

Poetry Series

Ronald Peat
- poems -

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Ronald Peat(4/24/42)

Retired now.

68 years old. Taught poetry and art for a number of years. Published in the USA, India, New Zealand, & Japan.

Willing to offer help to anyone but doesn't not like to overburdened with endless lists of poetry to read. One for one is fine. Tit for tat. Or nothing for nothing.3 lines for 3 lines.

a poet friend

RH Peat

1a Abyss Of The Moon/ My New Book/

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1a Perfection/ From My Book.

Perfection

Every oak will lose a leaf to the wind.
Every star-thistle has a thorn.
Every flower has a blemish.
Every wave washes back upon itself.
Every ocean embraces a storm.
Every raindropp falls with precision.
Every slithering snail leaves its silver trail.
Every butterfly flies until its wings are torn.
Every tree-frog is obligated to sing.
Every sound has an echo in the canyon.
Every pine drops its needles to the forest floor.
God's whispered breath at dusk comes
with a frost and leaves within dawn's faint mist,
for all of creation remains perfect, adorned,
with a dead sparrow on the ground.

Ronald Peat

1a.) Poetry In A Nutshell. An Essay For Better Writing.

This is a hand-out I use to give my classes on the first day of class when working toward the English sonnet. You might find it helpful in many different ways. Mind you, they are not rules; they are just signposts along the open road. I really don't think poetry has set rules unless you are writing in a specific form, like a sonnet. But there are certain choices that make a poem stronger in presentation that deal with the concepts and characteristics of poetry in general.

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Here it is, Poetry in a nutshell/ The basic Stuff

THESE ARE NOT RULES; THEY ARE BEWARE MARKERS, SIGNS ALONG THE ROAD TO A HAPPY POEM PRESENTATION.

Here are Some Simple Basics that hold true most of the time to help you with your writing:

1. The 3 characteristics of poetry: Poetry is a musical, a metaphorical and a connotative and highly suggestive aural language with a structure that fits its contextual concept in presentation. That means poetry is: 1. music, 2. metaphor, & 3. form.

2. All poems have 3 basic literary parts:

a.) The opening= this is the grabbers and the introduction to the poem's concept and metaphor. (grabbers) are words and phrases in the title and first 3-4 lines that pull the reader into the poem and set up the metaphor and/or storyline as well.

b.) The turning point= this is the place in the poem where the concept will change or shift toward something new, sometimes in conflict. It presents a related idea at times or a totally new concept into the poem. This usually occurs in the last third or last quarter of the poem but I've seen it happen just before closure as well. It is best when you have some lines left to build the closure. 2/3rds or 3/4ers of the way through the poem.

c.) The closure = This is the hardest part of any poem to write. It has to

combine the opening and the turning point of the poem into a single concept. Everyone attempts to do this on their poems to bring about closure, but sometimes they can't identify their turning point/the shift in the poem. So just become more conscious of the turning and opening when you form the closure to the poem. Look back to the beginning and the turning in the poem and then draw them together in your own personal way.

3. Watch the verb tense and maintain it throughout the poem. if it is past tense keep the whole poem past tense. If its present tense keep it all present tense.

4. Watch the personage in the poem: If it's first person write the whole poem in first person, don't be skipping from I to you. or from we to they.

5. if you want depth to your poem use metaphors. There are many different types of metaphors; learn to use many different types of metaphors for your own benefit. They say a lot in just a few words.

6. Learn about the many different kinds of musical devices that are used in poetry. i.e. anaphora, refrain, repeton, identities, rhymes, onomatopoeia, alliteration, consonance, assonance, internal rhyme, mid-line rhymes, etc. As well as word meter, syllabic meter, accentual meter and accentual syllabic meter create rhythms within the lines. Understand that stanza forms and line breaks (versification) , end-stops and enjambment effect the music of the poem; they all create different sorts of rhythms within the poems structure by creating a pacing through spacing of the breaks.

7. REMEMBER THIS FOREVER: poems show; they don't tell. Basically that's using concrete images and not abstract ideas. It's not explaining or defining the poem to the reader.

8. know the difference between concrete images and abstract ideas. Know that the abstract has to be reinforced with the concrete to help maintain the reader in a mood of feeling something about the subject matter. A concrete image is an image with a simple single definition, like: a rose. We hear the word and then we have a picture in our mind. That's a concrete image. It is generally something tangible. Abstracts are not tangible. Abstracts work best in a metaphor that contains a tangible image along with the abstract. "The law is a pussy cat." Would be an example.

