Dear teacher/tutor/parent and learner

To study Literature is to want to know more of the world around you. When reading poetry, we experience something of another person's world as written in poetic form recently or a long, long time ago.

Keep this in mind when preparing poetry. The notes given to you as support material are just that – notes to guide you or to get you thinking about the poem you are studying. Unless the poet comes to us and explain exactly what message was intended when writing a poem, we will never really know for sure.

<u>Therefore</u>: be brave and creative and apply what you have learnt in your literature studies over the years to the new poems that you are going to study this year.

Have fun!

<u>INTRODUCTION TO</u> POETRY

1. The main idea of a speaker/poet: to reflect the ideas of his times through his poetry.
    - ❖ It helps to understand the poet's background and ideas
    - ❖ One gets different schools of poets, for example *The Romantic Poets* like Wordsworth, *African Poets* or *Protest Poets*.

2. To analyze a poem you need to look at:
    - The <u>theme</u> or main idea
    - The <u>intention</u> of the poet
    - A poem may tell a story (narrative) or describes personal feelings of the poet (Lyric)
    - Look at the <u>format</u> the poem is written in (*See notes on poetic format and forms below)*
    - Word choice or <u>diction</u> – helps to create the mood of the poem
    - Use of <u>poetic devices or figures of speech</u> like Similes or Metaphors: Imagery is VERY important to create a vivid picture in words.
    - <u>Repetition</u> is often very important in a poem – to emphasize a word or an idea.
    - <u>Tone</u> of the poem – reveals the poet's feelings and views.
    - <u>Rhythm:</u> A Poem often has a rhythm or a flow. The change of pace of the poem affects the mood of the poem.
    - <u>Rhyme:</u> depends on SOUND and not spelling, for example: born/dawn or teen/scene. (*See notes on different rhyme schemes)*

POETIC FORM AND FORMAT
- ❖ A poem has lines and stanzas (verses)
- ❖ Does not have to have verses: in FREE VERSE, the poet defines his own form.
- ❖ May use POETIC LICENCE – they may use words as they please to fit their poem.
- ❖ Enjambment – occurs at the end of lines where there is no punctuation to create a sense of flow and unbroken ideas.
- ❖ Many poetic forms have developed over time, but a poem is mainly narrative or lyrical in structure:

    1. Narrative : tells a story
       - Ballad = oldest form of narrative poetry, usually about love, death, war and rhythm has a strong beat, lots of action.
       - Epic = very long narrative poem telling the story of an historical figure   or event.
    2. Lyrical poetry: poem with musical or song-like quality.

        ➢ It conveys the personal thoughts and feelings of the speaker. The most famous lyrical poem format is the SONNET.
        ➢ Contains feelings and thoughts about love and/or nature.

SONNETS:

➢ Always has 14 lines – *Shakespearean and Italian Sonnet*

➢ **Shakespearean**: 3 quatrains and a rhyming couplet: **abab cdcd efef gg**

   Rhyming couplet at end summarizes the theme.

