

Poetic devices checklist

Make sure you have a thorough understanding of the poetic devices below and identify where they are used in the poems in your anthology. This will help you gain maximum marks across all exam boards.

Please see the **activity** on page 2.

- ❖ Alliteration
- ❖ Allusion
- ❖ Ambiguity
- ❖ Anthropomorphism
- ❖ Assonance
- ❖ Colloquial
- ❖ Connotation
- ❖ Empathy
- ❖ Enjambment
- ❖ Figurative language
- ❖ Genre
- ❖ Imagery
- ❖ Irony
- ❖ Onomatopoeia
- ❖ Personification
- ❖ Pathetic fallacy
- ❖ Protagonist
- ❖ Pun
- ❖ Repetition
- ❖ Rhyme scheme
- ❖ Rhythm
- ❖ Satire
- ❖ Sonnet
- ❖ Stanza
- ❖ Structure
- ❖ Symbol
- ❖ Simile
- ❖ Syntax
- ❖ Sibilance
- ❖ Theme



Activity - complete the following table:

| Poetic term | Definition | Example from a poem in your anthology |
|---------------------|------------|---------------------------------------|
| Alliteration | | |
| Allusion | | |
| Ambiguity | | |
| Anthropomorphism | | |
| Assonance | | |
| Colloquial | | |
| Connotation | | |
| Empathy | | |
| Enjambment | | |
| Figurative language | | |
| Genre | | |

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| Imagery | | |
| Irony | | |
| Onomatopoeia | | |
| Personification | | |
| Pathetic fallacy | | |
| Protagonist | | |
| Pun | | |
| Repetition | | |
| Rhyme scheme | | |
| Rhythm | | |
| Satire | | |

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| Sonnet | | |
| Stanza | | |
| Structure | | |
| Style | | |
| Symbol | | |
| Simile | | |
| Syntax | | |
| Sibilance | | |
| Theme | | |
| Metaphor | | |

ANSWERS:

| Poetic term | Definition | Tick if revised |
|----------------------------|---|-----------------|
| Alliteration | The repetition of the same consonant sound, especially at the beginning of words | |
| Allusion | Allusion is usually implied rather than explicit and provides another layer of meaning to what is being communicated | |
| Ambiguity | The creation of uncertainty. The ability to interpret something in other ways usually allowing us to explore other things outside the obvious meaning | |
| Anthropomorphism | The endowment of human characteristics to something that is not human | |
| Assonance | The repetition of similar vowel sounds | |
| Colloquial | Ordinary, everyday speech and language – conversational, informal, relaxed communication | |
| Connotation | An implication or association attached to a word or phrase. It is suggested or felt rather than being explicit | |
| Empathy | The ability to understand and share the feelings of another (e.g. the poet or protagonist) | |
| Enjambment | A line of verse that flows on into the next line without a pause – usually creates an illusion of continuation or pace | |
| Figurative language | The use of language that is symbolic or metaphorical | |
| Genre | Type of writing e.g. prose, poetry, ballad, drama | |
| Imagery | The use of words to conjure up a picture in the mind of the reader. A description that is closely connected to the image of something real | |
| Irony | The expression of one's meaning by using language that normally signifies the opposite, typically for humorous or emphatic effect | |
| Onomatopoeia | The use of words whose sounds copies the thing or process they describe | |
| Personification | The attribution of human feelings, emotions, or sensations to an inanimate object. It is a type of metaphor giving human qualities to things / abstract ideas | |
| Pathetic fallacy | Where the weather reflects the mood of the protagonist / atmosphere of the poem | |
| Protagonist | The main character or speaker in a poem, monologue, play or story | |
| Pun | A play on words that have similar sounds but quite different meanings | |
| Repetition | Words or phrases repeated to provide an effect e.g. re-emphasising the point | |
| Rhyme scheme | The pattern of rhymes in a poem | |
| Rhythm | Corresponding sounds in words, usually at the end of each line, but not always | |
| Satire | The use of humour, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticise people's stupidity or vices | |
| Sonnet | 14-line poem, usually with 10 syllables in each line | |
| Stanza | The blocks of lines into which a poem is divided, looks like mini paragraphs | |
| Structure | The way in which the poem has been constructed | |
| Style | The way in which the poet writes e.g. contemporary | |
| Symbol | A symbol is when an object, person, theme presents something else | |
| Simile | The comparison of one thing to another to make the description more vivid | |
| Syntax | The way in which sentences are structured to achieve a specific effect | |
| Sibilance | A more specific type of alliteration that relies on the repetition of soft consonant sounds in words to create a wooshing or hissing sound in the writing | |
| Theme | The idea(s) explored by the poet throughout the poem | |
| Metaphor | A comparison of one thing to another to make the description more vivid | |