Grade 7: Reading Benchmark

Poetry

7.R.1.4: Analyze the impact of various poetic forms on meaning and style.

© 2021 Amplify Education, Inc.

These materials are provided solely for licensed users of Amplify ELA Florida Edition. Any further reproduction or distribution of this document or its contents is prohibited.

Benchmark Introduction



Benchmark:

Examine how the structure of a poem affects its meaning and style.

Definition of Poetry

“The best words in the best order.”

—Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Definition of Poetic Form

The **poetic form** is the physical structure of a poem—how the poem is arranged on the page.

Understanding structure and poetic form

When examining the structure of a poem, a reader may consider:

- How does the poem look on the page? (boxy? skinny? regular? irregular?)
- How are the lines arranged? How many are there?
- How many stanzas can you count? Are they all of equal length?

Understanding structure and poetic form

When examining the structure of a poem, a reader may consider:

- How many syllables are there in each line? Which syllables are stressed?
- What is the pattern of rhymes or the rhyme scheme?
- What are the rhythms within and between the lines, the patterns of sound and meter?

Understanding structure and poetic form

The elements of a poem's structure or form contribute to the poem's overall meaning or impact on the reader.

- For example, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow uses a **meter** that sounds like Revere's horse galloping in his poem, "Paul Revere's Midnight Ride."

  Listen, my children, and you shall hear,
  Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere

Understanding structure and poetic form

There are named **poetic forms** that follow an established structure. For example:

- sonnet
- villanelle

Definition of Sonnet

A **sonnet** is a poetic form that follows an established structure.

- Fourteen lines, arranged into stanzas
- Regular meter: Each line contains ten syllables with (usually) the same rhythm—iambic pentameter.
- Regular rhyme scheme: The end rhymes follow a regular pattern that depends upon the style of the sonnet.

Sonnet: Structure and Meaning

- **Sonnets** often develop a theme or express an argument.
- The consistent arrangement of stanzas supports the development of the sonnet's argument or theme.
- The consistent meter and rhyme scheme highlight and connect key words.

Sonnet Form and Meaning: “Sonnet 18”

Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer’s lease hath all too short a date;

Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature’s changing course untrimm'd;

But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow’st;
Nor shall death brag thou wander’st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow’st:

So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

by William Shakespeare



The poem has fourteen lines, arranged into three quatrains (4-line stanzas) and a couplet (2-line stanza). Each part develops the argument about why the beloved is more lovely than a “summer’s day.”

Sonnet Form and Meaning: “Sonnet 18”

Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer’s lease hath all too short a date;

Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature’s changing course untrimm'd;

But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow’st;
Nor shall death brag thou wander’st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow’st:

So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

by William Shakespeare

- The sonnet has the sonnet meter (iambic pentameter) with no variation, perhaps reflecting the beloved’s perfect nature or the strength of the argument.

- The sonnet follows the Shakespearean sonnet rhyme scheme ABAB CDCD EFEF GG.

Definition of Villanelle

A **villanelle** is a poetic form that follows an established structure.

- Nineteen lines, arranged into stanzas of five tercets (three lines) followed by a quatrain (four lines)
- Two lines of the first tercet are repeated alternately as the last lines of the stanzas that follow. Both lines are repeated in the final quatrain.
- The entire poem is restricted to the two rhyme sounds introduced in the first tercet.

Villanelle: Structure and Meaning

- The **villanelle** was originally a song form and focused on rural themes.
- The repetition of lines can add emphasis to the meaning of those repeated lines or communicate a new meaning to each repetition.
- Poets can use the strict pattern of lines and rhymes to create a sense of playfulness, or convey obsession.

Villanelle Form and Meaning: “Villanelle of Change”

Since Persia fell at Marathon,
The yellow years have gathered fast:
Long centuries have come and gone.

And yet (they say) the place will don
A phantom fury of the past,
Since Persia fell at Marathon;

And as of old, when Helicon
Trembled and swayed with rapture vast
(Long centuries have come and gone),

This ancient plain, when night comes on,
Shakes to a ghostly battle-blast,
Since Persia fell at Marathon.

