

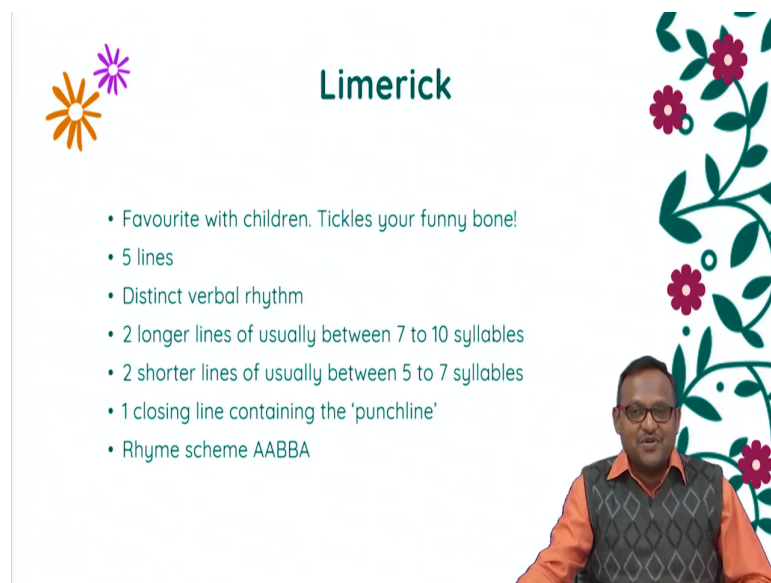
Elements of Literature and Creative Communication
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Lecture - 14
Poetry and its Tributaries - 2

Hello, welcome again to our discussion of Poetry and its Tributaries, I do not need to extensively recall what we did in the previous class as you very well remember it. Nevertheless very quickly if we can recall we discussed how difficult it is to classify poetry into different types, nevertheless for practical purposes we do need to classify them as part of that we were discussing sonnets and haikus and how some categories pose problems such as prose poetry and visual poetry.


So, in this class, we are going to continue our discussion of subtypes of poetry after learning about sonnets and haikus let us see what more subtypes there are to poetry and how to identify them.

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Limerick

- Favourite with children. Tickles your funny bone!
- 5 lines
- Distinct verbal rhythm
- 2 longer lines of usually between 7 to 10 syllables
- 2 shorter lines of usually between 5 to 7 syllables
- 1 closing line containing the 'punchline'
- Rhyme scheme AABBA



So, here we have limerick; limerick is a very popular subtype of poetry. In fact, limericks are something that children enjoy a lot. So, as a genre of poetry limericks have the capacity to tickle your funny bone and again like haiku they too are quite short ones generally speaking. They have a very distinct verbal rhythm in the sense they make use of rhyme and rhythm in

such a way that they bring out a humorous aspect of a thing. So, even here there are generally five lines, and normally speaking the last line is considered a kind of a punchline. So, that is going to create an ambience of humour when you read it. Though it is not very strict in terms of rhyme scheme generally it is said that it follows a rhyme scheme of AABBA we have already identified how to mark rhyme schemes in a poem, but there are exceptions to this. But for time being yes we can say its limerick is a genre of poetry that makes use of five lines and it is generally very humorous.

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There was an Old Man with a beard,
Who said, 'It is just as I feared! -
Two Owls and a Hen,
Four Larks and a Wren,
Have all built their nests in my beard.'

by Edward Lear

ROGER GORDON
A Limerick on Limericks

The limerick packs laughs anatomical
Into space that is quite economical.
But the good ones I've seen
So seldom are clean -
And the clean ones so seldom are comical.

The slide also includes a video inset of a man with glasses and a beard, wearing an orange shirt and a grey vest, speaking.

Let us take a look at a couple of popular ones. So, Roger Gordon's limerick is a kind of limerick on limericks.

The limerick packs laughs anatomical
into space that is quite economical,
but the good ones I have seen
so, seldom are clean-
and the clean ones so, seldom are comical.

