

## Poetic Devices

Instructions: Read through this list of Poetic Devices and Examples. Then read these poems listed below:

The Facebook Sonnet by Sherman Alexia

Still I Rise by Maya Angelou

God's Gonna Cut You Down by Johnny Cash

[in Just-] by e e cummings

Easter Wings by George Herbert

Your task is to find 2 examples of each poetic device in the poems provided. Then quote them within the list of Poetic Devices.

Note: When quoting poetry use double quotation marks around the quote. Also, when quoting more than one line use a / to separate each line. For example: The third stanza of Emily Dickinson's poem "Hope is the Thing with Feathers" looks like this:

And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -

And sore must be the storm -

That could abash the little Bird

That kept so many warm -

But it looks like this when properly quoted:

"And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard - / And sore must be the storm - / That could abash the little Bird / That kept so many warm -"

Notice the quote is written EXACTLY the way it looks with capitals and dashes. All quotations should be quoted exactly as they look.

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### **Metaphor**

A comparison that isn't literal.

Examples: "Eyes are the windows of the soul"

Your Examples:

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### **Simile**

A comparison between two things that typically uses the words "like or as."

Examples: "Eyes are like the windows of the soul"

Your Examples:

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### **Imagery**

Visually descriptive language. (Uses the five senses.)

Examples: “The child’s eyes were colored like rich smooth chocolate”

Your Examples:

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### **Tone**

The attitude or feeling of a piece of writing.

Examples: “It is a God-damned lie to say that these / Saved, or knew, anything worth any man’s pride. / They were professional murderers and they took / Their blood money and impious risks and died. / In spite of all their kind some elements of worth / With difficulty persist here and there on earth.” Hugh MacDiarmid “Another Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries”

Your Examples:

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### **Symbol**

An object, person, or place that represents a deeper meaning or idea.

Examples: A reference to a heart could mean Love, Faithfulness, Warmth While a reference to a broken heart could mean Betrayal, Suffering.

A gun could mean Violence.

Red could mean Passion, Romance, or Life

Your Examples:

### **Theme**

An abstract idea which shows up again and again.

Examples: Edgar Allen Poe's poem "Annabel Lee" uses the two most popular themes in literature: Love & Death

It was many and many a year ago,  
In a kingdom by the sea,  
That a maiden there lived whom you may  
know  
By the name of Annabel Lee;  
And this maiden she lived with no other  
thought  
Than to love and be loved by me.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,  
Went envying her and me—  
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,  
In this kingdom by the sea)  
That the wind came out of [the cloud](#) by  
night,  
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the  
love

Your Examples:

Of those who were older than we—  
Of many far wiser than we—  
And neither the angels in heaven above,  
Nor the demons down under the sea,  
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul  
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:  
For the moon never beams, without bringing  
me dreams  
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;  
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright  
eyes  
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;  
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the  
side  
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my  
bride,  
In her sepulchre there by the sea,  
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

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### **Repetition**

Repeated sentences, phrases, or words.

Examples: "Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the

time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children." — Martin Luther King, Jr.

Your Examples:

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### **Rhyme**

A word, syllable, or line ending that has a sound which matches another word, syllable, or line.

Examples: "The road goes ever on and on / Down from the door where it began. / Now far ahead the road as gone/ And I must follow if I can." J.R.R. Tolkien *The Lord of the Rings*

Your Examples:

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### Poem 1

The Facebook Sonnet by Sherman Alexia

Welcome to the endless high-school  
Reunion. Welcome to past friends  
And lovers, however kind or cruel.  
Let's undervalue and unmend

The present. Why can't we pretend  
Every stage of life is the same?  
Let's exhume, resume, and extend  
Childhood. Let's all play games

That occupy the young. Let fame  
And shame intertwine. Let one search  
For God become public domain,  
Let church.com become our church

Let's sign up, sign in, confess  
Here at the altar of loneliness.  
Poem 2

### Still I Rise by Maya Angelou

You may write me down in history  
With your bitter, twisted lies,  
You may trod me in the very dirt  
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?  
Why are you beset with gloom?  
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells  
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,  
With the certainty of tides,  
Just like hopes springing high,  
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?  
Bowed head and lowered eyes?  
Shoulders falling down like  
teardrops,  
Weakened by my soulful cries?

Does my haughtiness offend you?  
Don't you take it awful hard  
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold  
mines  
Diggin' in my own backyard.

You may shoot me with your words,  
You may cut me with your eyes,  
You may kill me with your  
hatefulness,

But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?  
Does it come as a surprise  
That I dance like I've got diamonds  
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame  
I rise  
Up from a past that's rooted in pain  
I rise  
I'm a black ocean, leaping and  
wide,  
Welling and swelling I bear in the  
tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and  
fear  
I rise  
Into a daybreak that's wondrously  
clear  
I rise  
Bringing the gifts that my  
ancestors gave,  
I am the dream and the hope of the  
slave.  
I rise  
I rise  
I rise.

### Poem 3

#### God's Gonna Cut You Down by Johnny Cash

You can run on for a long time  
Run on for a long time  
Run on for a long time  
Sooner or later God'll cut you down  
Sooner or later God'll cut you down  
Go tell that long tongue liar  
Go and tell that midnight rider  
Tell the rambler  
The gambler  
The back biter  
Tell 'em that God's gonna cut 'em down  
Tell 'em that God's gonna cut 'em down  
Well my goodness gracious let me tell you  
the news  
My head's been wet with the midnight dew  
I've been down on bended knee talkin' to the  
man from Galilee  
He spoke to me in the voice so sweet  
I thought I heard the shuffle of the angel's  
feet  
He called my name and my heart stood still  
When he said, "John, go do my will!"  
Go tell that long tongue liar  
Go and tell that midnight rider  
Tell the rambler  
The gambler

The back biter  
Tell 'em that God's gonna cut 'em down  
Tell 'em that God's gonna cut 'em down  
You can run on for a long time  
Run on for a long time  
Run on for a long time  
Sooner or later God'll cut you down  
Sooner or later God'll cut you down  
Well, you may throw your rock and hide  
your hand  
Workin' in the dark against your fellow man  
But as sure as God made black and white  
What's down in the dark will be brought to  
the light  
You can run on for a long time  
Run on for a long time  
Run on for a long time  
Sooner or later God'll cut you down  
Sooner or later God'll cut you down  
Go tell that long tongue liar  
Go and tell that midnight rider  
Tell the rambler  
The gambler  
The back biter  
Tell 'em that God's gonna cut 'em down  
Tell 'em that God's gonna cut 'em down  
Tell 'em that God's gonna cut you down

## Poem 4

[in Just-] by e e cummings

in Just-  
spring        when the world is mud-  
luscious the little  
lame balloonman

whistles        far        and wee

and eddieandbill come  
running from marbles and  
piracies and it's  
spring

when the world is puddle-wonderful

the queer  
old balloonman whistles  
far        and        wee  
and bettyandisbel come dancing

from hop-scotch and jump-rope and

it's  
spring  
and

the

goat-footed

balloonMan        whistles  
far  
and  
wee

Poem 5

Easter Wings by George Herbert

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,  
  Though foolishly he lost the same,  
    Decaying more and more,  
      Till he became  
        Most poore:  
        With thee  
    O let me rise  
    As larks, harmoniously,  
  And sing this day thy victories:  
Then shall the fall further the flight in me.

My tender age in sorrow did beginne  
  And still with sicknesses and shame.  
    Thou didst so punish sinne,  
      That I became  
        Most thinne.  
        With thee  
    Let me combine,  
    And feel thy victorie:  
  For, if I imp my wing on thine,  
Affliction shall advance the flight in me.