

English 521

Introduction to Poetry
February 2010

1

The Road Not Taken

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,	And both that morning equally lay
And sorry I could not travel both	In leaves no step had trodden black.
And be one traveler, long I stood	Oh, I kept the first for another day!
And looked down one as far as I could	Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
To where it bent in the undergrowth;	I doubted if I should ever come back.
Then took the other, as just as fair,	I shall be telling this with a sigh
And having perhaps the better claim,	Somewhere ages and ages hence: Two roads diverged in a wood,

Analyzing Poetry

- *The more we read it, the more we realize that poetry usually involves some deeper meaning.*
- *In order to know what this deeper meaning is, we must know what we are looking for.*
- *We generally look for things*

Figures of Speech

- *Figures of speech are used to make ordinary language more effective to the reader.*
- *They are not necessarily logical, but they appeal to the reader's imagination.*
- *They include:*

4

Metaphor

- a figure of speech in which a word or phrase that ordinarily means one thing is used to describe (or compare) something else that wouldn't ordinarily have that quality.
- This description does not compare the things using the words "like" or "as".

5

Metaphor

*All the world's a
stage,
And all the men and
women
merely players
They have their
exits and their
entrances.*

William Shakespeare

6

Simile

- a figure of speech which compares two things (like a metaphor does) using the words "like" or "as" in its description (which metaphors don't do).
- If a poet compares two things that don't usually belong together and doesn't use the words "like" or "as", then he or she is using a metaphor, not a simile.


7

Flint

*An emerald is as green as grass;
A ruby red as blood;
A sapphire shines as blue as
heaven;
A flint lies in the mud.*

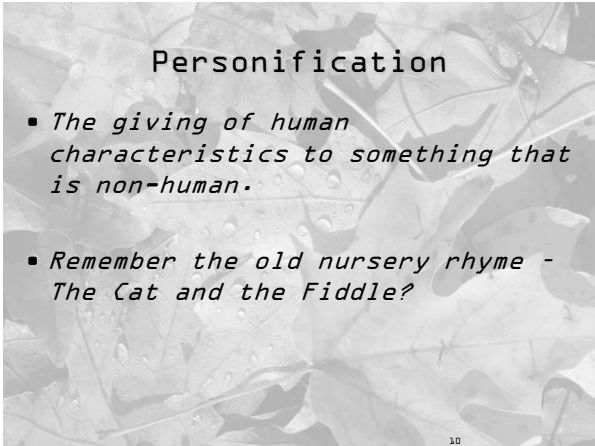
*A diamond is a brilliant stone,
To catch the world's desire;
An opal holds a fiery spark;
But a flint holds a fire.*

Christina Rossetti



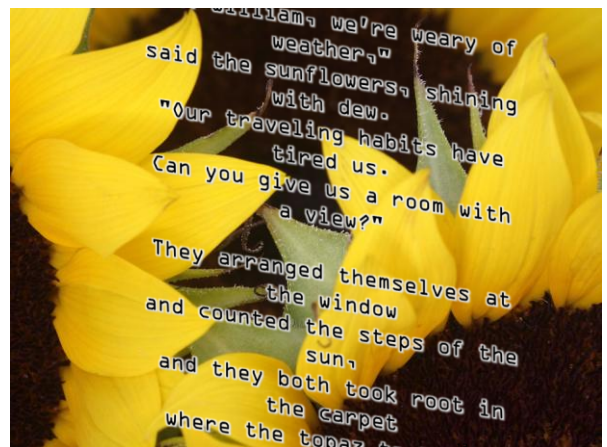
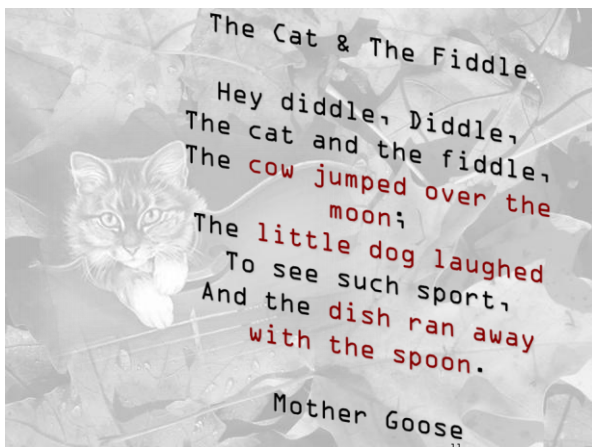
Remember :

- Keep in mind that metaphors and similes, on the surface, do not seem to make sense.
- In fact, they should appear *illogical* to the reader. You must analyze the



Personification

- The giving of human characteristics to something that is non-human.
- Remember the old nursery rhyme - The Cat and the Fiddle?



