

Literary forms: the short story and poem

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Short stories are a newer invention that is meant to be consumed in solitude and usually read silently. Short stories often follow a formula that poems do not. Poems need not have a plot or characters, while it is hard for stories that do not have these things to be understood by readers. When a reader sits down to read a story they generally know what they are getting into, but this is not always the way with poems. However, there are similarities between the two forms. Both use language to create an effect on the reader. Their authors want to communicate something important and timeless to their audience and they want to use well-chosen and powerful words to do so. In my opinion, poems are works of art that show you something about your everyday life that you don't realize. They do this by using a lot of literary devices to sneak past your defenses. Richard Wilbur's poem "Boy at the Window" is a good example of this. The form and devices of the poem affect the reader's experience of the work. The poem has a rhyme scheme that keeps the work measured and moving along; the reader wants to keep reading to hear what the next rhyme will be. This formal quality gives the poems a kind of moral force that is effective in a poem that has so many dichotomies: heat and cold, love and fear, inclusion, and exclusion. Overall, the poem manages to say a great deal in a small space. It chooses a little vignette—a boy looking out a window at a snowman—and yet says a great deal about human beings and their desire to belong. The final line of the poem "Such warmth, such light, such love, and so much fear" is very effective because of its use of repetition. Repeating the word "such" is emphatic and makes the change at the end "so much" much more effective. It kind of lulls the reader into false security. Literary forms, be they the short story or poetry, are part of what makes us human. They show us the world

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around us in a way we never saw it before. Through the devices they employ they shape our reality and lead us to realize that a deeper, more profound world exists around us.