But into soundless Acheron
The glory of Greek shame was cast:
Long centuries have come and gone,

The suns of Hellas have all shone,
The first has fallen to the last:—
Since Persia fell at Marathon,
Long centuries have come and gone.

by Edwin Arlington Robinson

- The poem has nineteen lines, divided into five tercets (3-line stanzas) and a quatrain.

- The first and third lines of the opening tercet (Since Persia fell at Marathon, / Long centuries have come and gone.) are repeated alternately as the last lines of the stanzas that follow and become the two final lines in the poem. The repetition of these lines perhaps reflects the multiple years that have passed since the Greek defeat of Persia at Marathon and the long standing impact of this defeat, which ushered in the classical Greek civilization.

Benchmark Skill Routine



How to analyze poetic form

Read the poem aloud. Then read closely, highlight, and annotate details that catch your attention or reveal something about the speaker, setting, and events in the poem.

How to analyze poetic form

What imagery, feelings, and themes do you notice in the poem?

How to analyze poetic form

Read the poem aloud again, and make observations about the poem’s structure.

- How are the lines arranged on the page?
- What do you notice about the rhyme and meter?
- Does the poem follow an established form?

How to analyze poetic form

Ask yourself:

How does the structure of the poem contribute to its meaning or impact?

Remember

1. Read the poem aloud. Then read closely, highlight, and annotate details that catch your attention or reveal something about the speaker, setting, and events in the poem.
2. What imagery, feelings, or themes do you notice in the poem?
3. Read the poem aloud again and make observations about the poem’s structure.
4. How does the structure of the poem contribute to its meaning or impact?

Benchmark in Action: Example of how to analyze poetic form



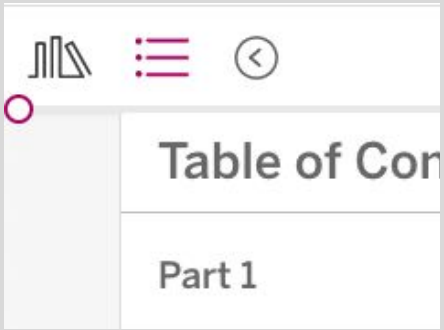
Get ready to read “Sonnet 116” by William Shakespeare.



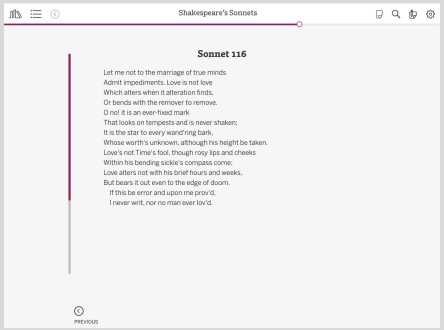
1. Open the Library app.



2. Type “Shakespeare’s Sonnets” into the search bar. Click on the title of the book to open it.



3. Click on the Table of Contents. Find and click on “Sonnet 116.”



4. Read “Sonnet 116.”

Read “Sonnet 116.”

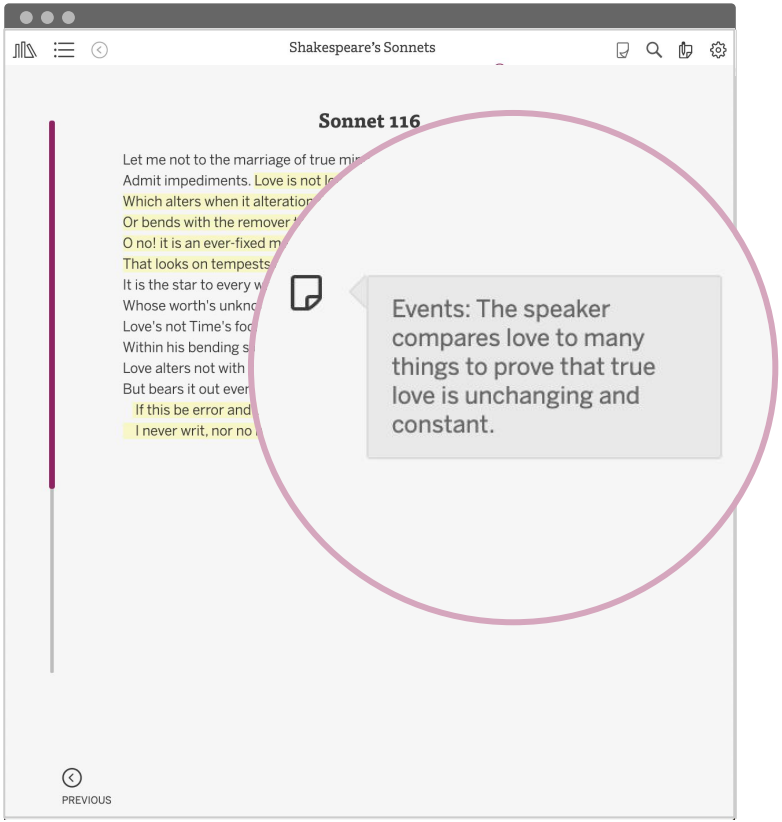
As you read...

