# Glossary of Poetic Terms

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/education/glossary/sonnet>

**[Sonnet](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/education/glossary/sonnet)**

A 14-line poem with a variable rhyme scheme originating in Italy and brought to England by [Sir Thomas Wyatt](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/thomas-wyatt) and [Henry Howard, earl of Surrey](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/henry-howard) in the 16th century. Literally a “little song,” the sonnet traditionally reflects upon a single sentiment, with a clarification or “turn” of thought in its concluding lines. There are many different types of sonnets.

The Petrarchan sonnet, perfected by the Italian poet Petrarch, divides the 14 lines into two sections: an eight-line stanza (octave) rhyming ABBAABBA, and a six-line stanza (sestet) rhyming CDCDCD or CDECDE. John Milton’s [“When I Consider How my Light Is Spent”](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=174016) and Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s [“How Do I Love Thee”](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=172998) employ this form. The Italian sonnet is an English variation on the traditional Petrarchan version. The octave’s rhyme scheme is preserved, but the sestet rhymes CDDCEE. See Thomas Wyatt’s [“Whoso List to Hunt, I Know Where Is an Hind”](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=174862) and John Donne’s [“If Poisonous Minerals, and If That Tree.”](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=173365) Wyatt and Surrey developed the English (or Shakespearean) sonnet, which condenses the 14 lines into one stanza of three [quatrains](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/learning/glossary-term.html?term=Quatrain) and a concluding couplet, with a rhyme scheme of ABABCDCDEFEFGG (though poets have frequently varied this scheme; see Wilfred Owen’s [“Anthem for Doomed Youth”](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=176831)). George Herbert’s [“Love (II),”](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=173631) Claude McKay’s [“America,”](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=173957) and Molly Peacock’s [“Altruism”](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=175781) are English sonnets.

These three types have given rise to many variations, including:

            -The caudate sonnet, which adds codas or tails to the 14-line poem. See Gerard Manley Hopkins’s [“That Nature Is a Heraclitean Fire.”](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=173662)

            -The curtal sonnet, a shortened version devised by Gerard Manley Hopkins that maintains the proportions of the Italian form, substituting two six-stress [tercets](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/learning/glossary-term.html?term=Tercet) for two quatrains in the octave (rhyming ABC ABC), and four and a half lines for the sestet (rhyming DEBDE), also six-stress except for the final three-stress line. See his poem [“Pied Beauty.”](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=173664)

           -The sonnet redoublé, also known as a crown of sonnets, is composed of 15 sonnets that are linked by the repetition of the final line of one sonnet as the initial line of the next, and the final line of that sonnet as the initial line of the previous; the last sonnet consists of all the repeated lines of the previous 14 sonnets, in the same order in which they appeared. [Marilyn Nelson’s](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/marilyn-nelson) A Wreath for Emmett Till is a contemporary example.

           -A sonnet sequence is a group of sonnets sharing the same subject matter and sometimes a dramatic situation and persona. See George Meredith’s [Modern Love](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=173969) sequence, Sir Philip Sidney’s [Astrophel and Stella,](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=174419) Rupert Brooke’s [1914](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=2277) sequence, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s [Sonnets from the Portuguese.](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=172991)

           -The Spenserian sonnet is a 14-line poem developed by Edmund Spenser in his [Amoretti,](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=180371) that varies the English form by interlocking the three quatrains (ABAB BCBC CDCD EE).

           -The stretched sonnet is extended to 16 or more lines, such as those in George Meredith’s sequence [Modern Love.](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=173970)

           -A submerged sonnet is tucked into a longer poetic work; see lines 235-48 of T.S. Eliot’s [“The Waste Land.](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=176735)”

Browse more [sonnets](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/browse#page=1&sort_by=recently_added&forms=263). You can also read the educational essays [“](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=176735)[Learning the Sonnet”](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/resources/learning/articles/detail/70051) and [“](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=176735)[The Sonnet as a Silver Marrow Spoon.”](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/resources/learning/articles/detail/70283)

<https://poets.org/poem/time-year-thou-mayst-me-behold-sonnet-73>

*That time of year thou mayst in me behold (Sonnet 73)*

[William Shakespeare](https://poets.org/poet/william-shakespeare)

1564 –

1616

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west;
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the deathbed whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nourished by.
    This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,
    To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

*Remember*

* <https://poets.org/poem/remember>

[Christina Rossetti](https://poets.org/poet/christina-rossetti)

1830 –

1894

Remember me when I am gone away,

 Gone far away into the silent land;

 When you can no more hold me by the hand,

Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.

Remember me when no more day by day

 You tell me of our future that you planned:

 Only remember me; you understand

It will be late to counsel then or pray.

Yet if you should forget me for a while

 And afterwards remember, do not grieve:

 For if the darkness and corruption leave

 A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,

Better by far you should forget and smile

 Than that you should remember and be sad.

<https://www.sonnetstoorpheus.com/book1_1.html>

Rainer Maria Rilke “Sonnets to Orpheus”

There the tree rises. Oh pure surpassing!
Oh Orpheus sings! Oh great tree of sound!
And all is silent, And from this silence arise
New beginnings, intimations, changings.

From the stillness animals throng, out of the clear
Snapping forest of lair and nest;
And thus they are stealthy not from cunning
Not from fear

But to hear. And in their hearts the howling, the cry,
The stag-call seem too little. And where before
Was but the rudest shelter to receive these,

A refuge fashioned out of darkest longing
Entered, tremulo, the doorpost aquiver, -
There You have fashioned them a temple for their hearing.

* <https://poets.org/poem/windhover>

*The Windhover*

* [Gerard Manley Hopkins](https://poets.org/poet/gerard-manley-hopkins)

1844 –

1889

I caught this morning morning's minion, king-

 dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, in his riding

 Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and striding

High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing

In his ecstasy! then off, off forth on swing,

 As a skate's heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend: the hurl and gliding

 Rebuffed the big wind. My heart in hiding

Stirred for a bird,—the achieve of; the mastery of the thing!

Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume, here

 Buckle! AND the fire that breaks from thee then, a billion

Times told lovelier, more dangerous, O my chevalier!

 No wonder of it: shéer plód makes plough down sillion

Shine, and blue-bleak embers, ah my dear,

 Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermillion.

#### <https://fourteenlines.blog/tag/sonnet-by-w-s-merwin/>

#### Sonnet

by W. S. Merwin (1927 – 2019)

Where it begins will remain a question
for the time being at least which is to
say for this lifetime and there is no
other life that can be this one again
and where it goes after that only one
at a time is ever about to know
though we have it by heart as one and though
we remind each other on occasion

How often may the clarinet rehearse
alone the one solo before the one
time that is heard after all the others
telling the one thing that they all tell of
it is the sole performance of a life
come back I say to it over the waters