

Assonance Poems

Assonance happens when the vowel sound within a word matches the same sound in a nearby word, but the surrounding consonant sounds are different. "Tune" and "June" are rhymes; "tune" and "food" are assonant.

Example:

"I sipped the rim with palatable lip."
(The "i" sound is repeated in sipped, rim and lip.)

Assonance is a difficult sound to achieve in a poem, as it is easier to slip into a rhyming formula. The difficulty here is to have the assonant words near each other, not necessarily rhyme, but rather be more subtle.

Underline the examples of assonance in the poems. What are the sounds used?

<p style="text-align: center;">West Beast East Beast</p> <p>Upon an island hard to reach, The East Beast sits upon his beach. Upon the west beach sits the West Beast. Each beach beast thinks he's the best beast. Which beast is best? ... Well, I thought at first That the East was best and the West was worst. Then I looked again from the west to the east And I liked the beast on the east beach least.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">"Travel" by Edna St. Vincent Millay</p> <p>The railroad track is miles away, And the day is loud with voices speaking, Yet there isn't a train goes by all day But I hear its whistle shrieking.</p> <p>All night there isn't a train goes by, Though the night is still for sleep and dreaming But I see its cinders red on the sky, And hear its engine steaming.</p> <p>My heart is warm with the friends I make, And better friends I'll not be knowing, Yet there isn't a train I wouldn't take, No matter where it's going.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">El Dorado By Edgar Allan Poe</p> <p>Gaily bedight, A gallant knight, In sunshine and in shadow, Had journeyed long, Singing a song, In search of Eldorado.</p> <p>But he grew old, This knight so bold, And o'er his heart a shadow Fell as he found No spot of ground That looked like Eldorado.</p> <p>And, as his strength Failed him at length, He met a pilgrim shadow; "Shadow," said he, "Where can it be, This land of Eldorado?"</p> <p>"Over the mountains Of the moon, Down the valley of the shadow, Ride, boldly ride," The shade replied,-- "If you seek for Eldorado!"</p> <p>(look for the o sounds)</p>
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