

Example Text: Narrative Poetry (Ages 7 - 11)

A narrative poem is simply a poem that tells a story. They tend to have **several stanzas** or verses - these are like poetry paragraphs. Narrative poems usually have a **rhyming structure** too. They might include pairs of lines next to each other that rhyme, or alternate lines might rhyme - it totally depends on the poem. Narrative poems are meant to be recited aloud so people can enjoy hearing stories; this means there will be a consistent rhythm to the poem too.

It can be tricky to create a rhyming poem! Take a look at the example and the features required.

1

Follow a **rhyming structure**. In this poem, alternate lines rhyme, but we've highlighted the final word in each alternate line the same colour. Encourage your child to spot the rhyming sounds.

2

Use **powerful adjectives** (describing words) to give more information about things (nouns) in the poem. Think about the five senses.

3

Often, some **dialogue** is included in a narrative poem. This helps the reader to get to know the characters and progresses the story along too. Make sure your child is correctly punctuating any speech they include in their own poem.

4

Start each line with a **capital letter** - this is common in lots of types of poetry.

The Listeners

by Walter De La Mare

"Is there anybody there?" said the Traveller,

Knocking on the **moonlit door**;

And his horse in the silence champed
the grasses

Of the **forest's ferny floor**:

And a bird flew up out of the turret,

Above the Traveller's **head**:

And he smote upon the door again a
second time;

"Is there anybody there?" he said.

But no one descended to the Traveller;

No head from the **leaf-fringed sill**

Leaned over and looked into his **grey** eyes,

Where he stood perplexed and **still**.

5

Often, a **comma** is used at the end of a line. This shows where there is a pause. Sometimes, other pieces of punctuation are used.

6

Use a **full stop** (or a question mark or exclamation mark, if appropriate) at the end of the poem and at the end of each stanza or section. This shows a section has come to an end. A stanza is like a paragraph of poetry - it is a group of lines and they are separated by a space. This poem doesn't have stanzas, but it does separate sections using full stops.

7

Group lines together into **stanzas**. In this particular poem, the writer hasn't used stanzas; the poem is one big stanza. You could discuss with your child why they might have decided not to use stanzas.

8

Try to include figurative language techniques, such as **alliteration**, to paint a picture for the reader. Alliteration involves repeating the first sound in a string of words or words that are close together in a sentence.

9

Try to include figurative language techniques, such as **personification**, to paint a picture for the reader. Personification gives non-human things (like animals, plants or objects) human traits or characteristics.

But only a host of **phantom** listeners

That dwelt in the **lone** house **then**

Stood listening in the **quiet** of the moonlight

To that voice from the world of **men:**

Stood thronging the **faint** moonbeams on the dark stair,

That goes down to the **empty hall,**

Harkening in **an air stirred and shaken**

By the lonely Traveller's call.

And he felt in his heart their strangeness,

Their stillness answering his **cry,**

While his horse moved, cropping the **dark** turf,

'Neath the **starred** and **leafy sky;**

For he **suddenly smote** on the door, even

Louder, and lifted his **head:-**

"Tell them I came, and no one answered,

That I kept my word," he said.

Never the least stir made the listeners,

Though every word he **spake**

Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the **still** house

From the one man left **awake:**

10 Try to include figurative language techniques, such as **similes**, to paint a picture for the reader. A simile is a technique that compares one thing to another, using the words 'like', 'as', 'than' and 'as if'.

Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,

And the sound of iron on **stone**,

And how the **silence surged softly** backward,

When the **plunging** hoofs were **gone**.

11 Try to include figurative language techniques, such as **metaphors**, to paint a picture for the reader. A metaphor is a comparison between two things, using the words 'is' or 'was'.

Not every figurative language technique has been used in this one poem; your child doesn't have to include every figurative language technique in their own poetry either. Encourage them to try using a couple of techniques.