Poetry Vocabulary

<u>alliteration</u> -
use of the same consonant at the beginning of each word
The light from the porthole was a pulsing purple.— Slaughterhouse Five, Kurt Vonnegut

<u>allusion</u>
passing reference or indirect mention
*She was dancing below a noose, an **allusion** to the hanging of dissidents under her father's regime.*
—New York Times Aug 30, 2014

<u>assonance</u>
the repetition of similar vowels in successive words
Those images that yet,
Fresh images beget,
That dolphin-torn, that gong-tormented sea.
– Byzantium, W.B. Yeats'

<u>caesura</u>

a break or pause in the middle of a verse line
*But the third line, with its **caesura** before the last foot, complicates the grandfather's absence, extends his influence, and begins to restore his existence.*
—The Guardian Jul 15, 2013
I'm nobody! Who are you?
Are you nobody, too?
Then there's a pair of us — don't tell!
—I'm Nobody ! Who are you?, Emily Dickinson

<u>consonance</u> - the repetition of sounds especially at the ends of words

I'll swing by my ankles.
She'll cling to your knees.
As you hang by your nose,
From a high-up trapeze.
But just one thing, please,
As we float through the breeze,
Don't sneeze.
— The Acrobats, Shel Silverstein

<u>couplet</u> - a stanza consisting of two successive lines of verse

For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;
Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.
- Sonnet 94, William Shakespeare

<u>hyperbole</u> - extravagant exaggeration

I'll love you, dear, I'll love you
Till China and Africa meet,
And the river jumps over the mountain
And the salmon sing in the street,
I'll love you till the ocean
Is folded and hung up to dry
— As I Walked One Evening, W.H. Auden

<u>internal rhyme</u> - a rhyme between words in the same line

Double, double toil and trouble,
Fire burn and cauldron bubble
—Macbeth, William Shakespeare

<u>metaphor</u> - a figure of speech that suggests a non-literal similarity

She really was a most charming girl, and might have passed for a captive fairy, whom that
truculent ogre, Old Barley, had pressed into his service.
-Great Expectations, Charles Dickens

<u>octave</u> - a rhythmic group of eight lines of verse

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 the sepulchre there by the sea,
In her tomb by the sounding sea.
—Annabel Lee, Edgar Allan Poe
<u>onomatopoeia</u> - using words that imitate the sound they denote

It went zip when it moved and bop when it stopped,
And whirr when it stood still.
I never knew just what it was and I guess I never will.
—The Marvelous Toy, Tom Paxton

<u>paradox</u>
a statement that contradicts itself
*The brilliant **paradox** of Flanagan's introspective novel is that a work of such powerful
remembrance should so movingly capture our inmost longing to forget.*
—Seattle Times Aug 27, 2014

I can resist anything but temptation.
— Oscar Wilde

personification - attributing human characteristics to abstract ideas

Pearl Button swung on the little gate in front of the House of Boxes. It was the early afternoon of a sunshiny day with little winds playing hide-and-seek in it.
—How Pearl Button Was Kidnapped, Katherine Mansfield

spondee
a metrical unit with stressed-stressed syllables
*"Hot sun" and "cool fire" are both **spondees***.
—The Guardian Oct 11, 2010
'By the shore of Gitche Gumee,
By the shining Big-Sea-Water,
—The Song of Hiawatha, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

trochee
a metrical unit with stressed-unstressed syllables
Tyger! Tyger! Burning bright
—The Tyger, William Blake

The trochee here is "Burning bright".

simile - a figure of speech expressing a resemblance between things

...impressions poured in upon her of those two men, and to follow her thought was like following a voice which speaks too quickly to be taken down by one's pencil . . .
—To the Lighthouse, Virginia Woolf