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# Exploring Rhyme and Repetition

PART 1

## Introduction

THEME: >>> Living in the World

Authors use the **repetition** of sound—the same sound over and over—to achieve an effect in a text. There are several forms of repetition:

- **Alliteration** is the repetition of sound at the beginning of a word in a group of words that are close to each other. For example: *Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.*
- **Consonance** is the repetition of consonants in the middle or end of a word in a group of words that are close to each other. For example: *The black sack is in the back.*
- **Assonance** is the repetition of vowel sounds in the middle or end of a word in a group of words that are close to each other. For example: *Try to light the fire.*

**Rhyme** is the echoing or repetition of sounds, providing a song-like quality to words in a poem. A **rhyme scheme** describes the pattern of end rhymes in a poem.

**Read the poem. Then analyze the poem’s rhyme and repetition by filling in the chart.**

The mouse in the house was a clever old louse,  
 Outsmarting the traps with hardly a scuffle,  
 Laughing, playing, and overstaying in our house,  
 Outsmarting the traps with barely a shuffle,  
 5 Oh, yes the mouse in the house was a clever old louse,  
 Winking at us from his home in the wall,  
 Winking at us and having a ball.

	Example	Impact on Poem
Rhyme		
Rhyme scheme		
Repetition		

Read the first part of the poem. Then answer the questions.

## Celebrate

by Anna Akhmatova

Celebrate our anniversary—can't you see  
tonight the snowy night of our first winter  
comes back again in every road and tree—  
that winter night of diamantine splendour.

- 5 Steam is pouring out of yellow stables,  
the Moika river's sinking under snow,  
the moonlight's misted as it is in fables,  
and where we are heading—I don't know.

- There are icebergs on the Marsovo Pole.  
10 The Lebyazh'ya's crazed with crystal art....  
Whose soul can compare with my soul,  
if joy and fear are in my heart?—

- And if your voice, a marvellous bird's,  
quivers at my shoulder, in the night,  
15 and the snow shines with a silver light,  
warmed by a sudden ray, by your words?

### Think About It



**What is the rhyme scheme of the first two stanzas?** The question asks you to identify the pattern of end rhyme in the poem.

Which lines rhyme in stanza 1? Lines \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ rhyme.

Lines \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ rhyme.

Which lines rhyme in stanza 2? Lines \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ rhyme.

Lines \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ rhyme.

What is the rhyme scheme, or pattern of end rhyme, in the first two stanzas of the poem?

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Read an excerpt from a play. Then answer the question.

## For the Crime of Voting

by Jan Kelter

### ACT 1, Scene 2

*The law office of Henry Selden. SELDEN sits behind a desk, with SUSAN B. ANTHONY in a chair opposite him.*

**SELDEN:** You know that you will likely be arrested by federal marshals if you vote tomorrow?

**SUSAN:** I am counting on it, sir. I want my arrest to be as public as possible.

**SELDEN:** *(sighs)* Miss Anthony. As your attorney, and as a former judge, I agree with your reading of the 14th Amendment. I have advised you that the only way to find out what the law is upon a subject is to bring a test case.

**SUSAN:** Mr. Selden, I believe you knew my father. *(Selden nods.)* He and my mother raised my sisters and me to believe firmly in equal rights for all people. It was a loss of innocence when I learned that the majority does not feel this way. If a woman is unmarried, law and custom do not permit her the education and employment required to earn a substantial living. If she marries, the law requires her to yield her property to her husband.

*She gets up from her chair, agitated, but quickly composes herself.*

**SUSAN:** I have been silenced in temperance meetings and in abolition meetings, and all on account of my sex. You may not know how many women are regularly beaten by their husbands. You may not know it, because they would have no recourse to legal counsel, assuming they could afford it, and therefore no reason to seek it. You must not assume that only poor men beat their wives. It happens in the most respectable homes. In this as in other matters, the female has no rights. Under the law, she is her husband's property. Under the law, to obtain a divorce she must abase herself to the extent that respectable society regards her as no better than those unfortunate women sitting in our county jail. And why, Judge Selden? Because we are constrained from exercising the fundamental right to participate in the process that makes the laws—the very right that defines citizenship in a free country. Do I make myself plain?

