

## Rhyme Scheme Practice

A rhyme scheme is a regular pattern of rhyme, one that is consistent throughout the extent of the poem. Poems that rhyme without any regular pattern can be called rhyming poems, but only those poems with an unvarying pattern to their rhymes can be said to have a rhyme scheme.

Rhyme schemes are labeled according to their rhyme sounds. Every rhyme sound is given its own letter of the alphabet to distinguish it from the other rhyme sounds that may appear in the poem. For example, the first rhyme sound of a poem is designated as a. Every time that rhyme sound appears in the poem, no matter where it is found, it is called a. The second rhyme sound to appear in the poem is designated b. Every other time that rhyme sound appears in the poem, no matter where it is found, it is called b. The third rhyme sound to appear would be c, the fourth d, and so on, for as many rhyme sounds as appear in the poem.

The following short poem illustrates the labeling of a rhyme scheme.

There once was a big brown cat	a
That liked to eat a lot of mice.	b
He got all round and fat	a
Because they tasted so nice.	B

This bit of elegant verse shows a very simple rhyme scheme. The first rhyme sound we encounter, at the end of the first line, is cat. Because it is the first rhyme sound, it is labeled as a. Every time that rhyme sound is repeated, any time something rhymes with cat, it is also called a. Line three ends with fat, which rhymes with cat, so it is also an a. The second rhyme sound comes at the end of the second line, mice. As the second rhyme sound it is called b, and so are any other following lines that rhyme with it, such as nice in line four

Mark the rhyme scheme for the following three poems. Answer on your own paper. Do not skip lines. Write down the page in columns. EX :

A  
B  
C  
A

### **The Road Not Taken**

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear,  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same.  
And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black .  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I,  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

-Robert Frost

### **Alone**

Edgar Allen Poe

From childhood's hour I have not been  
As others were; I have not seen  
As others saw; I could not bring  
My passions from a common spring.  
From the same source I have not taken  
My sorrow; I could not awaken  
My heart to joy at the same tone;  
And all I loved, I loved alone.  
Then—in my childhood, in the dawn  
Of a most stormy life—was drawn  
From every depth of good and ill  
The mystery which binds me still:  
From the torrent, or the fountain,  
From the red cliff of the mountain,  
From the sun that round me rolled  
In its autumn tint of gold,  
From the lightning in the sky  
As it passed me flying by,  
From the thunder and the storm,

And the cloud that took the form  
(When the rest of Heaven was blue)  
Of a demon in my view.

Dulce Et Decorum Est  
Wilfred Owen

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,  
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,  
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs  
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.  
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots  
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;  
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots  
Of tired, outstripped Five-Nines that dropped behind.

Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!--An ecstasy of fumbling,  
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;  
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling  
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime...  
Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light,  
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,  
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams you too could pace  
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,  
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,  
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;  
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood  
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,  
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud  
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues---  
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest  
To children ardent for some desperate glory,  
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est  
Pro patria mori.\*