



Poetry

Free Verse Poems do not have to follow rhyme schemes but often contain rhythmic patterns and other poetic elements.



Literary Elements

Onomatopoeia is the use of a word that imitates the sound that it stands for, such as *hiss*.

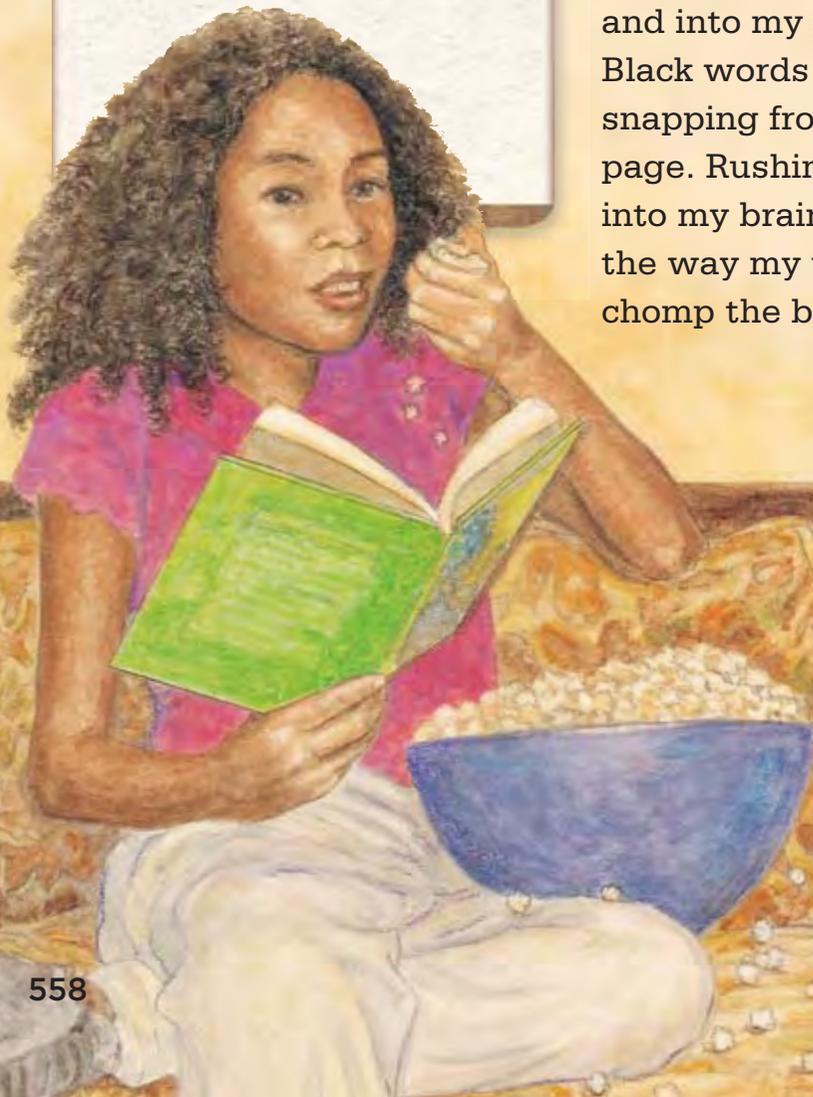
A **Simile** compares two different things, usually by using the words *like* or *as*.

I Love the Look of Words



The word *popping* sounds like the thing it describes. This is an example of onomatopoeia.

Popcorn leaps, popping from the floor
of a hot black skillet
and into my mouth.
Black words leap,
snapping from the white
page. Rushing into my eyes. Sliding
into my brain which gobbles them
the way my tongue and teeth
chomp the buttered popcorn.



When I have stopped reading,
 ideas from the words stay stuck
 in my mind, like the sweet
 smell of butter perfuming my
 fingers long after the popcorn
 is finished.

This simile compares ideas sticking in the poet's mind to the smell of butter sticking to her fingers.

I love the book and the look of words
 the weight of ideas that popped into my mind
 I love the tracks
 of new thinking in my mind.
 — Maya Angelou

Connect and Compare



1. Although it doesn't rhyme, this free verse poem contains elements of poetry, such as onomatopoeia. Besides the word *popped*, what other examples of onomatopoeia can you find?
Onomatopoeia
2. The poet uses a simile to compare her brain to something. What is it? **Analyze**
3. Compare the narrator in this poem with the narrator in *Because of Winn-Dixie*. How are they alike? How are they different? **Reading/Writing Across Texts**



Find out more about free verse poems at www.macmillanmh.com



Writer's Craft

Multiple Paragraphs

Writers arrange **multiple paragraphs** in a logical order when they compare and contrast. You can use Venn diagrams to sort out similarities and differences before you write.



I arranged my paragraphs in a logical order.

First I told how the characters are different. Then I told how they are alike.

Write a Comparison

Ike and Cara

by Ramona C.

I am writing to compare two characters from the books we read this year. One is Ike from Dear Mrs. LaRue, and the other is Cara from Dear Mr. Winston.

Right away, you can tell that Ike's character could never be real—dogs cannot talk or write letters to their owners. Cara's character could be real. She looks and writes like a real person. Ike uses a typewriter. Cara types her letter on a computer.

The two characters are alike in that they are both clever, they get in trouble, and they were invented to make readers like me laugh.

Your Turn

Choose two characters you know from books. Then write a description that compares and contrasts the characters. Start your writing by introducing your subjects. Tell how they are alike in one paragraph and how they are different in another paragraph. Use the Writer's Checklist to help you evaluate your writing.



Writer's Checklist

- Ideas and Content:** Did I choose clear similarities and differences?
- Organization:** Are my **multiple paragraphs** in a logical order? Did I tell how my characters are alike in one paragraph and different in another?
- Voice:** Is it clear how I feel about the characters?
- Word Choice:** Did I use adjectives that paint vivid pictures of the characters?
- Sentence Fluency:** Did I use a variety of sentence lengths and types?
- Conventions:** Did I use correct punctuation throughout? Did I capitalize proper nouns?