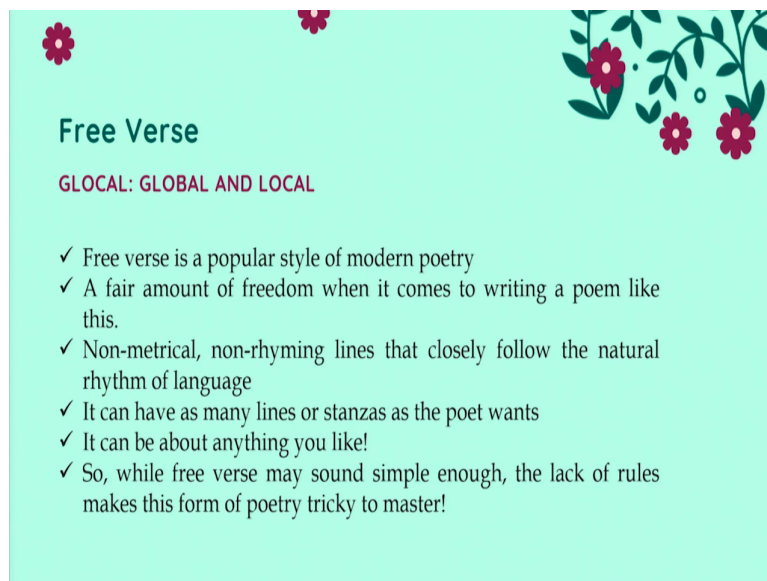
Again here you can see the AABBA rhyme scheme AABBA. And we have another one by Edward Lear a very well known writer.

There was an old man with a beard
who said it is just as I feared

two owls and a hen
four larks and a wren
have all built their nests in my beard.

Again they follow the rhyme scheme of AABBA. So, the genre is very popular with kids because they find it really amusing. So, for anybody who has a great taste in humorous poetry limerick is for them.

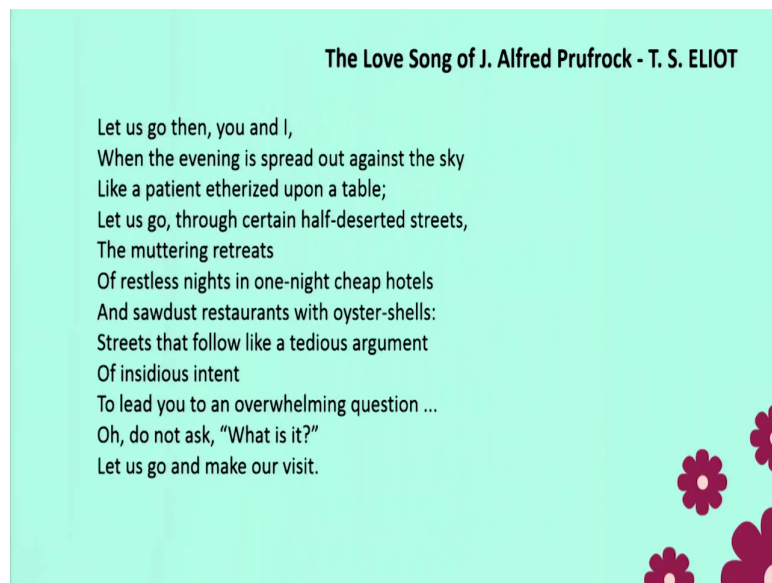
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From limericks let us go on to free verse. Free verse is a type of poetry that has now come to occupy a very important place in the world of poetry because it is a kind of a radical shift in the way poetry is generally composed. Here unlike other types of poetry other genres of poetry, there are literally no rules. You can write it in any way you want, it is in that sense truly glocal. Earlier of course, even to this day, many uninitiated readers think that poetry means it should rhyme not necessarily as long as there is a kind of working rhythm that lends that particular poem a musical quality. As long as it imitates the inherent rhythm of language in a beautiful way then it need not rhyme at all. So, the free verse in that sense is one of the most popular styles of modern poetry. So, here as we said earlier you have absolute freedom when it comes to writing a poem, there is nothing like you have to adhere to a particular rhyme scheme. It does not even follow that you need to write your poem using stanzas of a particular length no. If you wish you can begin with a quatrain, end with sestet, and in between, you can pack or you can almost insert a couplet.

So, what am I trying to say here the poet has total autonomy as far as this particular type of poetry is concerned. So, therefore, you can have as many stanzas as you want and each stanza can be of varying length it is absolutely up to you; it is absolutely up to you. Having said that we have to keep in mind that this is something very difficult the practitioners of free verse would tell you how difficult it is nevertheless of course, we can begin from somewhere. If this is a form that you like a lot then you can begin expressing yourself in free verse.

