

## The Sound of Poetry

Poems are meant to be heard. Poets use several devices to achieve certain sound effects in a poem. **Alliteration** is commonly used. This is the repetition of the beginning consonants, as in "Cathy can catch a cat." This sentence also happens to contain **assonance** which is the repetition of a vowel sound. The short a sound is repeated.

Headlines and advertisements often use these devices because they grab readers' attention and make words or phrases easy to remember. A sports headline may read "Owls Oust Oilers!" or an ad may announce "Sensational Salami Sale!" When the repeated consonant sound is not always at the beginning of the word, the device is called **consonance**: The moon shone through Nina's window.

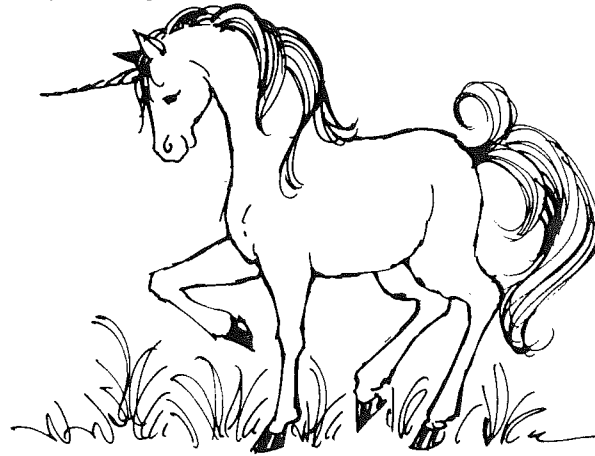
Complete the following lines with appropriate words.

1. Alliteration: Speak softly of \_\_\_\_\_ who \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Assonance: Joe can \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_ or he can make it float.
3. Consonance: Doris put a \_\_\_\_\_ on a \_\_\_\_\_ horse \_\_\_\_\_.

Sometimes poets repeat entire words as well as sounds. Notice the effect fourth-grader Elizabeth Robinson created by repeating words in her poem.

### The Unicorn

Through wind and rain I gallop,  
Stronger every day.  
Eating only wild grass and berries  
Tired as I lay.  
Nobody can catch me,  
Nobody dares,  
For I am wild,  
Wild as the night,  
Wild as the long, lonely night.



Write a poem containing at least one of the poetic devices explained on this page.

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# Onomatopoeia

*Onomatopoeia* refers to words which sound like the sound or action they describe. These words imitate the natural sounds associated with the object or action involved, such as *bang*, *hiss*, *smack*, *clink*, or *buzz*.

*Gerald heard a click as the whir began  
then a buzz and the bang of a metal pan.  
He opened wide and heard a clink,  
a gurgle and a splat like a stopped-up sink.*

From the sounds described, where do you think Gerald was? \_\_\_\_\_

Different sounds are associated with different places. Write a few onomatopoeic words you might hear at

a baseball game	a school	a zoo
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

What is another place you can think of where you would hear many different sounds?

\_\_\_\_\_ Make a list of those sounds and use them in a poem.

Don't name the place you are describing. If you have captured the place with onomatopoeia, your readers should know what place it is.

**Onomatopoeia**

**Poem**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____