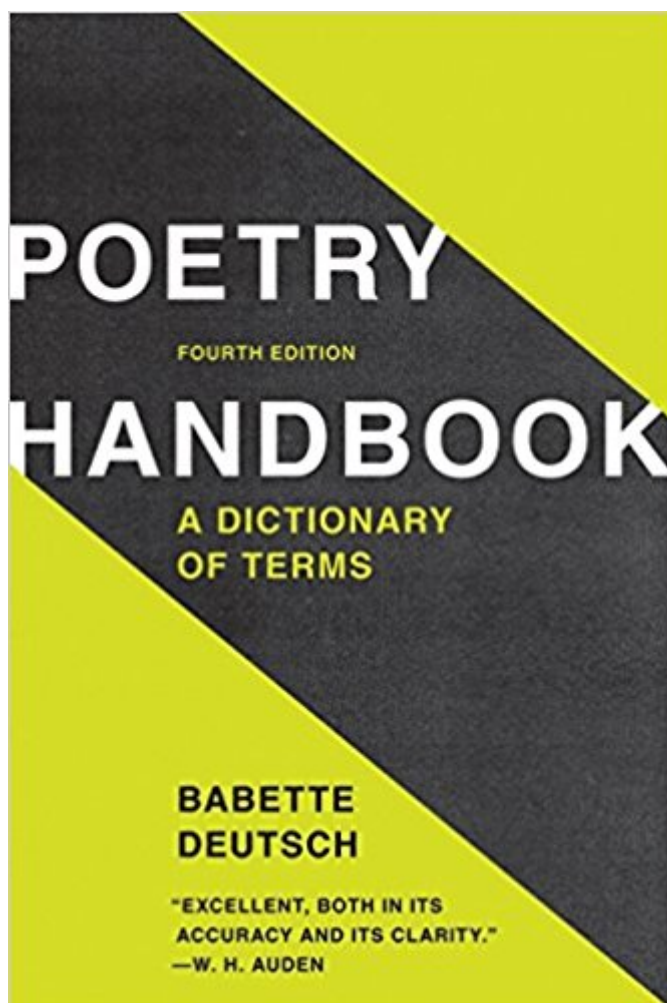


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# Poetry Handbook: A Dictionary Of Terms



## Synopsis

The classic reference work – an invaluable sourcebook for poets and readers

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Excellent, both in its accuracy and its clarity."--W. H. Auden

"It could be read right through, to our infinite enjoyment."--William Carlos Williams..

"...truly a handbook...both for beginner and expert."--Marianne Moore

"A much-needed work, splendidly done: the definitions are clear; the illustrations apt; what is more, it is a pleasure to read for its own sake, and so belongs to the

aristocracy of reference books."--Richard Wilbur..

"...full of vitality, knowledge, and its own poetry."--Edmund Keeley

[ A ] abstract poem A term used by Dame Edith Sitwell for verse that depends chiefly upon its auditory values for its meaning. Such poetry is analogous to abstract painting in which the arrangement of colors and shapes is significant though no physical objects are represented. Words are employed with little regard for their usual connotations, but rather for their aural effectiveness in a pattern of full and approximate rhymes and in the manipulation of rhythm. Her own poems in the collection called *Facade* exemplify the type, which may be illustrated by three lines from her lively "Hornpipe" where, we hear, the dumb Sky rhinoceros-glum Watched the courses of the breakers' rocking-horses and with Glaucis Lady Venus on the settee of the horsehair sea! acatalectic See catalectic. acatalexis The use of an acatalectic line. accent Emphasis on a syllable. Some prosodists

distinguish between the terms "stress" and "accent" in order to clarify the different kinds of emphasis. These writers use "stress" when referring to metrical stress and reserve "accent" for the emphasis demanded by the language. Such emphasis is called etymological, grammatical, or more simply word accent. The emphasis that in normal speech falls on a heavily stressed syllable is the primary accent ( ' ). The emphasis that in normal speech falls on a lightly stressed syllable is the secondary accent ( ` ). Shelley's line "Ah, sister! Desolation is a delicate thing:" exhibits both primary and secondary accents in the word "de's o la tion." Usually, as here, a primary accent coincides with the metrical stress. An even accent or level stress is one which falls with equal emphasis on two syllables in a dissyllabic or polysyllabic word, as in man'kind' and wa'ter-worn' and sometimes occurs when two monosyllabic words are closely associated, such as old' man'. In verse it has the effect of DISTRIBUTED STRESS. See also recessive accent. accentual verse See metre, pages 91-92. accentual-syllabic verse See metre, page 94. acephalous line A headless line. See catalectic. acrostic A poem in which the initial letters of the lines spell a name or a title. Thus, Ben Jonson prefaces *The Alchemist* with