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TS Eliot and WB Yeats are modernist writers, and most of the modernist writers preferred this particular type of poetry- free verse. And the love song of J. Alfred Prufrock is a remarkable poem that belongs to the free verse category, just to have a taste of that well-known poem.

Let us go then you and I
when the evening is spread out against the sky
like a patient etherized upon a table.
Let us go through certain half deserted streets
the muttering retreats
of restless nights in one night cheap hotels
and sawdust restaurants with oyster shells.
Streets that follow like a tedious argument
of insidious intent

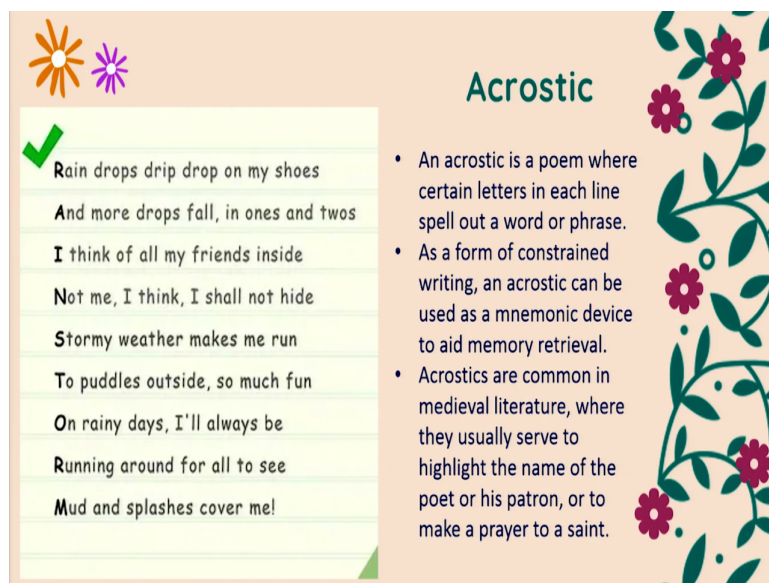
to lead you to an overwhelming question

oh! do not ask what is it?

let us go and make our visit.

Now, look at it, of course, there is no rhyme pattern and there is no stanza here. And even if you look at the other stanzas and the poem they are of different lengths, nevertheless it is an extraordinary poem it is a remarkable poem that has had its influence on other modernist and postmodernist poets.

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The slide is titled "Acrostic" in a teal font. On the left, there is a list of ten lines of a poem, each preceded by a green checkmark. The first letters of these lines, when read vertically, spell out "RAINSTORM". On the right, there are three bullet points explaining what an acrostic is and its historical use. The slide is decorated with a floral border on the right and two small flowers in the top left corner.

Acrostic

- An acrostic is a poem where certain letters in each line spell out a word or phrase.
- As a form of constrained writing, an acrostic can be used as a mnemonic device to aid memory retrieval.
- Acrostics are common in medieval literature, where they usually serve to highlight the name of the poet or his patron, or to make a prayer to a saint.

✓ Rain drops drip drop on my shoes
And more drops fall, in ones and twos
I think of all my friends inside
Not me, I think, I shall not hide
Stormy weather makes me run
To puddles outside, so much fun
On rainy days, I'll always be
Running around for all to see
Mud and splashes cover me!

From the free verse, let us go to acrostic. This is another slightly difficult type of poetry - acrostic poetry has its roots in the middle ages. Earlier this was a type of poetry that was preferred a lot for various reasons. So, what does an acrostic poem do or what does an acrostic poem look like. So, here now look at this the first letter of each line is significant in an acrostic poem the first letter of each line is significant because either that reveals to you the name of the poet or the title of the poem. So, if you look at that if you look at the first letter of all the lines so, you get the title of this rainstorm that is the title of the poem right. Therefore, you can call acrostic that kind of a poem where certain letters in each line they spell out a word or a phrase that is generally related to the poet or the title of that particular poem. Because of this, you can call it it is a highly constrained form of writing because you need to think a lot because you have to start a line with a particular letter otherwise you do not get to practice this form at all therefore, you have to work under a lot of pressure.