- highlight and annotate details that catch your attention or reveal something about the speaker, setting, and events in the poem.
- notice imagery, feelings, or themes in the poem.
- make observations about the poem’s structure.
- think about how the structure of the poem contributes to its meaning or impact.

Practice Step 1

Read the poem aloud. Then read closely, highlight, and annotate details that catch your attention or reveal something about the speaker, setting, and events in the poem.

Practice Step 1



Highlight and annotate details that reveal something about the speaker, setting, and events.

Events: The speaker compares love to many things to prove that true love is unchanging and constant.

Speaker: The speaker firmly believes that true love must be constant. He says that if he is wrong about this, it would be as if he never wrote anything, or that no man ever truly loved. The speaker seems to be arguing his point, even including the word “prov’d” in final couplet of the sonnet.

Practice Step 2

What imagery, feelings, or themes do you notice in the poem?

Practice Step 2 Examples:

1. The poet uses imagery to create pictures of the comparisons the speaker makes between love and other things. For example:

   "Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
   Within his bending sickle's compass come;"

2. The poet uses several comparisons and a strong final statement to show that the speaker feels passionate about his argument.

3. The poem strongly argues the idea that true love must be constant and unchanging.

Practice Step 3

Read the poem aloud and make observations about the structure of the poem.

- How are the lines arranged on the page?
- What do you notice about the rhyme and meter?
- Does the poem follow an established form?

Practice Step 3 Examples:

1. There are fourteen lines in the poem; they are all about the same length. The fourteen lines are divided into three quatrains and a couplet.

2. The rhyme scheme is ABAB CDCD EFEF GG. Each line has ten syllables, and is written mostly in iambic pentameter.

3. The poem follows the Shakespearean sonnet poetic form.

Practice Step 4

Ask yourself:

How does the structure of the poem contribute to its meaning or impact?

Practice Step 4 Example:

The poem follows the Shakespearean sonnet form perfectly. This perfection aligns with the perfection that the speaker demands of true love: that it is unwavering and stands the test of time.

Remember

1. Read the poem aloud. Then read closely, highlight, and annotate details that catch your attention or reveal something about the speaker, setting, and events in the poem.
2. What imagery, feelings, or themes do you notice in the poem?
3. Read the poem aloud again and make observations about the poem’s structure.
4. How does the structure of the poem contribute to its meaning or impact?

Independent Practice



Benchmark:

Examine how the structure of a poem affects its meaning and style.

Navigate to “the sonnet-ballad” by Gwendolyn Brooks.

Search for this poem on a poetry website such as poets.org.

Practice analyzing poetic form

Step 1
Read the poem aloud. Then read closely, highlight, and annotate details that catch your attention or reveal something about the speaker, setting, and events in the poem.

Step 2
What imagery, feelings, or themes do you notice in the poem?

Step 3
Read the poem aloud again and make observations about the poem’s structure.

Step 4
How does the structure of the poem contribute to its meaning or impact?

Check for Understanding



Share and Discuss

1. What are two or three details that catch your attention or reveal something about the speaker, setting, and events in the poem?

Share and Discuss

2. What imagery, feelings, or themes did you notice in the poem?

Share and Discuss

3. What do you notice about how the poem is arranged: the lines, rhyme, and meter? Does the poem follow an established form?

Share and Discuss

4. How does the structure or pattern of words in the poem impact your understanding of the poem’s meaning?