

Literary Formats: A writing genre resource

Prose formats

Traditional forms of prose include essays, short stories, flash fiction, narratives, biographies, reflective pieces, commentaries, plays (dialogues/ monologues), and fiction/non - fiction.

More innovative formats could be:

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| advertisement | Create a one page advertisement like you'd see in a magazine. You want to get your reader's attention, demonstrate the need for what you are selling, and show how your product/service will satisfy that need. Study professional ads to see how these goals are accomplished and use those examples as your models. |
| advice columns | Like the ones you find in magazines or newspapers, an advice column features a letter from a reader who needs advice or help and a response from the columnist whose expertise allows him or her to sincerely give this help. You should consult a real column in a newspaper to see how you could format yours. |
| announcement | We hear announcements each day in school. There are also announcements in church or before a meeting. Announcements alert people to important events that are coming up. Create an announcement that gives critical information about an upcoming event: who, what, when, where, why, and how. Top the announcement with an attention-getting label, such as "Attention all athletes," or "important information for all drivers." |
| campaign speech | Politician who are running for office give speeches that they hope will get them elected. These speeches usually include the person's views on important issues as well as statements that they hope will help voters understand what kind of people they are. |
| descriptive paragraph | When we read a descriptive paragraph, its like we are there. The imagery allows us to see, smell, hear, taste, and feel our surroundings. |
| diary | A personal diary is a daily journal, a recording of the significant moments of the day. It begins with the date. Some diary writers begin, "Dear Diary," but that's not a rule. Since a diary is meant to be personal, it often reveals feelings and thoughts that people tend to keep private. You should include diary entries for several days. This genre is a good way to show a process over time. |
| eyewitness account | When important events happen, someone is generally there to see it happen. An eyewitness is asked to give details about exactly what happened, when it happened and how it happened. The eyewitness would provide specific, concrete details like colors, sizes, distances, times, etc. that make the account as factual as possible. While not everyone sees an event in the exact same way, eyewitness accounts help us put the event into perspective. The account could be prompted by a reporter's or a police officer's questions. |
| Informative essays | Informative essays explain a process, an event, or a concept. It is writing characterized by inclusion of sufficient details, reasons, or examples to allow the reader to fully understand the process, event, or concept. For help with this form of writing click here . |

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| interview | When trying to figure out appropriate questions to ask an interviewee follow this guideline. First, get the facts. Next, ask your interviewee to clarify what has been said. (What do you mean by...?) Then the interviewer is supposed to verify information given, provide any follow-up questions, and provide closure to the discussion. |
| memory | A memory is similar to a monologue in that it is the reflection of one speaker. To write a memory is to single out an important event from the past and recall its details (who, what, when, and where) and to write also about why the memory is important. How did the event change the person (speaker, narrator) or why does it still come to mind? Why was this event important? Memories are written in first person point of view and should be full of details that make the event seem true to life. Your reader should be able to visualize the event, almost as if he or she were there. |
| one act play | A one act play introduces characters in a conflict that is resolved in one act. Before writing your own, read a one act play to give you an idea of how to proceed. The play must be written using the typical conventions of a play or drama. |
| personal commentary | Most personal commentaries fall into one of three styles: an amusing commentary, a description of an event whose consequences are emotionally charged or easy to relate to, and finally, a personal point of view about something serious. The common elements that personal commentaries share are that they reveal something about the author and they have a single, central theme. |
| post card | A post card must have three parts. On the front is the picture and a greeting, such as "Hello from Ontario," or "Wish you were skiing with us." On the back are the address and stamp to the right and the message to the left. People generally write in small print on postcards to let them say everything they want to say or they may write brief ideas. Be sure that each word in your message counts or means something. |
| ransom note | A ransom note is written from a kidnapper who demands money or something else of value before he will release his captive. Things like addictions or obsessions or fears can hold people hostage, too. It would be interesting to write from the point of view of such a kidnapper. Be careful that you play with ideas here and don't get carried away. Kidnapping is violent and illegal. |
| song/ballad | Write lyrics to a song or ballad (a song that tells a story). You should have several verses. Think of the main ideas you want the song to express. Remember that songs are to be sung, so think of that as you compose. If you're really adventurous, record your song and make your genre an audio file. Look at the structures of some of your favorite songs to use for examples. |

Source:

http://www.sheboyganfalls.k12.wi.us/cyberenglish9/multi_genre/genre_types.htm#advice%20columns

Poetry Formats

ABC

A poem that has five lines that create a mood, picture, or feeling. Lines 1 through 4 are made up of words, phrases or clauses while the first word of each line is in alphabetical order. Line 5 is one sentence long and begins with any letter.

Acrostic

Poetry that certain letters, usually the first in each line form a word or message when read in a sequence.

Ballad

A poem that tells a story similar to a folk tale or legend which often has a repeated refrain.

Ballade

Poetry which has three stanzas of seven, eight or ten lines and a shorter final stanza of four or five. All stanzas end with the same one line refrain.

Blank verse

A poem written in unrhymed iambic pentameter and is often unobtrusive. The iambic pentameter form often resembles the rhythms of speech.

Bio

A poem written about one self's life, personality traits, and ambitions.

Burlesque

Poetry that treats a serious subject as humor.

Canzone

Medieval Italian lyric style poetry with five or six stanzas and a shorter ending stanza.

Carpe diem

Latin expression that means 'seize the day.' Carpe diem poems have a theme of living for today.