So, earlier acrostic poetry was used as a mnemonic device to aid memory retrieval. So in fact, in one of the earlier classes we discussed gnomic poetry right, how with the help of poetry certain concepts, certain things, and in many cases secrets too were passed on from person to person generation to generation. So, acrostic poetry is a form of gnomic poetry so, they help you memorize a thing. So, that is how you get an acrostic one so, that is where you need to make use of the first line in a very careful and calibrated way. So, because they first appeared in medieval during the medieval times they form a major chunk of medieval literature. And as I said this form of poetry is used in order to bring out the name of the poet or the patron who may have helped the poet in some way or the other or it may even refer to the god. So, it may even be made use of in prayer. So, these are the various places where acrostic poetry is made use.

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 **Elegy**

- ✓ Elegies are poems of lamentation - the word elegy itself comes from the Gk. *elegeia* which means to 'lament'.
- ✓ One composes an elegy to someone one has loved and lost to the grave.
- ✓ Poems of serious reflection on life and death
- ✓ Usually come in three parts: grief, praise of the deceased, and consolation.



From acrostic poetry let's go to elegy. Elegy is one of the oldest types of poetry. Elegies are generally called poems of lamentation and sad songs. And the term elegy itself has a Greek origin which means to cry to lament. So, you write an elegy when you have lost someone you have loved when you have lost someone to the grave. And as a mode of recalling your love as a mode of recalling the equation you have had with the person you write it. It is in a way dedicated to the person who is no longer with you it is a way of recalling their friendship, recalling your equation with that person. Because of this, you can call elegy a serious kind of poetry unlike a limerick, which tries to bring out the funny bone, elegy brings out a sad dimension of human life. Therefore, you can call them serious reflections of life and death,

they seriously reflect on the questions of life and death, especially death. So, if you look at an elegy generally speaking there are three parts to it. In fact, these three parts are not necessarily put in the form of three stanzas it does not work out that way, but there are if you look at if you these three parts are evident if you look at the content of the poem. The first part deals with grief and how the person is under the grips of inconsolable grief with the demise of the person closest to them. And then comes praise of the deceased, how the person who is no longer with you was very close to you his or her virtues and all that. And the third part is consolation, how do you come to terms with grief because you cannot go on grieving forever you have to come to terms with grief and try to move on so, that moving on part is there in the third part. So, that constitutes elegy for us.

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KATHERINE PHILIPS'S ELEGY

EPITAPH

What on Earth deserves our trust?
 Youth and Beauty both are dust.
 Long we gathering are with pain,
 What one moment calls again.
 Seven years childless marriage past,
 A Son, a son is born at last:
 So exactly lim'd and fair,
 Full of good Spirits, Meen, and Air,
 As a long life promised,
 Yet, in less than six weeks dead.

Too promising, too great a mind
 In so small room to be confined:
 Therefore, as fit in Heaven to dwell,
 He quickly broke the Prison shell.
 So the subtle Alchemist,
 Can't with Hermes Seal resist
 The powerful spirit's subtler flight,
 But t'will bid him long good night.
 And so the Sun if it arise
 Half so glorious as his Eyes,
 Like this Infant, takes a shroud,
 Buried in a morning Cloud.

Here is an example, or an illustration of elegy, it is called Epitaph. There is also another subtype of poetry called epitaph, but of course, here the title of the poem is Epitaph it is by Katherine Philips. Read the poem in order to understand its mood and see if you can spot the three stages in which elegy is developed the first one is mourning grief the second stage is praising the person. And the third is coming to terms with that grief consolation, consoling oneself and trying to move on.

What on earth deserves our trust?

