The Use of Deliberate Repetition

**Alliteration**: repetition of initial sounds in words and syllables (as in "**f**ew **f**locked to the **f**ight" or "a**r**ound the **r**ugged **r**ock the **r**agged **r**ascal **r**an")

Alliteration can help poets to intensify effects, add weight to an idea, and make the verse easier to remember.

MÁRGARÉT, áre you gríeving

Over Goldengrove unleaving?

Leáves, líke the things of man, you

With your fresh thoughts care for, can you?

**Assonance**: repetition of similar vowel sounds

“bright night”; “with penitence and reticence”; “Men sell the wedding bells”

It may not be as prominent as alliteration, but the resonating vowel sounds can create a melodic effect and subtly bind the lines together.

Futility

Move him into the *sun*—

Gently its *touch* awoke him *once*,

At home, whispering of fields *unsown*.

Always it *woke* him, even in France,

*Until* this morning and this *snow*.

If anything might rouse him now

The kind *old* sun will *know*.

**Consonance**: the repetition of consonants appearing within a line or at the end of words

pitter patter

odds and ends

struts and frets

all mammals named Sam are clammy.

napping, rapping, and tapping

And all is seared with trade; bleared smeared with toil;

And wears man’s smudge and shares man’s smell: the soil

What scheme does the following line employ?

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain.

**Rhyme:** Rhyme, especially end rhyme—the repetition of identical sounds at the end of successive lines—is perhaps the most easily recognized characteristic of formal poetry.

Examples:

A long time ago I told my *mother*

I was leaving home to find *another*:

I never answered her *letter*

But I never found a *better*

Here am I, here are *you*:

But what does it mean? What are we going to *do*?

“It’s No Use Raising a Shout” by W. H. Auden

Customarily, rhyme is produced by one syllable words (*fat* & *cat*) or by the final syllables of multisyllabic words (pre*vail* & en*tail*; disclo*sure* & compo*sure*).