

Poetic devices

Poetic devices are literary devices which help in the enunciation of a poem by way of describing, persuading, informing, illustrating and above all embellishing the various ideas and concepts expressed in a poem.

Alliteration: Alliteration is the repetition of a speech sound in a sequence of nearby words. Usually, the term is applied to consonants, and only when the recurrent sound is made emphatic because it begins a word or a stressed syllable within a word.

For example: “Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak and weary...”
(The Raven, Edgar Allen Poe”)

Allusion: Allusion is a passing reference, without explicit identification, to a literary or historical person, place or event, or to another literary work or passage.

For example: Brightness falls from the air/ Queens have died young and fair/ Dust hath closed Helen’s eye,

The unidentified Helen in the last line alludes to Helen of Troy.

Apostrophe: An Apostrophe is a direct or explicit address either to an absent person or to an abstract or nonhuman entity. Many Odes are constituted throughout in the mode of such an address to a listener who is not literary able to listen.

For example, John Keats begins his “Ode on a Grecian urn” (1820) by apostrophising the Urn- “Thou still unravished bride of quietness”- and directs the entirety of the poem to the Urn and the figures represented on it.

(To be continued...)