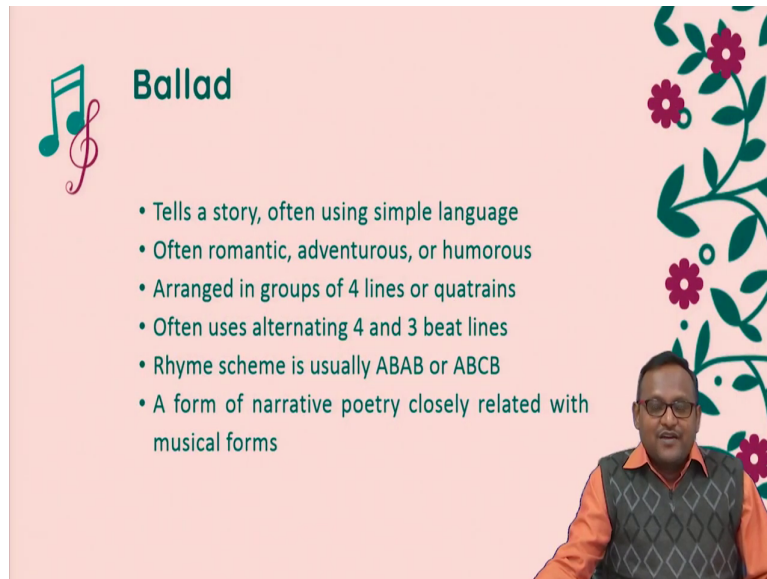
Youth and beauty both are dust.

Long we gathering are with we with pain,

what one moment calls again.
Seven years childless marriage past
a son, a son is born at last.
So, exactly limid and fair
full of good spirits meen and air
as long as life promised
yet in less than six weeks dead
Too promising too great a mind
in so small room to be confined
therefore, as fit in heaven to dwell
he quickly broke the prison shell.
So, the subtle alchemist
cant with hermes seal resist
the powerful spirits subtler flight,
but it will bid him long good night.
And so, the sun if it arise
half so, glorious as his eyes
like this infant takes a shroud
buries in a morning cloud.

So, the first part deals with grief, the second part too promising and onwards until the last 4-5 lines it deals with praising and then the last 4-5 lines discusses how the poet consoles themselves over the loss of a loved one.

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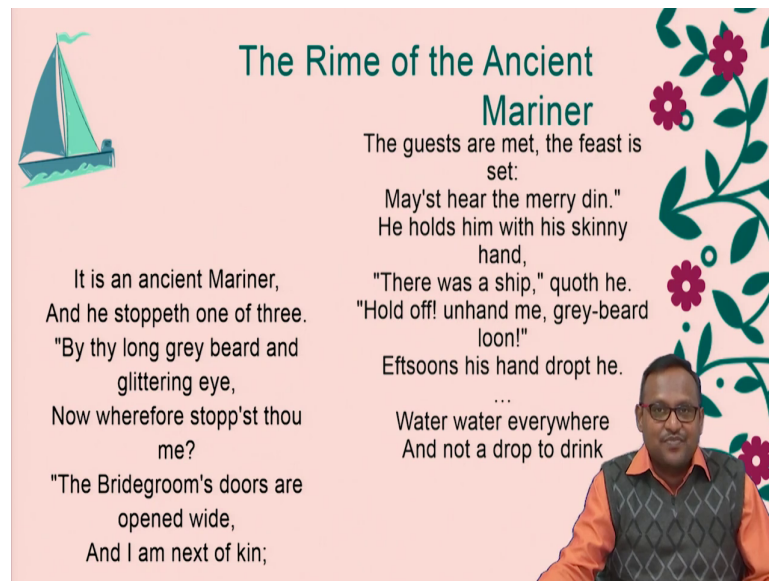


Ballad

- Tells a story, often using simple language
- Often romantic, adventurous, or humorous
- Arranged in groups of 4 lines or quatrains
- Often uses alternating 4 and 3 beat lines
- Rhyme scheme is usually ABAB or ABCB
- A form of narrative poetry closely related with musical forms

From elegy, we move to ballad - perhaps the oldest of the poetic form that we have. In fact, even our epics, part of our epics are built out of ballads you can say. So, if you want to use poetry to convey a story or if you have a narrative and you wish to convey that narrative using poetry or using verse then a ballad is the right form, as the focus of the ballad is to narrate it tells you a story using very simple language. Of course, there is no scope for ornamentation here using a simple rhyme using simple diction it narrates a beautiful story. The emphasis here is of course, on building the story. Generally speaking, the story could be a romantic one, it could be a humorous one, it could be a heroic or an adventurous one, but it is a story. Generally, if you read, it follows a particular beat if you read the lines you follow a particular beat and there is a rhyming scheme of ABAB or ABCB, not a very rigid structure in terms of rhymes are concerned. But one of the most popular ones for anybody interested in conveying narrative in conveying a story using the form of verse. So, let us take a quick look at a very important poem that belongs to this genre.

