Unit 2 Section B Glossary

Alliteration

Repetition of the same or similar sounds (usually consonants) at the beginning of words. It can be used to highlight the feeling of sound and movement or draw attention to a particular group of words to emphasise meaning, for example 'Sweet-scented stuff' (*Out, Out* – by Robert Frost).

Ambiguity

The possibility of more than one meaning, for example the ending of *The Five Students* by Thomas Hardy.

Assonance

Repetition of the same vowel sounds in words which follow each other, especially when the vowel is stressed, for example 'Smouldering through spouts of drifting smoke that shroud/The menacing scarred slope;' (*Attack* by Siegfried Sassoon).

Ballad

A narrative poem, often composed to be sung. A ballad normally had a regular stanza form, a regular rhyme scheme and used repetition. The second and fourth lines of each verse rhyme, for example in *The Cap and Bells* by W B Yeats.

Consonance

Repetition, at close intervals, of the final consonant sounds of accented syllables or important words, for example 'And the saw snarled and rattled, snarled and rattled,' (*Out, Out* – by Robert Frost).

Couplet

Two consecutive lines of poetry which are paired in length or rhyme, for example 'I was angry with my friend: I told my wrath, my wrath did end' (*A Poison Tree* by William Blake).

Dramatic Monologue

A poetic form in which the character (not the author) speaks directly to the audience. A dramatic monologue usually involves a fictional speaker, an audience, a symbolic setting, and an emphasis on the speaker's subjectivity, for example *An Irish Airman Foresees his Death* by W B Yeats.

Elegy

A poem or song which is a lament, usually for someone who has died.

Enjambment

A line ending in which the syntax, rhythm and thought are continued and completed in the next line, for example 'With candles and with lanterns/throwing giant scorpion shadows/on the sun-baked walls/they searched for him' (*Night of the Scorpion* by Nissem Ezekiel).

Figurative language

Use of a metaphor or simile to create a particular impression or mood.

Imagery

The use of description, figures of speech and pictures to create ideas and feelings.

Irony

Words implying meaning opposite to their normal meaning.

Lyric

Originally poetry meant to be sung, accompanied by lyre or lute. The term now refers to poems that are short, concise, personal in their subject matter and songlike in quality.

Metaphor

Similar to a simile in that a metaphor compares two things. A simile says that one thing is like another, while a metaphor makes a symbolic comparison, for example 'summer's blood was in it' in *Blackberry Picking* by Seamus Heaney.

Metre

The pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a poem.

Monologue

Text spoken by a lone speaker, for example *Night of the Scorpion* by Nissem Ezekiel.

Mood

Atmosphere, for example sombre, tragic, comic, romantic. This is different from the tone of a poem which refers to the poet's attitude, for example bitter, angry, resentful, ironic, mocking.

Narrative poem

A poem which tells a story, often a ballad.

Ode

A lyric poem form usually rhymed and in the form of an address. It is often written in praise of someone.

Onomatopoeia

Words which actually convey the sound being made, for example 'Bubbles gargled delicately' (*Death of a Naturalist* by Seamus Heaney).

Pace

The speed at which it seems appropriate to read a poem. Poets vary the pace to suit the mood or subject matter of a poem.

Personification

Presentation of inanimate objects as having human qualities, for example 'And all that mighty heart is lying still!' (*Composed Upon Westminster Bridge* by William Wordsworth).

Pun

A comic effect suggesting two meanings from one word or phrase.

Punctuation

Punctuation helps to establish the pace for reading the poem. It can help to reflect mood or atmosphere.

Refrain

A phrase that recurs in a poem, usually at the end of a verse.

Repetition

A poet may repeat words or ideas to emphasise thoughts and feelings, for example 'Five of us; dark He, fair He, dark She, fair She' (*The Five Students* by Thomas Hardy).

Rhyme

The use of words with matching sounds, usually at the end of each line, for example 'Whenever Richard Cory went down town/We people on the pavement looked at him/He was a gentleman from sole to crown/Clean-favoured, and imperially slim.' (*Richard Cory* by E A Robinson).

Rhythm

Refers to the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables.

Satire

The use of wit or humour to attack something.

Simile

A comparison which uses the words 'like' or 'as', for example 'And bent nails/ dance all over the surfacing/like maggots' (*Love Song: I and Thou* by Alan Dugan).

Sonnet (Italian)

14 lines divided into eight lines (octave) and six lines (sestet). This formation is shown in the content and in the rhyme scheme. There are five beats in each line (pentameter) and a consistent iambic rhythm, for example *Composed Upon Westminster Bridge* by William Wordsworth.

Sonnet (Shakespearean)

14 lines divided into three quatrains (four line groups) and a rhyming couplet. This is made clear by the rhyme scheme as well as by the sense.

Stanza

A verse or set of lines of poetry, the pattern of which is repeated throughout the poem.

Structure

The organisation of a poem. The arrangement of parts of a poem (for example length of lines, use of stanzas, progression of ideas).

Syllable

Each pronounced part of a word is a syllable. Words with only one syllable are called monosyllabic. Words with more than one syllable are called polysyllabic.

Symbol

When a word, phrase or image represents a complex set of ideas, the meaning of which is determined by the surrounding context, for example, the gifts the jester gives to the Queen in *The Cap and Bells* by W B Yeats.

Syntax

Refers to the order in which words are placed. A change in natural syntax may highlight a particular group of words or phrases.

Tone

Tone can be conveyed by a poet's choice of words or by the poem's rhythm. The tone helps to create the overall impact of a piece of writing. You should think of the tone of the poet as separate from the characters' tone in the poem.