

Name _____

Date _____

Poetic Structure

Poetic structure refers to how a poem is organized and arranged. It includes elements like stanza patterns, line length, rhythm, meter, and rhyme scheme. Different structures create various effects—sonnets have fourteen lines with specific rhyme patterns, haikus contain three lines with 5-7-5 syllable counts, and free verse lacks formal patterns. Poets choose structures that enhance their themes and create specific emotional impacts.

Read the following poem and answer the questions.

The Skateboarder

The concrete flows beneath my feet,
Like water in a rushing stream.
My wheels spin fast, my heart beats quick,
As I soar through air on wings unseen.

The city is my playground now,
Each rail and step a new frontier.
I ride the urban waves with grace,
While passersby stop short and stare.

Not long ago, I feared to fall,
My knees were scraped, my courage thin.
But practice turned my fear to strength,
Now gravity's a game to win.

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The afternoon slips into dusk,
Street lamps flicker one by one.
I ride the last light home again,
Another day of freedom done.

My board becomes a faithful friend,
Together we have learned to fly.
Between the earth and endless sky,
We've found a place where dreams don't die.

1. Identify the rhyme scheme of this poem. What effect does this structure create?

2. What type of figurative language is used in the first stanza, and what comparison does it make?

3. How does the poem's structure help develop the theme of transformation?

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Poetic Structure-Answer Key

1. Identify the rhyme scheme of this poem. What effect does this structure create?

The rhyme scheme is AABB for each stanza (feet/stream, quick/unseen). This regular pattern creates a rhythmic flow that mirrors the smooth, continuous motion of skateboarding described in the poem.

2. What type of figurative language is used in the first stanza, and what comparison does it make?

The first stanza uses simile ("concrete flows beneath my feet, Like water in a rushing stream") and metaphor ("wings unseen"), comparing skateboarding to flowing water and flying to convey freedom and movement.

3. How does the poem's structure help develop the theme of transformation?

The poem's structure moves chronologically from present to past to future, with the middle stanza specifically addressing transformation ("feared to fall" to "fear to strength"). This progression supports the theme of growth and personal development.