

Poetry Book

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Poetry Book Content

A poetry book is a collection of poems by one or more authors. Poetry conveys thought or tells a story in a lyrical arrangement of words. The poems may rhyme or not and usually use rhythm and meter but are not required to. Freeform poetry has no formal structure. There is generally a theme or a direction for the collection.

Content 1 Appeal. The book...

1. Appeals to audiences who enjoy poetry and helps the reader feel emotion related to the theme or topic.
2. Might interest readers who like verse but may not elicit an emotional response.
3. Might not interest readers who appreciate poetry but helps the reader understand poetry as a genre.
4. Will not appeal to poetry readers in general, but may appeal to a specific audience.
5. It's hard to know who the audience should be.

Content 2. Flow/Organization. The book...

1. Has a central theme or topic that carries through the poems in an easy-to-follow arrangement that flows well from one poem to the next.
2. Arranges the poems to flow well but is without a clear or consistent theme.
3. Orders the poems haphazardly but stays true to the theme/subject.
4. Is disorganized, hard to follow, and lacks a central theme.
5. Lost me early on, and readers might give up early.

Content 3 Imagery. The book...

1. Uses rich imagery to create a vivid picture or emotion, including visual, sound, smell, taste, touch, or movement, to engage the reader and enhance the interaction of the reader with the poem.
2. Relies on interesting phrasing to create a mood but lacks imagery that gives it emotional depth.
3. Uses straightforward language and simple presentation.
4. Is simplistic and poetically unsophisticated but still delivers an interesting message.
5. Is poorly written and lacks imagery and creative language.

Content 4. Rhyming/Rhythm. The author...

1. Consistently uses rhymes, internal rhymes, clever phrasing, repetition of sounds, or imaginative techniques that support the meaning of the poems. Free verse poems include interesting rhythms and line breaks.
2. Often uses effective examples of rhythm and rhyme and some interesting line breaks.
3. Sometimes uses rhymes and or rhythms that are forced.
4. Frequently uses awkward rhymes and rhythms and arbitrary line breaks that detract from the overall poetic effect.
5. Misses it all.

Content 5. Entertainment/Value. The book...

1. Tells an important or entertaining story that matters to the reader.
2. Tells a story that might entertain or matter to some readers.
3. Tells a story that may not entertain or matter to readers.
4. Tells a story with questionable entertainment value or significance.
1. Has little value and is not worth the effort.

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Style

These criteria evaluate readability, redundancy, language, structure, and the use of active vs passive sentences.

Style 1. Readability. The book is...

1. Easy to understand, engaging, or thought-provoking.
2. Mostly easy to understand, engaging, or thought-provoking.
3. Sometimes pedestrian or ponderous, and the meaning is lost or not conveyed well.
4. Too difficult to grasp the meaning or emotion, but the reader will finish the book.
5. Difficult to finish, and even die-hard poetry readers will not make it to the end.

Style 2. Redundancy/Repetition/Cliché. The book...

1. Is lively and original, free of clichés, redundancies, and repetitions, unless for effect.
2. Generally avoids thematic redundancies and overdone words or phrases.
3. Uses clichés or unnecessary repetition of the same words or phrases throughout the book.
4. Provides multiple presentations of the same information and repeats the same words, phrases, and clichés throughout the book.
5. Is rife with repetition of information, words, phrases, and overblown clichés.

Style 3. Vocabulary/Diction. The author uses...

1. Precise, colorful, and descriptive similes, metaphors, and alliteration to create a mood.
2. Alliteration, similes, and metaphors that are usually effective, but also some confusing specialized language.
3. Some descriptive language but over-reliance on confusing, specialized vocabulary.
4. Awkward, confusing language that does not support the content.
5. Language that is ponderous, pretentious, or inappropriate for the content.

Style 4. Structure/Form.

Poetic structure involves a poem's form (the number of lines that it has) and its rhythm and rhyme scheme. Poets use stanzas, line breaks, rhyme patterns, punctuation, and pauses to structure the poem in a way that supports the meaning. Some better-known forms include haiku, limerick, sonnet, quatrain, free verse, and prose poem.

In this book...