Cinquain

Poetry with five lines. Line 1 has one word (the title). Line 2 has two words that describe the title. Line 3 has three words that tell the action. Line 4 has four words that express the feeling, and line 5 has one word which recalls the title.

Classicism

Poetry which holds the principles and ideals of beauty that are characteristic of Greek and Roman art, architecture, and literature.

Couplet

A couplet has rhyming stanzas made up of two lines.

Dramatic monologue

A type of poem which is spoken to a listener. The speaker addresses a specific topic while the listener unwittingly reveals details about him/herself.

Eulogy

A sad and thoughtful poem about the death of an individual.

Epic

An extensive, serious poem that tells the story about a heroic figure.

Epigram

A very short, ironic and witty poem usually written as a brief couplet or quatrain. The term is derived from the Greek epigramma meaning inscription.

Epitaph

A commemorative inscription on a tomb or mortuary monument written to praise the deceased.

Epithalamium (Epithalamion)

A poem written in honor of the bride and groom.

Free verse (vers libre)

Poetry written in either rhyme or unrhymed lines that have no set fixed metrical pattern.

Ghazal

A short lyrical poem that arose in Urdu. It is between 5 and 15 couplets long. Each couplet contains its own poetic thought but is linked in rhyme that is established in the first couplet and continued in the second line of each pair. The lines of each couplet are equal in length. Themes are usually connected to love and romance. The closing signature often includes the poet's name or allusion to it.

Haiku

A Japanese poem composed of three unrhymed lines of five, seven, and five syllables, usually about some form of nature.

Horatian ode

Short lyric poem written in two or four-line stanzas, each with its the same metrical pattern, often addressed to a friend and deal with friendship, love and the practice of poetry. It is named after its creator, Horace.

Iambic pentameter

One short syllable followed by one long one five sets in a row. Example: la-LAH la-LAH la-LAH la-LAH la-LAH

Idyll (Idyl)

Poetry that either depicts a peaceful, idealized country scene or a long poem telling a story about heroes of a bygone age.

Irregular (Pseudo-Pindaric or Cowleyan) ode

Neither the three part form of the pindaric ode nor the two or four-line stanza of the Horatian ode. It is characterized by irregularity of verse and structure and lack of correspondence between the parts.

Italian sonnet

A sonnet consisting of an octave with the rhyme pattern abbaabba followed by six lines with a rhyme pattern of cdecde or cdcdcd.

Lay

A long narrative poem, especially one that was sung by medieval minstrels.

Limerick

A short sometimes vulgar, humorous poem consisting of five anapestic lines. Lines 1, 2, and 5 have seven to ten syllables, rhyme and have the same verbal rhythm. The 3rd and 4th lines have five to seven syllables, rhyme and have the same rhythm.

List

A poem that is made up of a list of items or events. It can be any length and rhymed or unrhymed.

Lyric

A poem that expresses the thoughts and feelings of the poet.

Memoriam stanza

A quatrain in iambic tetrameter with a rhyme scheme of abba -- named after the pattern used by [Lord Tennyson](#).

Name

Poetry that tells about the word. It uses the letters of the word for the first letter of each line.

Narrative

A poem that tells a story.

Ode

A lengthy lyric poem typically of a serious or meditative nature and having an elevated style and formal stanza structure.

Pastoral

A poem that depicts rural life in a peaceful, romanticized way.

Petrarchan

A 14-line sonnet consisting of an octave rhyming abbaabba followed by a sestet of cddcee or cdecde

Pindaric ode

A ceremonious poem consisting of a strophe (two or more lines repeated as a unit) followed by an antistrophe with the same metrical pattern and concluding with a summary line (an epode) in a different meter. Named after Pindar, a Greek professional lyrist of the 5th century B.C.

Quatrain

A stanza or poem consisting of four lines. Lines 2 and 4 must rhyme while having a similar number of syllables.

Rhyme

A rhyming poem has the repetition of the same or similar sounds of two or more words, often at the end of the line.

Rhyme royal

A type of poetry consisting of stanzas having seven lines in iambic pentameter.

Romanticism

A poem about nature and love while having emphasis on the personal experience.

Rondeau

A lyrical poem of French origin having 10 or 13 lines with two rhymes and with the opening phrase repeated twice as the refrain.

Senryu

A short Japanese style poem, similar to haiku in structure that treats human beings rather than nature: Often in a humorous or satiric way.

Sestina

A poem consisting of six six-line stanzas and a three-line envoy. The end words of the first stanza are repeated in varied order as end words in the other stanzas and also recur in the envoy.

Shakespearean

A 14-line sonnet consisting of three quatrains of abab cdcd efef followed by a couplet, gg. Shakespearean sonnets generally use iambic pentameter.

Shape

Poetry written in the shape or form of an object.

Sonnet

A lyric poem that consists of 14 lines which usually have one or more conventional rhyme schemes.

Tanka

A Japanese poem of five lines, the first and third composed of five syllables and the other seven.

Terza Rima

A type of poetry consisting of 10 or 11 syllable lines arranged in three-line tercets.

Verse

A single metrical line of poetry.

Villanelle

A 19-line poem consisting of five tercets and a final quatrain on two rhymes. The first and third lines of the first tercet repeat alternately as a refrain closing the succeeding stanzas and joined as the final couplet of the quatrain.

Source: http://www.poemofquotes.com/articles/poetry_forms.php