

Poetry Project

The art of poetry is the heart of all fiction and creative nonfiction. All of the elements of craft you employ to develop and produce these two genres are generated through the poetic impulse. Indeed, our first attempts, as humans, to discover and uncover meaning in a seemingly disinterested universe began with verse and song. The rhythms, meters, repetitions, rhymes and symbols most associated came about from our need to make some order out of the disordered world in which we live.

In this course, you're required to submit at least one poem, with revisions as part of your Final Portfolio. Below are the requirements for the poem:

1. Good Title
2. Presents a narrative stance between the poet and reader—mood/message on the connotative level
3. Effective beginning, middle and end
4. Cohesive structure in both content and line breaks
5. Vivid imagery that uses all five senses
6. Concise, perceptive diction
7. Use of meter and rhythm to emphasize theme
8. Use of rhymes, when appropriate
9. Proper use of metaphor/figurative language (original metaphors, or older metaphors/similes used in a unique way)
10. Effective use of parallelism to emphasize ideas
11. Works for a turn in poem
12. Varied punctuation/syntax (caesura, enjambment, end-stopped lines, etc.)
13. Concrete nouns
14. Active verbs
15. Correct grammar and spelling
16. Some ambiguity (but not obscure or vague)
17. Imaginative
18. Thoughtful
19. Goosebumps (physical reaction)
20. Something disturbing (destabilized)

Notes on Poetry – Deceptions (Best Words, Best Order)

- One intention of a poem: to chart the world in which it is written.
 - It comes in to existence when emotion suddenly links with image, idea and language, and what is constructed is a metaphor that stands for some aspect of one's relation to one's fellow creatures and the world around them. A verbal box that conveys feeling.
- Even the title controls the reader's interest.
- A writer needs the reader to believe in the work. A verbal illusion. And the writer has to deliver.
- The writer is always in danger of falling into the trap of believing the lie that the work can remain tied to themselves. If a work is to become successful—the writer must become invisible.
- Must ask constantly: "What am I trying to do? How is each word, sentence or image contributing to the whole?"
- Be aware of multiple meanings—words are ambiguous.
- Saying too much or too little.
- Must have a certain amount of gall.
- Then set aside ego, and revise.
- A work of art gives testimony as to what it is to be a human being. It bears witness, it extracts meaning. It is also the clearest way that emotion is communicated from one human being to another. Emotion is re-created.

Elements of Bad Poetry

- Random word order/structure/spacing
- Insincere/apathetic
- Clichés
- Lack of emotion
- Forced rhyming
- Vague/obscure/or too abstract
- Poetic diction
- Restrictive rhyme schemes or butchered meter
- Bad line breaks
- Repetitive use of repetitive themes

- Lack of imagination
- No use of metaphor/personification/ simile, etc.
- Lack of style (grammar, punctuation, etc.)
- Too “dark,” self-indulgent
- Weak lines
- Weak title
- Forced imagery
- Following “rules” too closely
- Poems that are too sugary
- No stimulation of senses
- Obvious use of rhyme
- Bad title
- Bad punctuation