1. Each poem has a structure that supports the meaning of the poem and follows established patterns. If free form, each poem is structured to successfully convey meaning.
2. Most poems have a structure that either follows formal patterns or is meaningful if free form.
3. The structure of the poems neither detracts from nor supports the meaning of the poem.
4. The poems have either little structure or little that is meaningful.
5. The poems have no discernable structure or meaningful message.

Style 5. Point of View AND Active vs Passive Sentences

Point of View: Poems generally have one point of view, whether first person or third person. Consistency within the poem is maintained in tone, perspective, and level of knowledge. When two first-person perspectives are used, each must be clearly defined so as not to confuse the reader.

Active vs Passive Voice: Active voice sentences are those in which the subject performs the action (The dog chewed the bone). Passive voice sentences are those in which the subject is acted upon (The bone was eaten by the dog). Active voice provides clearer meaning, while passive voice sentences can be less interesting, longer, more complex, dry, and unengaging.

The poems...

1. Use a consistent discernible tone and point of view, AND active voice appropriately dominates.
2. Mostly use a consistent discernible tone and point of view AND mostly active voice sentences.

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3. Sometimes lack a consistent discernible tone and point of view but active versus passive voice is mostly balanced.
4. Often lack a consistent discernible tone or point of view or overuse passive voice.
5. Consistently lack a distinct discernible point of view so that it is confusing and uses excessive passive voice.

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Visual

These criteria evaluate cover art and layout, cover design and font, interior layout, front and back matter inclusions, and use of artistic elements.

Visual 1. Cover: Art and Layout

All elements are properly aligned, and the color scheme relates to the content and carries through the spine and back cover. Images are high resolution and placed so that the title is easily read. If displayed on a shelf, the book will attract readers, and the title will be easily seen. The title and author's name are easily distinguishable from background art.

Note: The back cover content does not have to be blocked. It can be left justified or centered.

The book's cover...

1. Is aesthetically attractive and relates to the contents of the book.
2. Is attractive but does not relate to the contents or is unattractive but relevant.
3. Has misplaced spine text, narrow margins on the back cover content, clashing colors, low-resolution imagery, etc.
4. Has background artwork that's so busy that the copy can't be read OR there are blurry images.
5. Is unattractive AND does not relate to the contents of the book.

Visual 2. Cover: Font and Content

Cover Font: Should be appropriate for the genre of the book (e.g., flowery cursive for romance, but not for a thriller). Legible (not so "cute" so as to be difficult to read) and large enough to see at thumbnail size (like on our website's season page). The cover should have no more than two different fonts.

Cover Content: Back cover text should be free of errors and hook the reader without too much or too little detail (whether a blurb or author bio or testimonials).

Note: If you have received an e-book, go to the Amazon page to evaluate the back cover of the print version. While fiction books generally include a blurb on the back cover, nonfiction books often only have endorsements by professionals in the field. For more details, [click here](#).

Referencing the evaluation areas listed above, the book's cover font and content are...

1. Artfully done, attention-grabbing, and error-free.
2. Reasonably well executed and somewhat likely to attract attention on a bookshelf or when listed online.
3. Pedestrian or run-of-the-mill OR contain elements that are difficult to read or don't grab attention OR include a text error.
4. Problematic, contain noticeable errors, and are not likely to attract attention.
5. So poorly done that the book is destined to remain shelved or unclicked online.

Visual 3. Interior: Front and Back Matter

Poetry books require a cover, inside title page, copyright page and ISBN. Optional front and back matter inclusions are introduction, foreword, endorsements, epigraphs, dedications, acknowledgements, author bios, contents page in print copies, and notes.

The book...

1. Contains a title page on the right, copyright information on the left, and ISBN. Chapter listings are not required for poetry books.
2. Provides complete front matter, but out of order or on the wrong side.
3. Includes title page, but some items required on the copyright page (author, city, state, copyright year, ISBN, publisher if there is one) are missing.
4. Missing some front and back matter.
5. Fails to provide basic information about the book.

Visual 4. Interior: Layout. This book...

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1. Has margins that are no less than ½ inch and uses serif font of sufficient size. Page numbers are on the outside edge or center (never at the gutter). Odd pages are always on the right side. Section titles, if used, can be as headers on the upper right.
2. Has margins that are slightly narrow, words that are difficult to read in the gutter, or not enough white space (text is too dense) OR page numbers are near the gutter or odd page numbers on the left side.
3. Is not blocked/justified or has many layout errors, but the book is still readable.
4. Has numerous layout errors that distract from the content OR uses a typeface too hard to read.
5. Has too many layout errors and hard-to-read fonts that distract from content.