➢ **Italian Sonnet:** Usually divided into octave (first 8 lines) and sestet (last 6 lines)
➢ **Definite** break in thought and often the octave conveys the problem and the sestet the solution.
➢ **Octave- abba abba rhyme scheme**
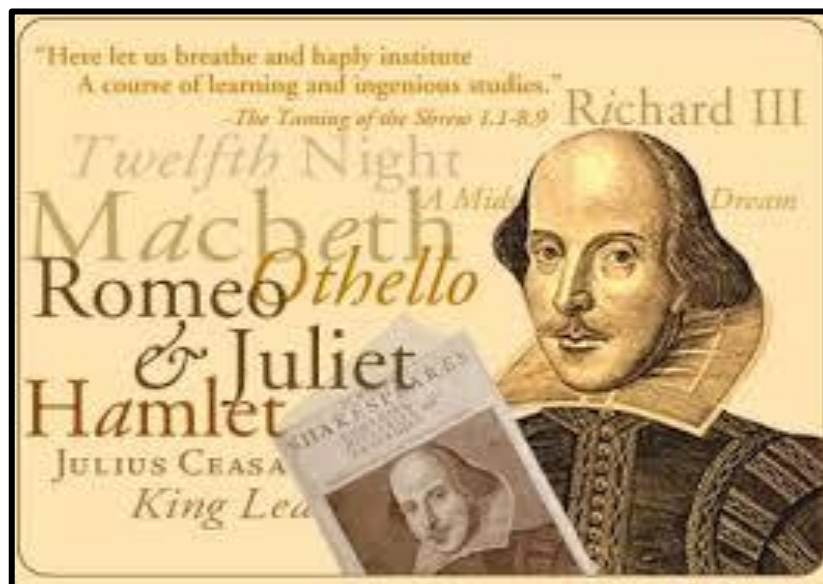➢ **Sestet –** varies and may have **cdecde or cdcdcd or cddcef rhyme schemes.**

 Modern poets often combine the two sonnet forms but still use the 14 lines format.

Shakespearean Sonnet

- 14 lines
- 3 quatrains
- 1 rhyming couplet at end
- rhyme scheme: abab cdcd efef gg
- Shakespeare wrote many sonnets

Italian Sonnet

- 1 octave (8 lines)
- 1 sestet (6 lines)
- rhyme scheme: abab cdcd eff egg
- rhyme scheme varies in sestet
- made famous by Petrarch (Italian poet)
- Octave: usually an introduction or desription
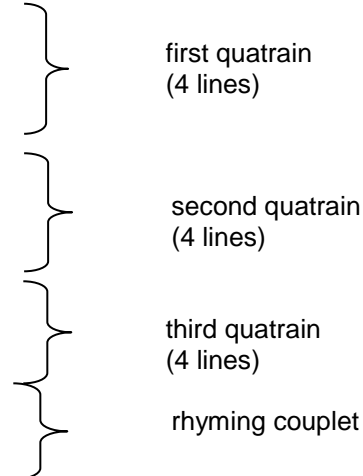- Sestet: usually contains the theme

"Here let us breathe and haply institute
A course of learning and ingenious studies."
–The Taming of the Shrew 1.1-8.9   Richard III
Twelfth Night
Macbeth   A Mid...   Dream
Romeo Othello
& Juliet
Hamlet
Julius Ceasa
King Lea

The TWO most important types of sonnets are the PETRARCHAN (Italian) SONNET and the SHAKESPEAREAN (Elizabethan) SONNET.

Examples:

A) *Shakespearean/Shakespearian Sonnet*

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun; A
Coral is far more red than her lips' red; B   first quatrain
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun; A   (4 lines)
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head. B
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white, C
But no such roses see I in her cheeks; D   second quatrain
And in some perfumes is there more delight C   (4 lines)
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks. D
I love to hear her speak, yet will I know E
That music hath a far more pleasing sound; F
I grant that I never saw a goddess go; E   third quatrain
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground. F   (4 lines)
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare G
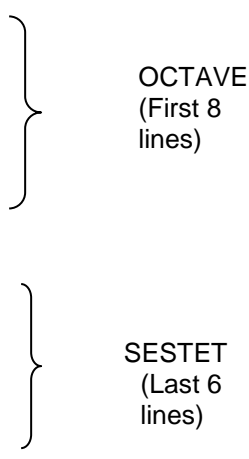As any she belied with false compare. G   rhyming couplet
(2 lines)

(Shakespeare, Sonnet 130)

B) *Italian Sonnet*

In what bright realm, what sphere of radiant thought A
Did Nature find the model whence she drew B
That delicate dazzling image where we view B
Here on this earth what she in heaven wrought? A   OCTAVE
What fountain-haunting nymph, what dryad, sought A   (First 8 lines)

In groves, such golden tresses ever threw B
Upon the gust? What heart such virtues knew?— B
Though her chief virtue with my death is frought. A
He looks in vain for heavenly beauty, he C
Who never looked upon her perfect eyes, D
The vivid blue orbs turning brilliantly – C   SESTET
He does not know how Love yields and denies; D   (Last 6 lines)
He only knows, who knows how sweetly she C

Can talk and laugh, the sweetness of her sighs. D

(Translation of Petrarch, Sonnet 159)

RHYME SCHEMES:

➕ REMEMBER: Rhyming has to do with the SOUND of words and not the SPELLING.

