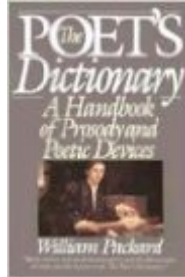


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# The Poet's Dictionary: A Handbook Of Prosody And Poetic Devices



## Synopsis

This handbook defines the tools, terms, and techniques of poetry. Arranged alphabetically from "accent" to "zeugma," The Poets Dictionary is clear, superb, and complete.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a great reference book for poets and lit students/teachers, though its focus is mainly classical styles. It covers great territory when it hits the rarely-used forms (eclogue, epistrophe), but falls short on history. Since it's a book of devices, however, you're going to want to look for poetry history somewhere else. Has TONS of examples of entries, which is invaluable for the poet wanting to branch into other forms and methods, and a nice launching pad for teachers looking to challenge students outside of ABABAB.

William Packard, founder & editor of the New York Quarterly and prof of poetry at NYU, knows his stuff. This is a great little book, perfect if you are beginning to study poetry, whether on your own or in a class. Packard's definitions are clear and concise; even more helpful are the numerous quotations that illustrate nearly every article. This is *not* a book of poetic theory (i.e., no articles on reader-response theory or structuralism) or history (no articles on, e.g., Eliot, Donne, Sappho), but a book of poetic "devices" (e.g., accent, conceit, epithalamion, rhyme, rhetoric, sonnet) that will help the diligent student of poetry recognize what the poet has done, and (perhaps) figure out why. [For the history, theory, national & ethnic poetry, &c., see, e.g., Preminger (ed.) "The New Princeton

Encyclopedia of Poetry & Poetics", or its abridgement, "The New Princeton Handbook of Poetic Terms".] I have been teaching English and biblical poetry for year--this little book is a required text for all students, and deserves a place on their permanent bookshelves. I recommend this most highly.

I think one reason I like this book is that the author is such a good instructor: it is personal, professional and succinct. The entries are as easy to engage with as a good lecture, providing some historical notes on specific poetic forms, while usually giving very useful examples and explications. This can give the creative force in a budding poet some tools to guide their own interests. As well, one can begin to appreciate how to discuss poetry from an analytical perspective. Still, several other works beckon the interested: Lewis Turco's *The Book of Forms*; *Poetry: The Basics*, by Jeffrey Wainwright; John Lennard's *The Poetry Handbook*; Burton Raffel's *How to Read a Poem*; and Terry Eagleton's *How to Read a Poem*. Each has its strengths. I'll try to review each separately.

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The Teachers and Writers Handbook of Poetic Forms  
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