

Free verse

Free verse is poetry that does not follow strict patterns in rhythm or rhyme. Writers of free verse still, however, use a wide variety of figurative language techniques to communicate their ideas and feelings. Much contemporary poetry is written in free verse.

Dramatic poetry

Poetry can be written in the form of a play. Many of Shakespeare's plays are written in a poetic form to powerfully communicate his ideas using the sounds of the words and the figurative language of the speeches.

Exercise 3.3.1

- 1 Read the following poem aloud and then answer the questions that follow.

The Grasshopper Heart

That man with the cowboy hat and tan and tattoos
is holding his little white-skinned daughter
very gently in the shallow water. Now he is
zooming her along, but not too quickly
for fear of her fear. He tosses her up,
catches and hugs her, holds in check
the fierce tenderness that craves to crush her.
Her father. His wholly holy love. He is smiling
and I know his heart is like a grasshopper—
leaping and landing spring-loaded to leap again.

Andrew Lansdown

- a The description of the man is created in just three short images in the first line. What is the poet saying about this man in these images?

- b How does the poet establish a strong contrast between the man and his daughter in the first three lines?

- c Why do you think that the onomatopoeia in 'zooming her along' is an effective description of this scene?
