foot.

**Metonymy**  
A figure of speech in which one word is substituted for another with which it is closely associated. Some significant aspect or detail of an experience is used to represent the whole experience.

**Onomatopoeia**  
A figure of speech in which words are used to imitate sounds. Examples of onomatopoeic words can be found in numerous Nursery Rhymes e.g. clippety-clop and cock-a-doodle-do.

**Paradox**  
A paradox is a statement or situation containing apparently contradictory or incompatible elements.

**Persona**  
Persona refers to the narrator or speaker of the poem, not to be confused with the author.  
**Personification**  
Personification means giving human traits to nonhuman or abstract things.

**Refrain**  
A phrase, line, or group of lines that is repeated throughout a poem, usually after every stanza.

**Rhyme**  
The occurrence of the same or similar sounds at the end of two or more words.  
**Rhythm**  
Rhythm is significant in poetry because poetry is so emotionally charged and intense. Rhythm can be measured in terms of heavily stressed to less stressed syllables. Rhythm is measured in feet, units usually consisting of one heavily accented syllable and one or more lightly accented syllable.

**Scansion**  
The analysis of a poem's meter. This is usually done by marking the stressed and unstressed syllables in each line and then, based on the pattern of the stresses, dividing the line into feet.

**Simile**  
A figure of speech in which two things are compared using the word "like" or "as" to draw attention to similarities about two things that are seemingly dissimilar

**Slang**  
Slang refers to highly informal and sub-standard vocabulary which may exist for some time and then vanish. Some slang remains in usage long enough to become permanent, but slang never becomes a part of formal diction.

**Stanza**  
Two or more lines of poetry that together form one of the divisions of a poem. The stanzas of a poem are usually of the same length and follow the same pattern of meter and rhyme.

**Stress**  
Stress refers to the accent or emphasis, either strong or weak, given to each syllable in a piece of writing, as determined by conventional pronunciation.

**Synecdoche**  
Synecdoche is a figure of speech in which a part is used for the whole.

**Syntax**  
Syntax refers to word order and sentence structure. Normal word order in English sentences is firmly fixed in subject-verb-object sequence or subject-verb-complement. In poetry, word order may be shifted around to meet emphasis, to heighten the connection between two words, or to pick up on specific implications or traditions.

**Verse**  
A single metrical line of poetry, or poetry in general (as opposed to prose).