

# Narrative poetry

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Understanding Narrative Poetry What is Narrative Poetry? Narrative Poems are poems that tell stories. There is a beginning, which introduces the background to the story, a middle, which tells the action of the event, and an end, which concludes and summarizes the story. What are the origins of Narrative Poetry? Narratives are the oldest form of poetry. Long before there was paper to write on or ink to write with, long before the invention of the printing press, people often shared stories as a form of entertainment. These stories were also often used to relate historical events. In the same way that we spread news through newspapers today, oral stories were used to spread news of historical events long ago. In order to help recall details of the events, people began to use rhyme and rhythm to give their stories a musical quality that would allow the story to be remembered and recalled much more easily. Think about how much easier it is to remember the words to a song than it is to recall all of the words of a short story. That is exactly how narrative poems were originally created. In what ways are narrative poems similar to short stories? Narrative poems have many similarities to short stories. For example, short stories have characters, a setting, a conflict, and a clear beginning, middle and end. Narrative poems have all of these elements as well. Sometimes there may only be one character, or there may be many characters. At times, the setting may be implied rather than obvious, and the conflict may be an internal conflict rather than external. How can we analyze narrative poems? In order to analyze a narrative poem, first read through it with the following questions in mind: Who are the characters in the poem? What are the characters doing, or what is happening? Why are these events happening? How are the characters

affected by the action or events? What can be learned from the poem?

Where can we find narrative poetry in our daily lives? Although narrative poetry is one of the oldest forms of literature, this does not mean it is no longer prevalent in today's world. In fact, any time you turn on a radio, you can hear narrative poetry on nearly any radio station. The best place to see or hear narrative poetry today would be in songs. Songs are simply poems set to music, and the songs that tell stories are narrative poems set to music.