Apostrophe

- *someone absent or dead, or something non-human is addressed as if it were human, present, alive, and could respond.*
- *Remember - in apostrophe - the speaker of the poem must speak directly to the subject.*

13

Apostrophe Examples:

*For Brutus, as you know, was Caesar's angel.
Judge, O you gods, how dearly Caesar loved him.*

- Shakespeare

O World, I cannot hold thee close enough!//Thy winds, thy wide grey skies!//Thy mists that roll and rise!

- Edna St Vincent Mallay

14

*O Captain, my Captain! our fearful trip
is done;
The ship has weather'd every rack,
the prize we sought is won;
The port is near, the bells I hear, the
people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel,
the vessel grim and daring;
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.*

15

Verbal Irony

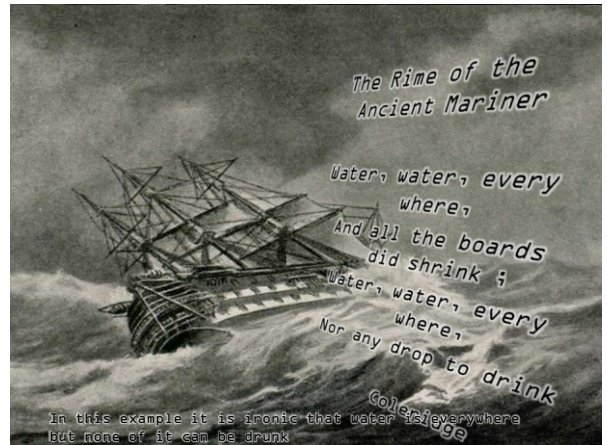
- *Stating the opposite of what is actually meant.*
- *Saying 'Oh Great' after you fail a test.*
- *There is a difference between what the speaker says and what is actually understood.*
- *Verbal irony refers to spoken words only.*

16

Verbal Irony

- In *Julius Caesar*, Mark Antony repeats the words "*and Brutus is an honorable man*" in the famous "Friends, Romans, countrymen" speech.
- Mark Antony's meaning, however, is that Brutus is completely dishonorable because Brutus, Caesar's best friend, joined the other conspirators and plunged a knife into Caesar's chest.
- Note: Verbal irony may be confused with sarcasm, but *sarcasm is harsh and direct*, while verbal irony is implied (more subtle).

17



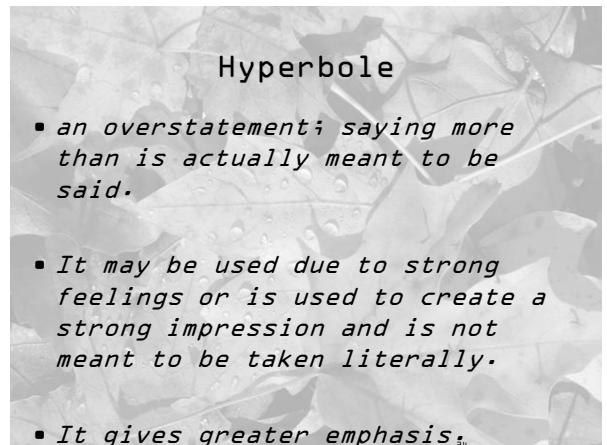
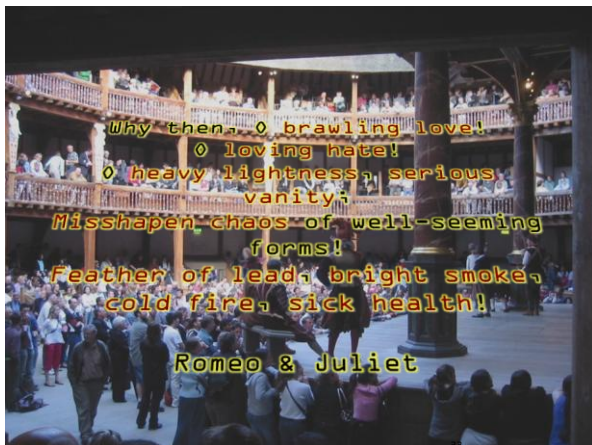
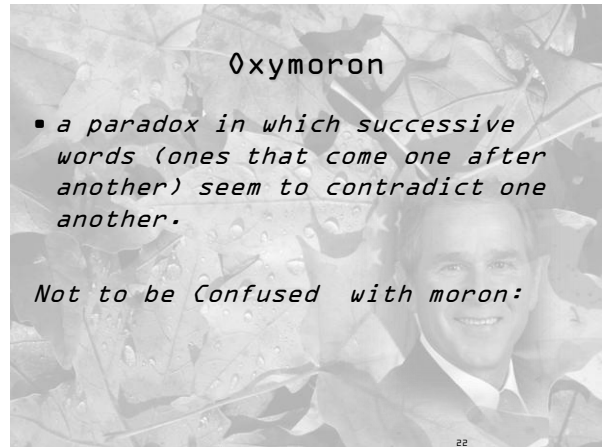
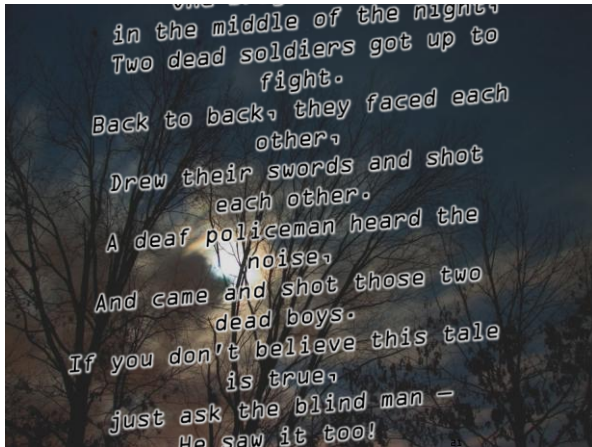
Paradox