**SELDEN:** Quite plain, Miss Anthony.

### A CLOSER LOOK

Circle repeated phrases in Susan B. Anthony's dialogue.

Repetition gives a kind of rhythm to speech. It's an aspect of *rhetoric*, or the way people express themselves in writing and speaking.

Examine how the repetition of phrases and sounds in Susan's monologue affects your reading of the scene.

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Do the words used by Susan have positive, negative, or neutral connotations?

Write two sentences that show evidence of Susan's demeanor in this scene.

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**DISCUSS IT**

With a partner, discuss Susan's mood and use of language in the scene. How does she feel about her lack of voting rights? Discuss, too, your opinion of women's suffrage in the 1870s.

**A CLOSER LOOK**

Circle the last word of each line of stanzas 1–3.

Connect the lines that rhyme.

Read the poem. Then answer the questions.

## The Need of Being Versed in Country Things

by Robert Frost

The house had gone to bring again  
To the midnight sky a sunset glow.  
Now the chimney was all of the house that stood,  
Like a pistil after the petals go.

- 5 The barn opposed across the way,  
That would have joined the house in flame  
Had it been the will of the wind, was left  
To bear forsaken the place's name.

- No more it opened with all one end  
10 For teams that came by the stony road  
To drum on the floor with scurrying hoofs  
And brush the mow with the summer load.

- The birds that came to it through the air  
At broken windows flew out and in,  
15 Their murmur more like the sigh we sigh  
From too much dwelling on what has been.

- Yet for them the lilac renewed its leaf,  
And the aged elm, though touched with fire;  
And the dry pump flung up an awkward arm;  
20 And the fence post carried a strand of wire.

For them there was really nothing sad.  
But though they rejoiced in the nest they kept,  
One had to be versed in country things  
Not to believe the phoebes wept.

The rhyme scheme is the same in every stanza.

- 1 What is the rhyme scheme of the poem "The Need of Being Versed in Country Things"?
- A The second and fourth line of every stanza rhymes.
  - B The first two lines and the last two lines of every stanza rhyme.
  - C Every other line of each stanza rhymes.
  - D The first and third line of every stanza rhymes.

What words have a repeated beginning sound?

- 2 Which of the following lines of the poem contains alliteration?
- A line 7
  - B line 9
  - C line 11
  - D line 13

What is the main purpose of the conjunction *and*?

- 3 What point is the poet emphasizing by repeating the word *and* in stanza 5?

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Read the poem. Then answer the questions.

## An Empty Nest

by James Whitcomb Riley

- I find an old deserted nest,  
Half-hidden in the underbrush:  
A withered leaf, in phantom jest,  
Has nestled in it like a thrush  
5 With weary, palpitating breast.
- I muse as one in sad surprise  
Who seeks his childhood's home once more,  
And finds it in a strange disguise  
Of vacant rooms and naked floor,  
10 With sudden tear-drops in his eyes.
- An empty nest! It used to bear  
A happy burden, when the breeze  
Of summer rocked it, and a pair  
Of merry tattlers told the trees  
15 What treasures they had hidden there.
- But Fancy, flitting through the gleams  
Of youth's sunshiny atmosphere,  
Has fallen in the past, and seems,  
Like this poor leaflet nestled here, —  
20 A phantom guest of empty dreams.



- 1 What is the rhyme scheme in each stanza of the poem?
- A Lines 1 and 2 rhyme, and lines 3, 4, and 5 rhyme.
  - B Lines 2 and 4 rhyme, and lines 1, 3, and 5 rhyme.
  - C Lines 3 and 4 rhyme, and lines 1, 2, and 5 rhyme.
  - D Lines 1 and 5 rhyme, and lines 2, 3, and 4 rhyme.

2 Which of the following lines of the poem includes alliteration?

- A line 7
- B line 11
- C line 14
- D line 17

3 What is the effect on the reader of using the long *a* sound in line 9?

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4 How does the repetition of the word *empty* support the main emotion expressed in the poem? Cite evidence from the poem to support your answer.

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