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What is stanza in a poem examples

In poetry, a stanza is a dividing and organizing technique which places a group of lines in a poem together, separated from other groups of lines by line spacing or indentation. Stanzas are to poetry what paragraphs are to prose. Stanzas can be rhymed or unrhymed and fixed or unfixed in meter or syllable count. II. Types and Examples of Stanzas There are numerous types of stanzas ranging in complexity and length. Here are some of the most common types of stanzas: Couplet The couplet is a couple of lines, a stanza made of two lines. Often, couplets are used to mimic togetherness and are found in love poems, though they can be used for all manner of subjects. This excerpt from Ciarán Carson’s “The Fetch” is an example of a poem using the couplet form: I woke. You were lying beside me in the double bed, prone, your long dark hair fanned out over the downy pillow. I’d been dreaming we stood on a beach an ocean away watching the waves purr into their troughs and tumble over. Tercet A tercet is a stanza consisting of three lines. Each haiku, by definition, is a tercet consisting of lines of five, seven, and five syllables: The crow has flown away: swaying in the evening sun, a leafless tree. Natsume Soseki’s haiku is an example of a poem consisting of one tercet. Quatrain A quatrain is a stanza of four lines. Quatrains are very common in poetry. Here is an example of a quatrain from Pablo Neruda’s poem “One Hundred Love Sonnets: XVII”: I don’t love you as if you were a rose of salt, topaz, or arrow of carnations that propagate fire: I love you as one loves certain obscure things, secretly, between the shadow and the soul. Quintain A quintain is a stanza of five lines. One prominent example of the quintain is the tanka, a five-line traditional Japanese poem: Burning underneath, This feeling will vanish. How sad the end will be When even the smoke becomes a cloud That leaves no trace behind. This tanka, written by the poet known as Shunzei’s daughter, is an example of a poem consisting of one quintain. The list only goes on: there are seven-line sestets, eight-line octaves, Spenserian stanzas, décimas, and numerous other stanzaic forms. III. The Importance of Using Stanzas Stanzas are important because they meaningfully divide poetry on the page, setting it apart from prose and allowing certain ideas, moments, and themes to be organized uniquely according to the poet’s intention and message. Stanzas create structure physically on the page and with certain rules like syllable counts and rhyme schemes that go along with them. Conversely, poems which lack stanzas can communicate a lack of organization or a sense of forward movement, run-on, or chaos. The decision to use stanzas or not to use them, and of what type, is an artistic mode of thought practiced by poets. IV. Examples of Stanzas in Literature Stanzas are a necessary and prominent aspect of poetry. Example 1 Excerpts from Carl Phillips’ “Cortège”: If the sea could dream, and if the sea were dreaming now, the dream would be the usual one: Of the Flesh. The letter written in the dream would go something like: Forgive me—love, Blue. * One says without actually saying it I am sometimes a book of such poems. I am other times a flower and lovely * Did you say to him something? I could not speak, for hunger. * Stylistically and in regards to stanza, this poem constantly changes. It begins with a quintain or five-line stanza, then moves into question-and-answer style couplets, then to tercets, and back and forth again. Phillips shows that poems can become greatly complicated and interesting by stanzaic choices of the poet. Example 2 Excerpt from “April to May” by Joyce Keseroff It is cold enough for rain to coagulate and fall in heavy drops. Tonight a skin of ice will grow over the bones of the smallest bush, making it droop like the wrist of someone carrying a heavy suitcase. This moving on, from season to season, is exhausting and violent, the break from the Berlin Wall of winter especially. I. Like a frostbitten hand coming to life, I color first with warmth, then with pain. Thawing, letting the great powers go their own way, in rivers and in flesh, frightens me, as this day warns me of an icy night. On the other hand, sometimes stanzaic decisions are simpler and more uniform. In this poem, the poet chooses to use quatrains for a clean and orderly poetic form. V. Examples of Stanzas in Pop Culture Stanzas are not found in pop culture, as stanzas are only used in poetry. Verses are the song’s equivalent of the poem’s stanzas. Example 1 Excerpt from “Let it Be” by the Beatles: When I find myself in times of trouble Mother Mary comes to me Speaking words of wisdom Centie writes, reads and analyzes poems from a psychological POV. See her book on Amazon: “Piece of Mind: Everyone has an Untold Story.”What is a Stanza?Stanza forms appear in poetry with all kinds of variations across cultures, generations, and poets. However, some standard forms of stanza have been popularized by famous poets who made a mark in poetry with their amazing forms. Before we examine these types of stanza forms, let’s clarify what a stanza is.A stanza in poetry is the equivalent of a paragraph in prose. It’s a group of lines arranged together to form one unit of a poem. Therefore, stanzas divide a poem.Some poems have one stanza, and others have more stanzas. When a poem possesses two or more stanzas, they are separated by leaving a space in between the concluding line of one stanza and the first line of the following stanza.Most classical poems with prescribed forms have fixed stanza