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The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din."
He holds him with his skinny hand,
"There was a ship," quoth he.
"Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!"
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.
...
Water water everywhere
And not a drop to drink

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
"By thy long grey beard and
glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou
me?
"The Bridegroom's doors are
opened wide,
And I am next of kin;

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner so, this is written by Samuel Taylor Coleridge one of the major poets a close friend of Wordsworth. Almost a kind of a classic ballad that is read across the world so, these two stanzas are an excerpt from there, look at how using simple language the poet tries to narrate a story here.

It is an ancient mariner
and he stops one of three
by the long grey beard
and glittering eye
now wherefore stops you
me?

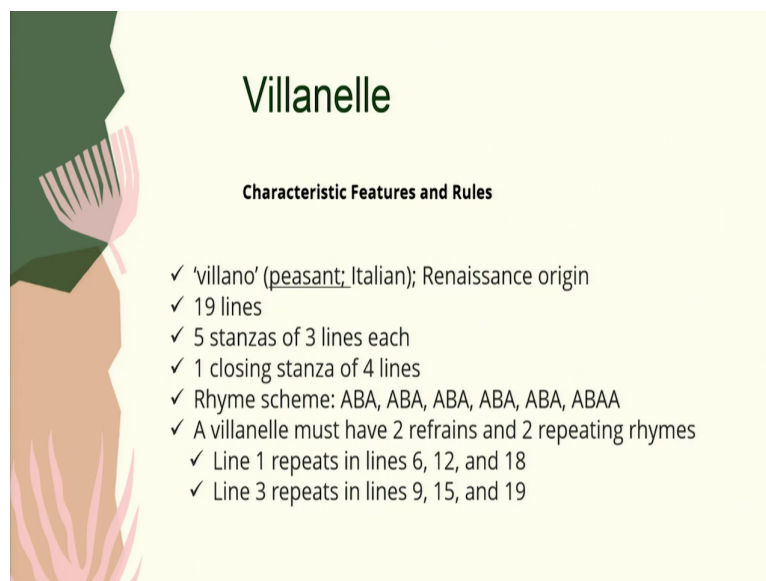
So, he is an ancient mariner so, it is an occasion maybe marriage. So, he is standing there and people want to move in, but right at the entrance, he stops one of the three who is about to enter and therefore, one of them asks why are you stopping me .

The bridegroom's doors are
wide open
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met the feast is
set
may you hear the merry din

he holds him with a skinny
hand
there was a ship quoth he
Hold off unhand me grey beard
loon!
eftsoons his hand dropt he .
Water water everywhere
And not a drop to drink.

In fact, it is one of the most oft-quoted lines that you can come across in order to describe the earth how it is surrounded by three-fourths of water, but not all of it is fit for drinking - water everywhere and not a drop to drink, a very well known ballad the rhyme of the ancient mariner.

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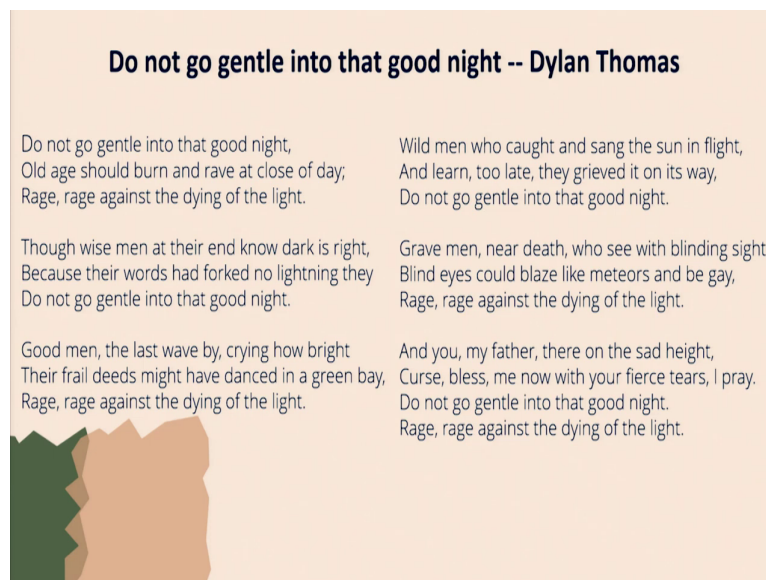


From ballad we move on to an Italian genre of poetry called villanelle, of course, it has its origins in Italy, especially during the renaissance time; however, it is popular even in even to this day and especially in England. So, it acquired a kind of fame during the late 18th century, but this is one of the popular forms that is being used even to this day.