Visual 5. Interior: Artistic Elements (captions, illustrations, if used). The book uses...

1. Consistent left-justified lines or centered text unless irregular lines are used for effect. Clean, clear, captioned, and appropriate photos and illustrations.
2. Photos and illustrations that are low resolution (blurry) but are captioned and appropriate.
3. Photos and illustrations that are low resolution and not properly captioned.
4. Photos and illustrations that are unidentified but still add to the content of the book.
5. Photos and illustrations that are blurry, undefined, and add nothing to the book.

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Technical

These criteria evaluate spelling, punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, verb tense, and noun-verb agreement. We have included word counts every 20,000 words. Interpolate as needed.

NOTE: Questions 1 and 2 require you to count errors. The number of errors allowed varies with word count. A 120,000-word book is allowed more errors than a 60,000-word book. Use the table to determine which answer to select.

Allowable Error Scoring by Word Count					
Word Count	Score				
	1	2	3	4	5
120,000	0-6	7-12	13-18	19-24	>24
100,000	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	>20
80,000	0-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	>16
60,000	0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	>12
40,000	0-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	>8
20,000	0-1	2	3	4	>4
10,000	0	1	2	3	>3

Technical 1. Spelling/Typos/Wrong Word

Poetry books rarely have 20,000 words, so extrapolate from the table above. Count noticeable misspellings, typos, and extra or missing words. Note them in the comment section (their/they're/there, its/it's, horse/hoarse, cavalry/Calvary, etc.).

Technical 2. Sentence Structure/Syntax

Poetry must make sense to the reader. Count awkwardly worded text that doesn't make sense, whether it is a sentence sprawl, run-on, or lengthy fragment that goes nowhere. Generally, count an error if the lines require re-reading to make sense to the target audience.

Technical 3. Consistency of Punctuation/Hyphenation

Poetry often takes exception to rules of punctuation, so look for uniformity and consistency. Count missing punctuation if it impedes the understanding of the text or duplicate punctuation marks. Hyphenation should be consistent throughout, including em dashes, which indicate an interruption in dialogue or a harder break than commas indicate in sentences.

The book...

1. Uses consistent punctuation and hyphenation throughout.
2. Occasionally is inconsistent with punctuation and hyphenation.
3. Often is inconsistent with punctuation and hyphenation.
4. Regularly uses random punctuation that doesn't make sense.
5. Has so many inconsistencies that it detracts from the read and/or is confusing.

Technical 4. Consistency of Capitalization/Italics

Poetry often takes exception to rules of capitalization, so look for uniformity and consistency. Overuse of italics for emphasis is to be discouraged, as it micromanages the reader. Large portions in italics are difficult to read. The use of italics for foreign words is not required.

The book...

1. Uses consistent capitalization and minimal italics throughout.

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2. Occasionally is inconsistent with capitalization or italics.
3. Often is inconsistent with capitalization or italics.
4. Regularly uses random capitalization or italics that don't make sense.
5. Has so many inconsistencies that it detracts from the read and/or is confusing.

Technical 5. Verb Form and Noun-verb Agreement. The book...

1. Uses the simplest verb form (preferably simple past or present tense) AND has consistent noun-verb agreement.
2. Occasionally uses an inappropriate tense but strives for simplicity OR has several noun-verb disagreements.
3. Uses complicated/inappropriate verb tense forms on a regular basis throughout the book (even if used correctly) OR has more than a few noun-verb agreement problems.
4. Uses complicated/inappropriate tenses throughout the book OR regularly messes up noun-verb agreement.
5. Uses complicated/inappropriate tenses throughout the book AND regularly messes up noun-verb agreement.

Tech comment (required).

Do not comment on your interpretation of the editing (e.g., “best editing I have ever seen,” or “really needs an editor”). Instead, use objective language to note the errors you saw. If you did not notice errors, simply say you did not note any tech errors. However, if you lower a tech score, you must list enough of the errors you noted to vindicate lowering your score. Spelling errors can be noted individually (discrete s/b discreet). Others can be noted in greater detail, but we do not want to “edit” the whole book. List enough errors to give the author some guidelines for where they went wrong.

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