forms. Poets use various forms of stanzas in a single poem, or they can use a uniform stanza form from the beginning to the end. Also, every so often one stanza can stand alone as a type of poem on its own. For instance, the Haiku type of poem has three lines and it’s done.Modern poets frequently combine various stanza forms in one poem, or they don’t follow fixed meters and rhyme. However, frequently, poems will fall under the categories of stanza forms described in this article. Identifying Stanza FormsThe most common stanza forms are identified by examining the number of lines in a stanza meter rhyme scheme the poet who popularized the specific form The Importance of Stanzas1. Stanzas separate prose from poetry. A poem is often recognized at a glance because of the stanzas.2. Stanzas simplify the process of memorizing poems.3. Stanzas group specific lines with the same idea to ease the reader’s understanding.4. Stanzas help to define formal types of poems.Types of Stanza FormsPoets all over the world compose different types of stanzas all the time with some being unnamed as yet. Stanza forms have acquired a name because of the number of lines per stanza. However, other variations of stanza forms have cropped up because of how widely they have been used or the fame of the poet who is believed to have introduced the form to the world. Continue reading the following list of the most common stanza forms in the world of poetics based on line count.The MonostichA monostich is a one-line stanza. It also refers to a one-line poem. It expresses a complete thought. Example of a monostich stanza/poem.Winter Echo Thin air! My mind is gone.Yvor WintersThe CoupletThis stanza form is made up of two lines. Since it has only two lines, they must rhyme. Also, classical couplets have the same meter and rhythm. William Shakespeare’s sonnets often end with a couplet, to summarize the theme of the specific poems.Check out this poem that uses the couplet stanza form.Beasts and Men Animal is what you should beTo spend your life wildly sin-freeMultiple sexual mates is fornicationTo the beasts it is just procreationBy stealing you can’t be blamelessBeasts steal and remain sinlessFor food they murder their ownSin is to kill even a baby unbornThere exist men worse than beastsYet they are not in the wanted lists CentieThe TercetThe tercet has 3 lines. You can use the tercet as a whole poem. The Haiku is an example of a tercet poem. When a three-line stanza rhymes it’s called a triplet. The Villanelle poem is a good example of a type of poem with tercets. It has five tercets and a quatrain.Check out this example of a tercet.Finality Final time to trustFinal time to see lightCats live to eatCentieThe Quatrain“Quatrain” is the official term for a stanza of four lines. There’s no limit to this stanza form -it can rhyme or not, it can have a regular meter or not. In fact, it is a very common stanza form since it is found in many cultures.I can’t help giving an example of one of my own poems which uses the quatrain. Note that I used a couplet stanza as the intro of this poem.Her Life was a Blessing As we mourn today, we will mourn tomorrow, but then we hope for an end to our sorrow.Thank God for giving herThe chance to enjoy breathingShe learnt new languagesShe helped others to fight on.She had happy and hard timesShe fought cancer to the endIn her great pain she criedBut also found time to smile.As we mourn for the lossFor her life was a blessingWith time we will be healedTaking our time to grieve.CentieThe QuintainThe quintain or quintet stanza has five lines. The cinquin is a type of quintain consisting of five lines with a fixed syllable scheme per line. Limerick and tanks poems use the quintain stanza. The following excerpt from a poem called “The World” written by George Herbert applies the quintet stanza form.The WorldLove built a stately house, where Fortune came,And spinning fancies, she was heard to sayThat her fine cobwebs did support the frame,Whereas they were supported by the same;But Wisdom quickly swept them all away.The Pleasure came, who, liking not the fashion,Began to make balconies, terraces,Till she had weakened all by alteration;But reverend laws, and many a proclamationReformed all at length with menaces....George Herbert.The Sestet/SestainThe sestet stanza form has six lines. There’s no limit, you may rhyme or not. The Sestina type of poem applies this effectively. Although the last stanza of a sestina is a tercet. This is an example of a poem which has sestet stanzas. The following is not the complete poem, it’s an excerpt of the first two stanzas of Elizabeth Bishop’s poem known as Sestina.Sestina by Elizabeth BishopSeptember rain falls on the house.In the failing light, the old grandmother sits in the kitchen with the childbeside the Little Marvel Stove,reading the jokes from the almanac.laughing and talking to hide her tears.She thinks that her equinoctial tearsand the rain that beats on the roof of the house were both foretold by the almanac,but only known to a grandmother.The iron kettle sings on the stove.She cuts some bread and says to the child,...Elizabeth BishopThe SeptetThe septet stanza form has seven lines. As long as the stanza has seven lines it’s a septet. Whether it has a rhyme scheme, regular meter or not. The seven-line stanza is often used in long poems. The septet can also stand alone as a whole poem.This septet example is the fifth stanza excerpted from Edgar Allan Poe’s poem called Annabel Lee. The other stanzas in this poem have six or eight lines each giving it a distinctive rhythm.Annabel Lee But our love it was stronger by far than the love Of those who were