



Olympiads School, Grade 8 English, Class 7 Notes

What is free verse?

- Free verse is poetry that does not stick to a defined rhythm or rhyme scheme.
- Poets who write in free verse try to mimic the natural rhythm and flow of language as it is spoken.
- There may be traditional poetic devices in free verse (e.g., imagery, alliteration, chiasmus etc.).
- But there isn't a strict pattern.



Common devices in free verse

- Poets who write in free verse often use alliteration, assonance, and imagery.
- The imagery may appeal to the five senses (i.e., olfactory, auditory, gustatory, tactile, and visual).



Source: iStock (istockphoto.com)

Other common poetic devices

- Onomatopoeia



- Parallel structure (the repetition of the same or similar words, phrases, or sentences)

FAULTY PARALLELISM	
Faulty Parallelism	Corrected Version
Formerly, science was taught by the textbook method, while now the laboratory method is employed.	Formerly, science was taught by the textbook method; now it is taught by the laboratory method.

So, there are no rules?

- Not exactly! There is still an underlying organizational pattern.
- First of all, the speaker (the voice in the poem) has to sound like a human being.
- The images may be derived from everyday reality.



Cadence

- Cadence is the natural, rhythmic rise and fall of language as it is normally spoken.
- When writing free verse, poets try to maintain a sense of balance, proportion, and timing that sounds natural to the ear.

A Noiseless Patient Spider by Walt Whitman

A noiseless patient spider,
I mark'd where on a little promontory it stood isolated,
Mark'd how to explore the vacant vast surrounding,
It launch'd forth filament, filament, filament, out of itself,
Ever unreeling them, ever tirelessly speeding them.



Walt Whitman