THE ARGUMENT  
 T he sickness hot, a master quit, for fear,  
 H is house in town, and left one servant there.  
 E ase him corrupted, and gave means to know  
 A cheater and his punk; who, now brought low,  
 L eaving their narrow practice, were become  
 C oz'ners at large; and, only wanting some  
 H ouse to set up, with him they here contract,  
 E ach for a share, and all begin to act.  
 M uch company they draw, and much abuse,  
 I n casting figures, telling fortunes,  
 news, S elling of flies, flat bawdry, with the Stone  
 T ill it, and they, and all in fume are gone.

See also alphabet poem. aesthetic distance The effect produced when an experience, removed from other irrelevant, haphazard experiences, is organized and framed by the formal limits of a poem, so that it can be contemplated and more fully understood. alba See troubadour, page 186. alcaics A stanza in the metre invented by the Greek poet Alcaeus, and later used in a slightly altered form by the Roman poet Horace. The original metre was imitated by Tennyson thus:

I am excited about this book, because after a time away from the university, and all the creative writing classes I have taken, one tends to start forgetting things, especially once you've seen 60-years-old pass you by. So this book was a Ace for this poet, and I'm mighty thankful to have it.

I had a copy of this in college and over the years it has vanished. This is a replacement copy for one of the best books on writing poetry that I know of!

Complete, enlightening, and enjoyable.

My favorite poetry handbook!!

Five stars! This Poetry Handbook is certainly a MUST, for anyone who loves to write poetry, from the beginner to the award winners of writing poetry. This book is a great way to find the differences in the terms of poetry, when you write. I would certainly be completely lost without my copy of the Poetry Handbook, A dictionary of terms. A Recommendation to one and all.

This is a text I used as an undergrad and for several years during my apprentice-novice stage as a writer. Selected by my teacher, one of two Iowa Writers Workshop M.FAs, who advanced my skills through formal training in poetry and fiction.

This little book is useful for students and practicing poets. It is arranged alphabetically, and contains listings for everything concerned with poetry in English, but doesn't forget the influence of poems from other cultures on English poetry. Poets quoted to demonstrate or illustrate the item under discussion range from classical to modern, from seventh century Japanese to Navajo. The author cross-references a lot, perhaps a bit much; but in this one little book, you can find the true definition of haiku (not only the line and syllable requirements, but the necessity to "rouse the emotion and suggest a spiritual insight", something often overlooked in definitions of the form; a discussion of "fancy", distinguishing it from fantasy and further distinguishing the latter from phantasy; and a definition of the "Monk's Tale Stanza" within a larger discussion of stanza. (This is where the cross-referencing is actually quite helpful). I lost my copy of this book for a while and was quite distraught. While I wouldn't go so far as to say I couldn't write without it, doing so was like eating a fine meal alone. I missed a dear friend at the table.

Information is not everything, and especially today when there is so much Information to be freely had. This guide to Poetic terms is for the most part simple and clear. It gives illustrations and examples for many of the most important terms. My problem with it was that I had hoped to be inspired by some of the Poetry, some of the examples. And I found her examples to be not very inspiring at all. There too is the problem that many of the entries are very skimpy. I also was bothered by her not giving significant weight to Biblical poetry and its importance for English Literature. Still I learned what 'chiasmus' is, and was reminded again of the difference between a trochee and an anapest and a dactyl. I did too learn that Free Verse has its origin in nineteenth

century French poetry and French poetry is syllabic, as words all tend to be equally accented. I learned that Free verse is a poetry of 'cadence' and not of 'syllable' and 'stress'. i.e. This book was useful to me in helping me refresh my knowledge of certain poetic terms and learn new terms and meanings I do not know. I suspect that any and everyone who takes a real interest in Poetry will be able to learn something from it.

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