- a statement whose two parts seem contradictory yet make sense with more thought.
 - In the Bible, Christ used paradox in his teaching: *They have ears but hear not*
 - In ordinary conversation, we might use a paradox, *Deep down he's really very shallow*
- Somehow, the statement seems true and false at the same time.

When you increase your
knowledge, you see how
little you know. You see
how much you still have to
learn. When you really
know a lot, you can say:
I know that I know
nothing.

I was so much older then,
I'm younger than that now.
Bob Dylan

20



It's a slow burg—I spent a couple of
weeks there one day.

—Carl Sandburg,
"The People, Yes"

This poem uses hyperbole in a
description of a young boy.

Why does a boy who's fast as a jet
Take all day—and sometimes two—
To get to school?

—John Ciardi, "Speed Adjustments"

Hyperbole can emphasize a truth by
exaggerating it.

Here once the embattled farmers stood
And fired the shot heard round the
world.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The Concord Hymn"

25

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash
this blood
Clean from my hand?
No.

This my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

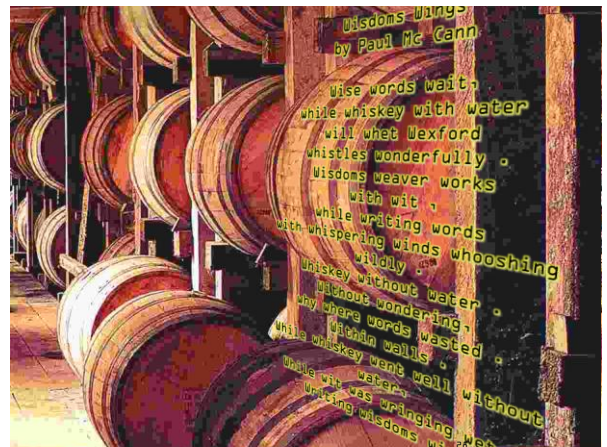
William Shakespeare

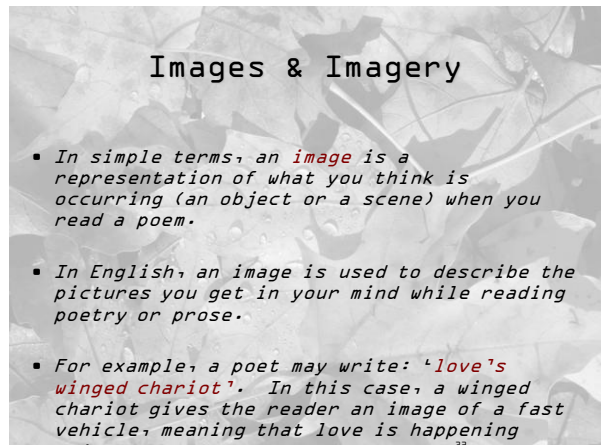
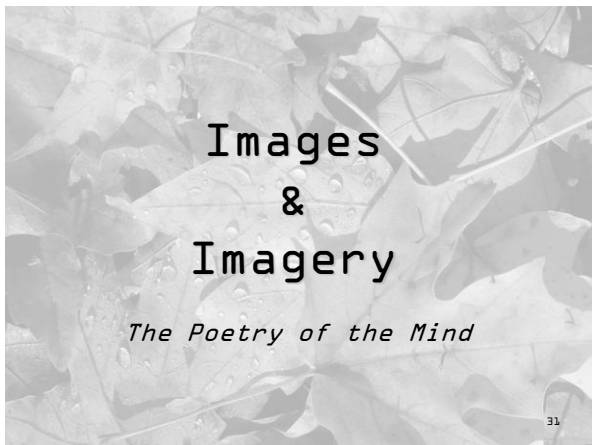
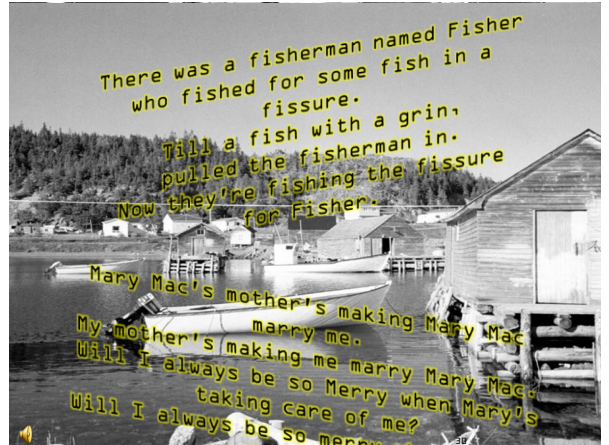


