

BIRD POEM REQUIREMENT	RATING
NARRATIVE POEM (tells a story)	
FORM: Three sestets (6 line stanzas)	
RHYME SCHEME: ABCBBB	
METER: Trochaic octameter 6TH LINE: Trochaic tetrameter	
REFRAIN: Repeated word or phrase at the end of each stanza	
ALLITERATION	
INTERNAL RHYME	
REPETITION: other than refrain (usually 4th and 5th lines)	
BIRD	
TOTAL:	
ALLUSION (extra credit)	

- 1 – needs serious help
- 2 - needs improvement
- 3- adequate
- 4 – very good
- 5 – excellent

The “bird poem” is an imitation of Poe’s “The Raven.” You will attempt to write a poem effectively incorporating the elements of “The Raven” listed below.

--bird (You should include a bird somewhere in the poem. It does not have to be a literal bird, although it may be; the bird doesn’t have to be the primary focus or character of the poem.)

--narrative (This means the poem tells a story. Many poems are lyric poems, which simply express the thoughts, feelings, impressions of the speaker. A narrative poem should actually tell a story. Think about story elements—characters, conflict, rising action, climax, resolution, dialogue, etc.)

--sestets (Sestets are 6-line stanzas. Your poem should have at least 3 sestets. “The Raven” has 18 sestets.)

--rhyme scheme (Like “The Raven,” you should use an ABCBBB rhyme scheme. This means that lines, 2, 4, 5, & 6 should all rhyme. So, when deciding on your refrain and the sound that you’ll use at the end of these lines, choosing a word that has many rhyming words would be wise. You can find rhyming dictionaries online that will give you lists of rhyming words, such as <http://www.rhymezone.com>.)

--meter [The majority of “The Raven” is written in trochaic octameter. Remember that a *trochee* is a two syllable unit of meter with the first syllable being stressed and the second syllable being unstressed (/). Octameter means that there are 8 of these in a line. So, when you put that all together, you’d have / / / / / / / / . Look at the first line of “The Raven” below as an example.]

/ / / / / / / /
Once upon a midnight dreary while I pondered weak and weary

--refrain (This a line, phrase, or word repeated at the end of each stanza. In “The Raven,” the refrain for the first several stanzas is “nothing more”; after the raven’s entrance, the refrain changes to “Quoth the raven ‘Nevermore.’” Think about your refrain. This line is going to need to make sense at the end of each stanza.)

--effective use of alliteration (There are many examples of alliteration in “The Raven” that help to create the gloomy, somber tone: “But the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain thrilled me, filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before.” Notice the soft sounds of “s” and “f” in these lines.)

--internal rhyme (This is rhyming within a single line of poetry. For example, in line 1 “dreary” and “weary” are an example of internal rhyme. Others are “remember” & “December,” “rapping” and “napping.”

--repetition (This means repeating a word or phrase, usually for emphasis or as a rhythmical/sound device. You should have repetition in your poem besides the refrain. Notice in many stanzas of “The Raven,” the 4th and 5th lines share a repeated phrase.)

BONUS:

--allusion (You must have a footnote explaining your allusion and how it relates to your poem in order to get the credit.)

--presentation/performance (This must be more than simply reading the poem to the class. I have had students perform songs of their poem, create videos, dance, create a sculpture or art piece. The presentation must demonstrate thought and effort in order to receive credit.)

The “bird poem” counts as a writing grade and is due on _____.

You may work with a partner or individually. (Absolutely no more than 2 people in a group)