

English 12

Poetic Terms

Archaic Language

Archaic language is preserving features that are no longer present in current languages.

Example. Shakespearean language is archaic, with words such as, “thou, thee, thy.”

Cacophony

Cacophony is a mix of discordant sounds.

Example. “Not more unutterable could have been the chaos of hellish sound if the pit itself had opened to release the agony of the damned, for in one inconceivable cacophony was centered all the supernal terror and unnatural despair of animate nature.”

-H. P. Lovecraft, *Herbert West: Reanimator*

Chorus

A chorus, or refrain, is a line or lines that are repeated in poetry or ballads. They are often linked in subject matter to the poem, but may stand alone in form.

Example. “I am a rock, I am an Island,” is the chorus line repeated in Paul Simon’s “I Am a Rock.”

Epic

An epic is a lengthy narrative poem, ordinarily concerning a serious subject containing details of heroic deeds and events significant to a culture or nation.

Example Homer’s *Odyssey* and *Iliad*,

Epigram

An epigram is a brief, clever, and usually memorable statement.

Example. “Little strokes
Fell great oaks.”
-Benjamin Franklin

Epitaph

An epitaph is a short text honoring a deceased person, strictly speaking that inscribed on their tombstone or plaque, but also used figuratively.

Example. “Good friend for Jesus sake forbear,
To dig the dust enclosed here.
Blessed be the man that spares these stones,
And cursed be he that moves my bones.” - William Shakespeare

“That’s all folks” -Mel Blanc

English 12

Poetic Terms

Euphony

Euphony is a pronunciation of letters and syllables, which is pleasing to the ear.

Example. The willows whispered softly in the whispering wind- a melody as whimsical as that which played the day that I first held you.

Extended Metaphor

An extended metaphor, also called a conceit, is a metaphor that continues into the sentences that follow. It is often developed at great length, occurring frequently in or throughout a work, and is especially effective in poems and fiction.

Example. If one starts with the metaphor of , "The seeds of discontent have already been sown," an extension could be, "It remains to be seen whether weeds or flowers will spring forth."

Internal Rhyme

Internal rhyme, or middle rhyme, is rhyme that occurs in a single line of verse.

Example. "Once upon a midnight dreary,
while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,
While I nodded, nearly napping,
suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
"Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door —Only this, and
nothing more."

- "The Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe

Juxtaposition

Juxtaposition is the extra emphasis given to a comparison when the contrasted objects are close together.

Example. There was a poignant juxtaposition between the boys laughing in the street and the girl crying on the balcony above.

Pastoral

In literature, the adjective 'pastoral' refers to rural subjects and aspects of life in the countryside among shepherds, cowherds and other farm workers that are often romanticized and depicted in a highly unrealistic manner.

Example. "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love" by Christopher Marlowe, is an example of a Pastoral poem.

English 12

Poetic Terms

Proverb

A proverb is a simple and concrete saying popularly known and repeated, which expresses a truth, based on common sense or the practical experience of humanity. They are often metaphorical. They are also often borrowed from similar languages and cultures, and sometimes come down to the present through more than one language.

Example. "A penny saved is a penny earned"

Pun

The pun is a form of word play which exploits the ambiguity of a statement, allowing it to be understood in multiple ways for an intended humorous or rhetorical effect.

Example:

- Captain Aubrey: "Do you see those two weevils, Doctor?...Which would you choose?"
- Dr. Maturin: "Neither. There's not a scrap of difference between them. They're the same species of *Curculio*."
- Captain Aubrey: "If you had to choose. If you were forced to make a choice. If there were no other option."
- Dr. Maturin: "Well, then, if you're going to push me. I would choose the right-hand weevil. It has significant advantage in both length and breadth."
- Captain Aubrey: "There, I have you!...Do you not know that in the Service, one must always choose *the lesser of two weevils*?"
- *Master and Commander: The Far Side of The World (film)*

"Now is the winter of our discontent made glorious summer by this *son* of York"

- *Richard III*, William Shakespeare

The above definitions constitute the terms related to poetry that are examinable in English 12.

These definitions were gathered from public domain content at wikipedia.org, dictionary.com, for students in the Saint Thomas Aquinas High School English Department.

Poetic language could be used in any communication resembling poetry in beauty or the evocation of feeling. While these terms will be used in the study of poetry, they could be applied in any written or verbal expression.

English 12 Poetic Terms

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Alliteration | Imagery |
| Metaphor | Oxymoron |
| Onomatopoeia | Paradox |
| Personification | Symbol; symbolism |
| Rhyme | Theme |
| Rhyme Scheme | Atmosphere |
| Rhythm | Ballad |
| Simile | Blank Verse |
| Speaker | Free Verse |
| Allusion | Lyric |
| Figurative Language | Mood |
| Hyperbole | Refrain |
| Image | Sonnet |
| Stanza | Assonance |
| Apostrophe | Consonance |
| Dissonance | Repetition |
| Ballad Stanza | Elegy |
| Couplet | Meter |
| Iambic Pentameter | Octave |
| Sestet | Ode |
| Tone | |

The above list constitutes the terms related to poetry that have been covered in high school English and are included in the list of examinable terms for the English 12 Provincial Exam.