Generally speaking, it is highly rigid in terms of its characteristic features and rules it is a slightly rigid and difficult form to follow, I said it in Italian. So, it has an Italian root which means in Villano it means 'peasant' in Italian. It is a 19 line poem with 5 line 5 stanzas and

each stanza is 3 lines. In other words, a tercet you make use of 5 tercets here and the closing stanza is a quatrain a 4 line stanza; that means, 5 3 za 15 the last stanza is 4 lines 15 plus 4 19 lines. And it also has a close rhyming scheme ABA ABA in other words there are just 2 sounds it makes use of 2 sounds A and B. So, it is a kind of a permutation and combination of AB sounds just 2 sounds which is why I said it's one of the slightly difficult types of poetry. Along with these things, a villanelle must also have two refrains. Refrain in poetry is repetition - a repeating line. So, you have to have two lines that keep occurring at certain intervals. So, two lines that need to repeat themselves. So, these are some things that you will have to keep in mind. So, two refrains and rigid rhyme scheme ABA ABA and ABAA in the last stanza and you have 5 tercets and 1 quatrain total 19 lines.

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Let us take a look at one of the extraordinarily remarkable villanelle written by Dylan Thomas do not go gentle into that good night. This poem has acquired an iconic status look at again let us see whether it fits into the bill of a villanelle. So, there are 1 2 3 4 5 stanzas of three lines each; that means, 5 tercets and the last one the poem ends with a quatrain four lines so; that means, it has 19 lines now let us see whether it matches the rhyming rule. So, night [T] the sound is [T] one sound day A, and ok the sound is B so, AB. Night and light AAB right and night again the sound [T], AA they are B. So, something like this so, ABA ABA ABA all that. And even the last quatrain ABAA so, it perfectly fits into that. Do not go gentle into that good night I mean the poem is highly elusive here night refers to night darkness images related to them they refer to death light bright green all these things they

refer to life vitality of life. So, the poem beautifully juxtaposes these contrasting images of light and darkness, beautifully juxtaposes. "Do not go gentle into that good night, old age should burn and rave at the close of the day, rage rage against the dying of the light." Now, look at "Do not go gentle into that good night" which acts as a refrain. You have the 6th and 12th line and even later. So it qualifies as a refrain. And "rage rage against the dying of the light" also is another refrain. So, it also meets that criteria there are two refrains here two lines that keep repeating at certain intervals rage rage against the dying of the light its again there on 9th line. And it is again there on 15th line and it is also there on the 19th line. Wild men who caught and sang in the sun in flight and learn too late they grieved it on its way do not go gentle into that good night. The poem goes on this way, in fact, the poem is written in the context of the poet's father. In fact, it said that his father was not very well. So, Dylan Thomas was very apprehensive that he may lose his father. So, in that fit of emotion, he writes it and almost urges his father to fight against death, though he knows very well that death is inevitable, but do not meetly surrender before there is at least put up one last fight before you die before you give up easily put up one last fight. So, here is again it's very heroic because it again talks about that existential conflict between life and death, how mortal beings try to fight against death and ultimately realise its not in our hands we will have to come to terms with it and all that. But here is his concern - do not give up so, easily fight put up one last fight before you go - an extraordinary and exemplary poem.