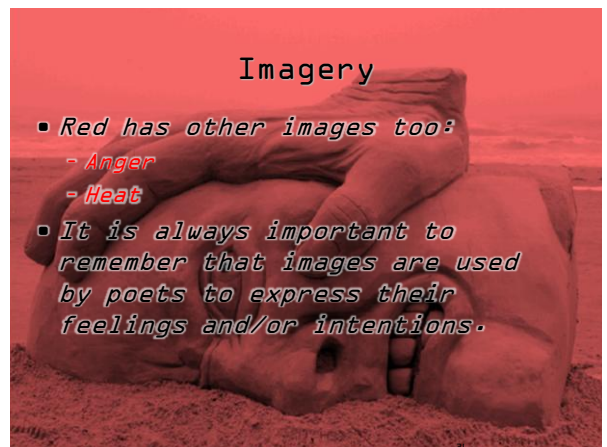
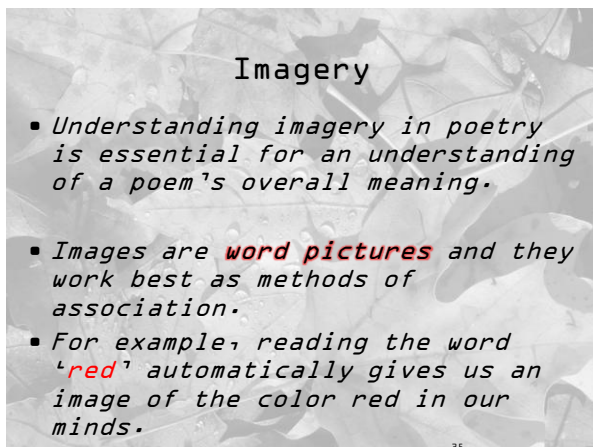
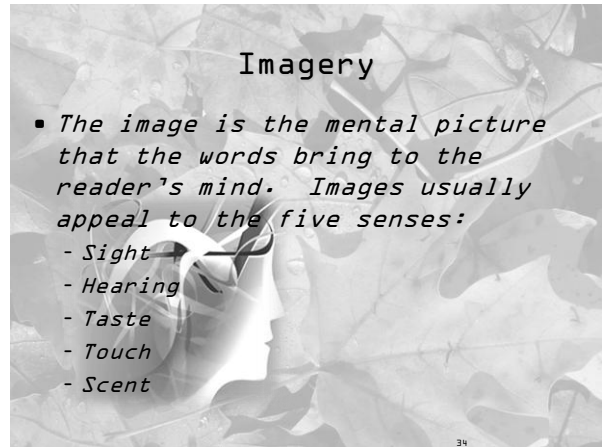
Alliteration

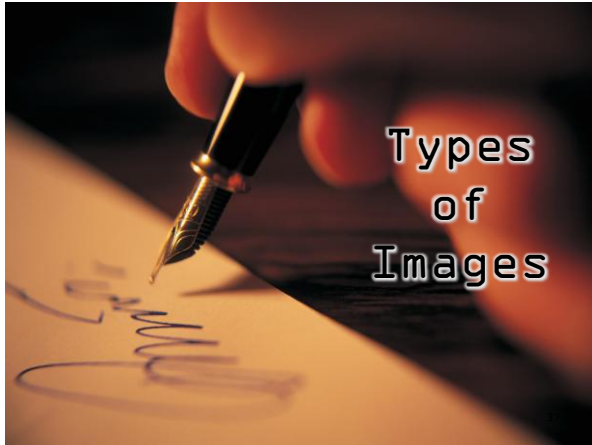
- successive words which all begin with the same letter.
- Alliteration is one of the poet's most important sound techniques. It makes particular words stand out.
- It also connects the words to be emphasized.
- Tongue twisters are great examples of alliteration.

