



Poetic Devices

Skills of Interpretation of Poetry

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Alliteration

Meaning: The repetition of initial consonant sounds.

Example: “The Tigers Tried To Tie Their Tails.”



Onomatopoeia

Meaning: The use of words which imitate sound.

Example: “Hark, Hark! Bow-wow. The watch-dogs bark!” (*The Tempest*).



Rhyme

Meaning: The similarity of ending sounds existing between two words.

Example: Once upon a midnight dreary / While I pondered weak and weary. (“The Raven”)



Hyperbole

**Meaning: Extravagant
exaggeration.**

**Example: “I will luvve thee still, my
dear / Till a’ the seas gang dry”
 (“A Red, Red Rose”)**



Synecdoche

Meaning: Substituting the name of a future for the name of a thing.

Example: “Let me not to the marriage of two minds . . .” (Sonnet 116)



Oxymoron

Meaning: Conjoined contradictory terms.

Examples: Cruel kindness, to make haste slowly.



Paradox

Meaning: A statement that contradicts itself.

Example: “I can resist anything but temptation” – Oscar Wilde.



Simile

Meaning: Expresses a resemblance between things.

Examples: “She was false as water” - Othello, “Thou are rash as fire - Desdemona” (*Othello*).



Metaphor

Meaning: Suggests a non-literal similarity.

**Example: “Juliet is the sun” -
Romeo (*Romeo Juliet*).**



Metonymy

Meaning: Substitutes the name of a feature for the name of a thing.

Example: “The pen is mightier than the sword” (*Richelieu*).



Irony

Meaning: Incongruity between what might be expected and what occurs.

Example: “It is true this god did shake” - Cassius (*Julius Caesar*).



Elision

Meaning: The omission of an unstressed syllable.

Example: “ I wandered lonely as a cloud . . . o’er vales and hills” (“Daffodils”).



Asyndeton

Meaning: Omission of conjunctions.

Example: “Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils / Shrunk to this . . .” *(Julius Caesar)*.



Polysyndeton

Meaning: Includes the addition of multiple conjunctions.

Example: “And it was dark and there was water and no lights broke and boats all up and trees blown and everything . . .” (*After the Storm*).



Tautology

Meaning: Repetitive use of phrases or words that have similar meanings.

Examples: completely devoid, repeat again.