(a) Pair Rhyme: aabb ccdd
(b) Alternate rhyme: abab cdcd
(c) Enclosed rhyme: abba cddc

2 rhyming lines = couplet
4 rhyming lines = quatrain
6 rhyming lines = sestet
8 rhyming lines = octave

Examples:

Pair:

The cat sits on the **mat**	a
On somebody's **hat**	a
Licking its *paw*	b
With a wide-open *jaw*	b

Alternate:

The cat sits on the **mat**	a
Licking its *paw*	b
On somebody's **hat**	a
With a wide-open *jaw*	b

Enclosed:

The cat sits on the **mat**	a
Licking its *paw*	b
With a wide-open *jaw*	b
On somebody's **hat**	a

Poetic Devices/Figures of Speech

1. Alliteration: Repetition of a consonant sound example "the *f*urrow *f*ollowed *f*lee" – f-sound

2. Sibilance: Sibilance is a special form of alliteration using the softer consonants that create hissing sounds, or sibilant sounds. These consonants and digraphs include: *s, sh, th, ch, z, f, x*, and *soft c*. *Sing a Song of Sixpence* is a song title that is a good example of sibilance.

3. Assonance: Using the same vowel sound ex. M<u>a</u>n – h<u>a</u>t, p<u>e</u>nny – m<u>e</u>rry: a-sound or e-sound.

4. Hyperbole: to exaggerate – to make something bigger, better, larger, stronger than life. /used to show the poet's strong feelings about something. Example: "He is much stronger than a lion"

5. Euphemism: The use of a pleasant phrase or word in the place of a more unpleasant idea in order to express a harsh thought in a gentler way. Example: Instead of saying "he died" one

can say that he "was called to rest." To say "he has long fingers" is a gentler way of saying "he is a thief."

6. Simile/Comparison: when two things are being compared using the words *like, as* or *than*. Example: "She is as pretty as a rose" or "She smells like honey."

7. Metaphor: Also a comparison but without the words *like, as or than* = indirect or condensed comparison. Remember: Always look for two things that are being compared. Example: "All the world is a stage" or "She is a rose"

8. Extended Metaphor: Sometimes a metaphor is sustained or extended through a series of related images throughout the poem or at least throughout one or two stanzas. Example: "Dover Beach" – man's faith is compared to the sea in a whole series of images relating to the sea.

9. Onomatopoeia: the sound made by a thing is imitated by the use of the word e.g. "the CLINCK of the glass" or "the CLIP-CLOP of hooves" or "the BUZZING of bees."

10. Oxymoron: A statement with two parts that seem opposites but still make perfect sense when analyzed. Example: "I must be **cruel** to be **kind**" or " cold-fire" or "loving-hate"

11. Personification: Lifeless things or non-human things are given human qualities e.g "the trees whispered" or a lifeless thing is directly addressed as if a person: "DEATH, where is thy sting?"

12. Satire: Using humour to criticize something, usually serious social criticism. (See example below: by using humour the cartoonist actually makes serious social criticism about the fact that our president is a dictator and resembles a person like Stalin)

(Marked in Blue – important for ENG FAL learners)

Exaggeration and understatement	Sound Devices
Litotes	Alliteration
Hyperbole	Assonance
Euphemism	Onomatopoeia

Comparisons	Opposites
Simile	Irony
Metaphor	Sarcasm
Personification	Oxymoron