

# Rhyme Scheme

## Definition of Rhyme Scheme

Rhyme scheme is the pattern of rhyme that comes at the end of each verse or line in poetry. In other words, it is the structure of end words of a verse or line that a poet needs to create when writing a poem. Many poems are written in free verse style. Some other poems follow non-rhyming structures, paying attention only to the number of syllables. The Japanese genre of Haiku is a case in point. Thus, it shows that the poets write poems in a specific type of rhyme scheme or rhyming pattern. There are several types of rhyme schemes as given below.

## Types of Rhyme Scheme

There are a number of rhyme schemes used in poetry; some of the most popular of which include:

**Alternate rhyme:** It is also known as ABAB rhyme scheme, it rhymes as “ABAB CDCD EFEF GHGH.”

**Ballade:** It contains three stanzas with the rhyme scheme of “ABABBCBC” followed by “BCBC.”

**Monorhyme:** It is a poem in which every line uses the same rhyme scheme.

Couplet: It contains two-line stanzas with the “AA” rhyme scheme, which often appears as “AA BB CC and DD...”

**Triplet:** It often repeats like a couplet, uses rhyme scheme of “AAA.”

**Enclosed rhyme:** It uses rhyme scheme of “ABBA”

**Terza rima rhyme scheme:** It uses tercets, three lines stanzas. Its interlocking pattern on end words follows: ABA BCB CDC DED and so on.

**Keats Odes rhyme scheme:** In his famous odes, Keats has used a specific rhyme scheme, which is “ABABCDECDE.”

Limerick: A poem uses five lines with a rhyme scheme of “AABBA.”

Villanelle: A nineteen-line poem consisting of five tercets and a final quatrain. It uses a rhyme scheme of “A1bA2, abA1, abA2, abA1, abA2, abA1A2.”

## Short Examples of Rhyme Scheme

The sun is shining bright  
This is a lovely sight.  
You are like a day of May  
And I as worthless as hay.  
This is poor Mr. Potter  
Walking a road with his daughter.  
Sometimes, your unspoken word  
Is more important than that heard.  
Little boy wants to eat cakes  
Whenever he from sleep awakes.  
I saw a tree that to God doth say  
I want the Lord to accept my pray.  
I think I can never see  
Something as free as a sea.  
After so many days of drought down poured the rain  
It took so long is if came from Spain.  
The green garden lets its shade fall  
Over the red old school hall.  
There flows the river  
That's amongst the greatest giver.

## Examples of Rhyme Scheme in Literature

Let us take a few examples of most widely used rhyme schemes in literature:

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### Example #1: *Neither Out Far nor in Deep* (By Robert Frost)

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The people along the sand	(A)
All turn and look one way.	(B)
They turn their back on the land.	(A)
They look at the sea all day.	(B)
As long as it takes to pass	(C)
A ship keeps raising its hull;	(C)
The wetter ground like glass	(D)
Reflects a standing gull.	(D)

This is an ABAB pattern of rhyme scheme, in which each [stanza](#) applies this format. For instance, in the first stanza, “sand” rhymes with the word

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### Example #2: *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* (By Donald Barthelme)

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Twinkle, twinkle, little star, (A)  
How I wonder what you are. (A)  
Up above the world so high, (B)  
Like a diamond in the sky. (B)

The following example uses an AABB rhyme scheme. Here, the first line ends in the word “star,” which rhymes with the final word of the second line, “are.” Since both words rhyme with each other, they are signified with letter “A.”

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### Example #3: *Divine Comedy* (By Dante Alighieri)

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As I drew nearer to the end of all desire, (A)  
I brought my longing’s ardor to a final height, (B)  
Just as I ought. My vision, becoming pure, (A)  
Entered more and more the beam of that high light (B)  
That shines on its own truth. From then, my seeing (C)  
Became too large for speech, which fails at a sight... (B)

Dante has used terza rima [tercet](#) rhyming patterns (ABA, BCB, CDC ...) in this poem, giving an impression of irresistible movement, as well as dynamism.

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### Example #4: *A Monorhyme for the Shower* (By Dick Davis)

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Lifting her arms to soap her hair (A)  
Her pretty breasts respond – and there (A)  
The movement of that buoyant pair (A)  
Is like a spell to make me swear... (A)

This poem presents a perfect example of monorhyme, in which you’ll notice that every line ends in a similar rhyme, “AAAA” like these words, “hair, there, pair, and swear.”

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### Example #5: *Nature’s Way* (By Heidi Campbell)

Upon a nice mid-spring day,	A
Let's take a look at Nature's way.	A
Breathe the scent of nice fresh air,	B
Feel the breeze within your hair.	B
The grass will poke between your toes,	C
Smell the flowers with your nose.	C
Clouds form shapes within the skies,	D
And light will glisten from your eyes	D

This extract from a poem by Heidi Campbell has a beautiful rhyme scheme AA, BB, CC and DD.

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#### **Example #6: *A Poison Tree* (By William Blake)**

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I was angry with my friend:	A
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.	A
I was angry with my foe:	B
I told it not, my wrath did grow.	B
And I watered it in fears	C
Night and morning with my tears;	C
And I sunned it with smiles,	D
And with soft deceitful wiles.	D

This extract from William Blake's poem has an excellent rhyme scheme as AA, BB, CC, and DD.

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#### **Example #7: *The One* (By Crystal R. Adame)**

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The one who brought me down to earth,	A
And held me every day.	B
The one who gracefully gave me birth,	A
And said, I love you in every way.	B
The one who taught me everything,	C
Like how to crawl and walk.	D
The one who taught me how to sing	C
After learning how to talk.	D

Here, poet Crystal R. Adame makes dexterous use of rhyme scheme. The scheme runs like this: ABAB and CDCD.

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**Example #8: *To A Terrific Dad* (By David L. Helm)**

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To a dad who is terrific,	A
To a dad who's real neat.	B
To a dad who makes the best of things,	C
Even when they're not so sweet!	B
To a dad who's growing older,	D
To a dad who's going gray.	E
To a dad who just gets smarter,	D
It would seem from day to day!	E

These lines from the poem *To a Terrific Dad* have yet another kind of rhyme scheme, which is different from all of the preceding examples. The rhyme scheme of this poem is ABCBDEDE.

### **Function of Rhyme Scheme**

Rhyme scheme is an integral part of the constitution of a poem, which includes [meter](#), length of phrase, and [rhythm](#). In fact, rhyme scheme, like other writing tools, is used to create balance and relieve tension, manage flow, create rhythm, and highlight important ideas. Its basic function is to form units of sound and suggest units of sense. It also communicates the idea in a more effective way.