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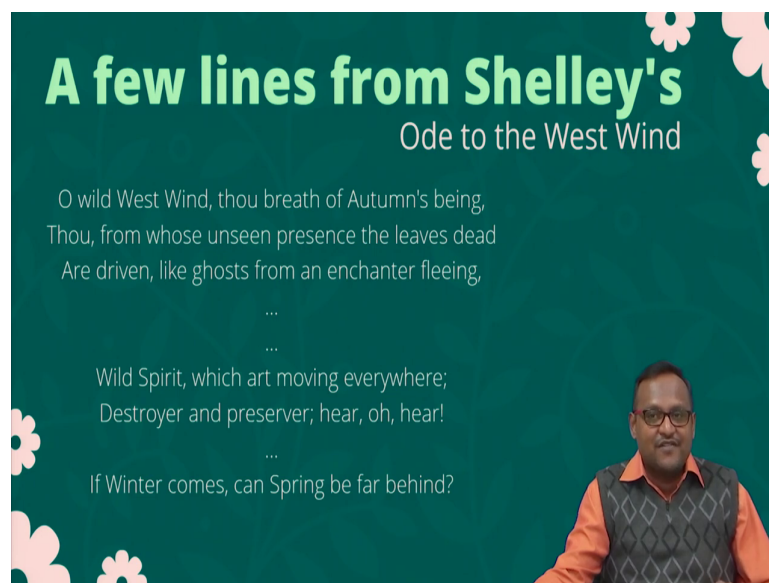


Ode

- Originated in ancient Greece
- The poet addresses a person, thing, or event
- Has a somber, elevated tone
- Explores universal elements of the theme
- Powerful emotional element often leading to catharsis
- Keats and Shelley have perfected the English odes.

So, we have 'ode' another very interesting type of poetry. Ode it is said that it originated in ancient Greece, but later we have odes in English in India. So, it is a form of poetry as a type of poetry it is found all across the globe now so, it has travelled across the globe. Here the poetic persona addresses anybody. Ode to West Wind is one of the well-known odes Ode to a Nightingale these are well-known poems by romantic poets - Keats and Shelley we are talking about them. So, they directly address whether it is a person, whether it is a thing, whether it is an event, birds anything they address that particular object directly in the poem and start constructing the poem around it. Generally, it has a kind of an elevated tone or an exalted tone very serious in nature, it explores generally themes of nature universal elements and all that. So, it makes use of powerful emotions and, in English literature in English poetry Shelley and Keats have almost perfected this type of poetry they have practised it to almost to its perfection.

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So, this excerpt is taken from Shelley's well-known ode to the west wind, O wild west wind. So, look at how the poet addresses the west wind he is directly addressing the west wind.

".....Though breath of autumns being, you are the breath of autumns being.
You from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
are driven like ghost from an enchanter fleeing
.....

Wild spirit, which art moving everywhere
destroyer and preserver hear oh hear!

.....

He wants the west wind to listen to him, he is addressing it, he is describing it, he is interacting with the west wind and he is calling it wild spirit. In fact, this is a poem where you come across these almost immortal lines.

“If winter comes can spring be far behind?”

These lines are the epitome of positivity. They are the epitome of hope, eternal human hope if winter comes if difficulties are there can spring be far behind can happiness be far behind it must be somewhere around the corner. If winter comes can spring be far behind it is like, these lines are the pinnacle of human hope they depict the pinnacle of human hope.

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Epic

- Long narrative poems
 - An objective and omniscient narrator
- Grand in tone, scale and style
- Recounts heroic events
 - The Mahabharata, Ramayana, Beowulf, Epic of Gilgamesh, Odyssey, Kalevala

The slide features a pink background with a decorative floral border on the right. A small image of a superhero flying is positioned next to the text. In the bottom right corner, there is a video inset showing a man with glasses and a patterned vest over an orange shirt.

So, from here we have epics we have discussed epics, especially while we were dealing with the origins of poetry some of the well-known epics are the Ramayana, Mahabharata, epic of Gilgamesh, Odyssey and Kalevala which is a national Finnish epic Kalevala. Generally, these are narrative poems that have an omniscient narrator. The narrator knows everything and narrates the course of events. And here everything is grand in tone grand in scale grand in

style these are some kind of epic battles between titans and gods. So, everything is taken on an epic scale these are some of the popular epics.

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So, these are some major forms of poems that we need to know about, the major subtypes of a poem. So, I hope this class has helped you identify major types of poetry and how to mark rhyme schemes if may be given an option you would be able to identify a poem you would be able to mark the correct rhyme scheme. So, in the next class, we might have an activity based on this until then take care and read a couple of poems, and see if you can identify the stanza structure if you can identify the type of poetry and the imagery used and all that.

So, until the next class, all the best take care bye.