9. Know that the reader is suppose to have an epiphany from your poem. This means you can't be telling the reader what your poem means. Let them discover it by what you have shown them within the poem. An epiphany will make them

read the poem over and over again because they like the experience they get from that little revelation you have created inside the poem that they discover within themselves. It also makes the reader part of the poem, and they feel ownership from having their own epiphany. This actually attaches the reader and the poem together in a very personal fashion.

10. Things to watch out for, try to stay away from the over-use of these words: words ending (ing) , words ending in (ly) , and the over use of the word (of) , especially as a metaphorical device. Which 9 out of 10 time is the case when the word (of) is used in a poem. All of these types of words can inundate a poem. This means the over-use of adverbs, adjectives and gerunds as filler is not too wise. A modifier should only heighten the intent in the complete poem and not just the line or image where it is attached. Most adjectives or modifiers can be cut from a poem and the content would be stronger in presentation.

11. Try to stay away from the really big abstracts, show them rather than say them. These in a nutshell are (soul) it's become the biggest cliché in poetic history as the only way to feel pain, right down to the soul. Huey: if someone is feeling any kind of pain they are feeling it in their soul. And (God) is something different to each of us no matter how well you describe the experience. We all have our personal experiences with God. In fact just describing the personal experience is far better than using the word at all. Far better, in that, it allows the reader to share your personal experience. It is far more poetical as well. My final say on this item is: a good writer knows how to say it without saying it at all. They know how to present concepts without defining them at all. They know how to make you feel things and know things without ever defining or explaining them on the page. They know how to make you dance to their tune. So show and don't tell. Present and don't define such things within your poem.

12. Finally: Mind you, take note, I am not saying to do only these things or not to do these things whatever the case may be personally. I am saying be concerned when you choose to do or not to do these things for they will effect the outcome of your complete presentation in many very different ways. Be "wise" within your choices is my only real caution here. Think it through. Ask yourself do I need this to make the poem complete. Do I need this to make the reader have their epiphany. Is every line written to the best of my ability. Does every line build toward the closure? Is every word needed for the intent? These are the things that would complete the poem in it's final presentation. Knowing how much to give is just as important as knowing how to give. Too much or too little and the reader is lost.

13. Watch out for the use of pronouns. With more than one character, person, place or thing within the poem they can become confusing. The further the distance between the noun and the pronoun the more confusing it can become. Always reread for the intent of the pronoun to make sure it cannot be confused with someone or something else within the poem. Always make sure that it is clear in its intent. Ask what does the pronoun refer to. A common misuse is 'it' with nothing for 'it' to refer to.

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14. Here is how to write a critique.

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to write a critique is to open yourself to critical growth and critical understanding of poetic structure.

The quick and easy critique deals with the 3 parts to the poem.

1. opening: (set up the metaphor and interest for reader)
2. turning point: (shift in the context)
3. closure: (ties opening and turning together.)

That's pretty basic. Anyone who writes should be able to do this. All forms of literature have these 3 basic parts or more added parts besides these three basics. Just let the poet know if you see them or not, and whether they are working or not. Poetry is a metaphorical and connotative language that has form and music as well. These things can be talked about in a critique as well. Stay focused on what is written on the page and not the writer. Only speak about the presentation's words that are set before you and how they work or don't work as you see it for the betterment of the poem. Be honest and direct in presentation. Make your statements believable for the reader. Believe what you are saying. A critique should be written for the writer to rethink his work from beginning to end. It is NOT about compliance, agreement, or even making any changes. The critique is a success if it allows the reader to rethink their poem from the presentation of another's eyes. How they saw the poem on the page.. DON'T BE TALKING ABOUT THE AUTHOR, THAT'S PERSONAL. KEEP THE NARRATIVE ABOUT THE POEM.

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General Information

What reference books do you have? A poetry dictionary and a poetry handbook that defines the terminology of poetry; They are great to have for information about writing poems and for writing criticism as well as just talking to other

poets. Criticism will teach you a lot about writing poetry. By tearing apart poems you learn about poetry structure and form. By analyzing a poem you learn to identify forms of presentation: ie meter, sonnet, villanelle, etc. You learn to see the depth of the poem behind the metaphors. The other side of the metaphorical presentation of concept and thought. You learn to be the critical reader that discerns for themselves what works or doesn't work for the complete presentation of a poem. You learn to think about a poem as a whole presentation and not just a bunch of rhyming lines. You learn the nuances and complexities of each poem you read and analyze. In the end reading poetry becomes more exciting because you see so much more of what is hidden within the depth of the poems you read anywhere. And one last thing you get to know and share information with fellow writers and a grand scale and a great level of concern.

A poet friend
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