older than we— Of many far wiser than we— And neither the angels in heaven above, Nor the demons down under the sea, Can ever dissever my soul from the soul Of the beautiful Annabel Lee....Edgar Allan PoeThe Octavo/OctetThe octavo stanza form has eight lines in any meter and rhyme scheme. It can stand as a whole poem. The Ottava Rima is a type of octet stanza form often found in Italian literature and used to praise heroic deeds.This is the first stanza excerpted from Among School Children by William Butler Yeats.Among School Children I walk through the long schoolroom questioning:A kind old nun in a white hood replies;The children learn to cipher and to sing,To study reading-books and history,To cut and sew, be neat in everythingIn the best modern way—the children’s eyesIn momentary wonder stare uponA sixty-year-old smiling public man.William Butler YeatsThe Nine-Line StanzaThere’s no specific term referring to a nine-line stanza in literature.(If you know would you kindly leave your comment below?) It seems official names end at 8. I couldn’t find an official name for any nine-line stanza during my research. It’s like 9-line stanzas have not received the reputation they deserve.However, there are different types of popular 9-line stanzas including the Spenserian stanza and the nonet.The Nonet“Nonet” is clearly derived from nine. In music, the nonet is a combination of nine voices, instruments, or musicians. The nonet is recognized as a standalone poem made up of nine lines. Essentially, it’s one stanza comprising of nine lines. The first line of a nonet contains nine syllables, the second eight, the third seven. It continues like that until the last line which has one syllable.Check out the nonet below.Amazing: you growing inside meAdventures end others beginFlutters and tummy movementsResponding to my touchKicked from the insideAlive and kickingYou are a Marvel Babeby CentieThe Spenserian StanzaThe Spenserian stanza was popularized by Edmund Spenser, a poet who lived in the 1500s. It’s a nine-line stanza with a rhyme scheme of ababbcbcc. The first eight lines follow the iambic pentameter and the ninth line has six iambic feet. A classical example of the Spenserian stanza is found in Lord Byron’s Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage.The following nine-line stanza is excerpted from Spenser’s poem known as The Fairie Queen.The Faerie Queene But on his brest a bloudie Crosse he bore,The deare remembrance of his dying Lord,For whose sweete sake that glorious badge he wore,And dead as living ever him ador’d,Upon his shield the like was also scor’d,For soveraine hope, which in his helpe he had:Right faithfull true he was in deede and word,But of his cheere did seeme too solemne sad,Yet nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad.Edmund SpenserThe Dizain StanzaThe dizain derives its name from French literature. Dix-pronounced “diz” means “ten” in French. Thus, the dizain stanza form has 10 lines. As other stanza forms, it can stand alone as a complete poem.Check out the following excerpt of a ten-line stanza from a long poem by John Keats entitled Ode on a Grecian Urn. This is Stanza 2 of the poem.Ode on a Grecian UrnHeard melodies are sweet, but those unheardAre sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear’d,Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leaveThy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,Forever wilt thou love, and she be fair!.....John KeatsNow that you have examples of basic stanza forms and their names, why don’t you create some poetry? Or analyze the stanza forms of your favorite poems. The beauty of poetry is that you can have fun creating them. Or, invent your own stanza form and give it a name.This content is accurate and true to the best of the author’s knowledge and is not meant to substitute for formal and individualized advice from a qualified professional.Questions & AnswersQuestion: Which of the following pairs of words alliterate? A) haunted hour B) cunning king C) charitable character D) great gel E) idling eyesAnswer: B) cunning kingQuestion: If a poem consists more than 14 lines or so what name we will give to it?Answer: A stanza with 14 lines is called the Onegin Stanza. The origin is the works of a Russian poet known as Alexandr Sergeevich Pushkin in his novel where the main protagonist was called Onegin.As for a poem with 14 lines, Sonnet, invented by William Shakespeare is the most popular. Poems with more than 14 lines are numerous and could fall into a variety of poetic types. The number of poems with special names reduces when they get to 8 lines. However, let’s hope modern-day poets will be able to invent names for such poems. © 2019 CentieCentie (author) from Kenya on September 02, 2020.Thank you for your kind comment.Dustry Anparteli on July 18, 2020:The article was wonderfully crafted with all the significant examples. Really helpful.Centie (author) from Kenya on January 14, 2020:Thank you Adebisi Alade for your commentADEBISI ALADE on January 11, 2020:It educative and informational to have seen all the forms of stanzas and examples of poems that go with them.Centie (author) from Kenya on May 10, 2019:Thank you Verlie, for your encouraging remarks.Thanks Jason,Jason Behm from Cebu, Philippines on May 09, 2019:Very informative and helpful!Thank you for sharing and please do keep writing!Verlie Burroughs from Canada on May 08, 2019:Nice work Centie, and really helpful for poets' understanding of the basics. I enjoyed the examples you presented, and appreciate you including your own poem (in quatrain) which is lovely, and heartfelt.

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