

Onomatopoeia – Poetry

Onomatopoeia

The use of a word or words which sound like what they are describing. E.g. crash, buzz, smash, woof.

Onomatopoeia is often used in poetry because it is so descriptive and helps us to imagine what is happening in the story or scene of the poem.

Types of onomatopoeia

- **Words related to air:** flutter, whisper, gasp, swish, swoosh, whoosh, whizz, whip.
- **Words related to animals:** baa, cheep, woof, purr, buzz, chirp, cluck, cock-a-doodle-doo, hiss, meow, moo, neigh, oink, quack, ribbit, tweet.
- **Words related to collisions:** bam, bang, clang, clank, clap, clatter, click, clink, ding, slam, screech, slap, thud, thump.
- **Words related to the voice:** chatter, blurt, giggle, growl, grunt, gurgle, mumble, murmur, belch.
- **Words related to water:** splash, spray, sprinkle, squirt, drip, drizzle, sloshes, plop.

Poems and poem extracts

Underline the onomatopoeia words in each of the following poems or poem extracts.

Meeting at Night (by Robert Browning)

Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match...

Fossils (by Ogden Nash)

At midnight in the museum hall
The fossils gathered for a ball
There were no dreams or saxophones,
But just the clatter of their bones...

Gathering Leaves (by Robert Frost)

Spades take up leaves
No better than spoons
And bags full of leaves
Are light as balloons.
I make a great noise
Of rustling all day
Like rabbit and deer
Running away.