27









Simple Description

- A large number of images which arise in a poem come from simple description of visible objects or actions.
- Often, simple imagery can be formed using similes and metaphors.
- Also, imagery can be formed by using sound pictures, created using onomatopoeia and alliteration.

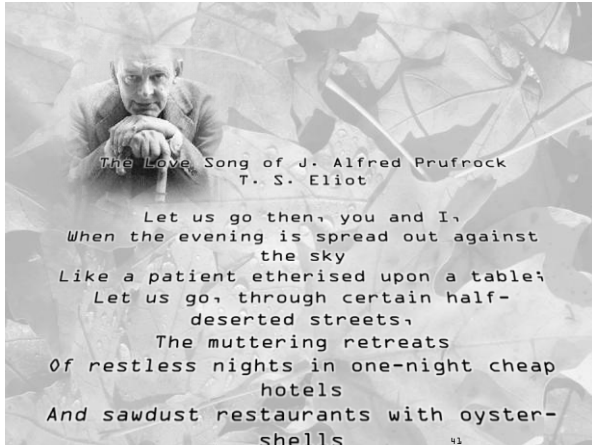
Simple Imagery in Poetry

Like as the waves make towards the
pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end
William Shakespeare

I caught this morning morning's minion,
kingdom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-
dawn-drawn Falcon, in his riding"
Gerard Manley Hopkins

Dramatic Monologue & Dialogue

- As soon as the reader becomes aware that the poem is a dramatic monologue (speech by one person to an unseen audience) or a dialogue, he visualizes a speaker or speakers.



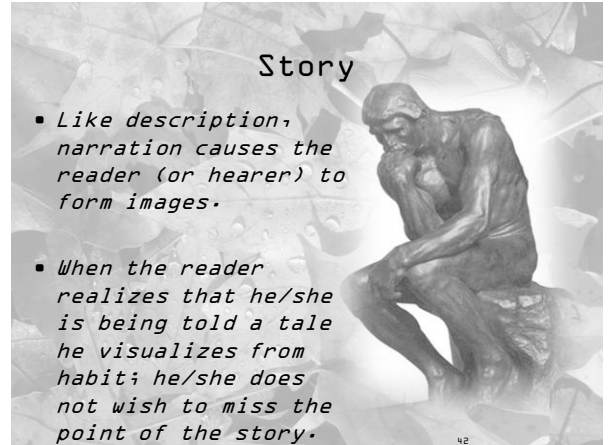
The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock
T. S. Eliot

Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out against
the sky
Like a patient etherised 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

41

Story

- *Like description, narration causes the reader (or hearer) to form images.*
- *When the reader realizes that he/she is being told a tale he visualizes from habit; he/she does not wish to miss the point of the story.*



42

Metonymy

- *A poet names one thing when he/she really means another thing with a close connection.*

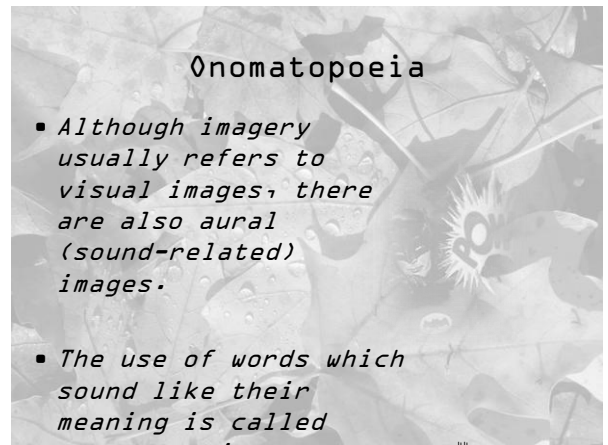
Seven little foreheads stared up at me from the first row. (where "foreheads" is used for "eyes").

Ottawa sent those boys to war. ("Ottawa" is used instead of the Canadian Government)

43

Onomatopoeia

- *Although imagery usually refers to visual images, there are also aural (sound-related) images.*
- *The use of words which sound like their meaning is called onomatopoeia.*



44

Common Imagery Themes

- *Winter*
- *Spring*
- *Summer*
- *Autumn*
- *Color*

