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| Form | Description | Rules |
| **Short Forms** |
| Haiku | Traditionally about the seasons, or nature. The main idea is to express a brief moment in time or contrast two moments. | 3 lines5 syllables, 7 syllables, 5 syllablesNo rhymeNo set metre |
| Limerick | A short funny poem.Uses puns, wordplay, or intentionally incorrect spellings to play with language. The last line is often the ‘punch line’ of the joke | 5 linesRhyme scheme: AABBA Line 1-2: 8 syllablesLine 3-4: 5 syllablesLine 5: 8 syllablesStrong rhythm to each line, 2 weak beats followed by 1 strong beat (da-da-DA, da-da-DA, da-da-DA)  |
| Cinquain | A short poem of five unrhymed lines. | 5 linesNo set rhymeLine 1: 2 syllablesLine 2: 4 syllablesLine 3: 6 syllablesLine 4: 8 syllablesLine 5: 2 syllables  |
| **Lyric Poems – expressing thoughts or feelings** |
| Ode | A poem expressing praise or admiration for a person or thing. Use similes, metaphors and sometimes hyperbole (exaggeration).  | No set rhyme or metreNo set rules for lines or syllablesOften addressed directly to the thing it praises |
| Sonnet  | A poem with very specific rules. Originally used to express romantic love, but can be on any topicHas a ‘shift’ or change in tone or mood halfway through, usually at line 9, indicated by words like ‘but’, ‘so’, ‘then’, or ‘and yet’.  | 14 linesRhyme structure: **English:** ABAB CDCD EFEF GG**Italian:** ABBA ABBA CDCDCD (or CDECDE)Each line has roughly 10 syllablesIn iambic pentameter: (da-DA, da-DA, da-DA, da-DA, da-DA) |
| Free verse | Poetry without any strict meter or rhyme scheme. Often use ‘enjambment’ (putting a line break in an unusual place, like in the middle of a thought)  | Lines can be any lengthVerses can be any lengthOften has no rhyme or rhythm pattern – but CAN have them |
| Villanelle | A poem with a specific pattern of repeated rhyming lines. Introduces an idea or theme and then develops on it a little more in each stanza – building intensity, giving a different example  | 19 lines, divided into six stanzas:* 5 tercets (3-line stanzas) with rhyme ABA
* 1 quatrain (4-line stanza) with rhyme ABAA

Should have a consistent metre/rhythm (but doesn’t always)Has two repeating refrain lines that alternate all the way through it |
| Psalm | A Hebrew poem where the structure of ideas is very important. Stanzas are arranged in a particular order and ideas must be balanced – key point is often in the middlePsalms usually include a lot of figurative language – similes, metaphors, hyperbole, personification | Often use parallelismSometimes had a refrain (e.g. “for his mercy endureth forever”)Sometimes rhymes (in Hebrew)Sometimes acrostic – each line begins with a letter of alphabet (in Hebrew)Sometimes use rhyme, alliteration, consonance or assonance (in Hebrew) |
| **Narrative poems – telling a story** |
| Ballad | A poem that tells a story about a hero or a dramatic or tragic eventBallads are often set to music | Rhyme scheme – often ABAB or AABBRegular metreOften has several stanzas (verses)Often has a refrain (chorus)  |
| Epic | A very long (novel-length) poem that tells feats and adventures of heroes from long ago | Often has regular metre Often in couplets (groups of 2 rhyming lines)  |
| Heroic couplets | A poem in rhyming pairs of lines, with five beats per line, often telling a story. | 2 linesRhyme AAIambic pentameterTopic should be serious (heroic) |