

Poetry with good rhythm sounds beautiful if it is read or recited in a meaningful, expressive way. It is good to feel the rhythm, but it is more important that the listeners understand the meaning of the words.

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* Remember: Rhythm helps the words of a poem to flow smoothly. Rhythm in poetry is made of a regular pattern of accented and unaccented syllables and a regular number of syllables in each line. *

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Oral Drill

A. Read the poems below. On the chalkboard, mark the accented and unaccented syllables of the first two or three lines in each poem. How many syllables are in each line?

Trees

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

—Joyce Kilmer



3. *Rhythm is made of a regular pattern of accented and unaccented syllables.* Read the lines of poems in the text. Help the students to get the feel of various rhythm patterns by having them tap their pencils on their desks at each accented syllable as they read poetry together.

- a. One pattern begins with an unaccented syllable and alternates between accented and unaccented syllables. This is one of the most common patterns.
- b. Another common pattern begins with an accented syllable and alternates between accented and unaccented syllables.
- c. In yet another pattern, an accented syllable is followed by two unaccented syllables. This pattern is used frequently, though not as often as the first two. It has a delightful, galloping rhythm.

Lesson 94 Answers

Oral Drill

A. ("Trees")

I think that I shall nev-er see 8
A po-em love-ly as a tree. 8

4. *Each line of poetry has a regular number of syllables.* This helps to keep the rhythm even. In the lesson, have pupils count the syllables in the examples given. The first two lines have eight syllables each (written as 8, 8); in the next four lines, the pattern is 4, 4, 4, 4; and in the last example it is 6, 4. Note especially the pattern in "Dandelion" (Oral Drill): in the first stanza it is 8, 8, 11, 8, 8, 11; and in the second stanza it is 8, 8, 11, 7, 7, 11.

5. *Poetry should be read or recited in a meaningful, expressive way.* Although the rhythm needs to come through, the important thing is a proper expression of the meaning and feeling of the words. Avoid using a singsong manner.

Try reading some stanzas of Oral Drill in the wrong pattern to show students how awkward it sounds.

