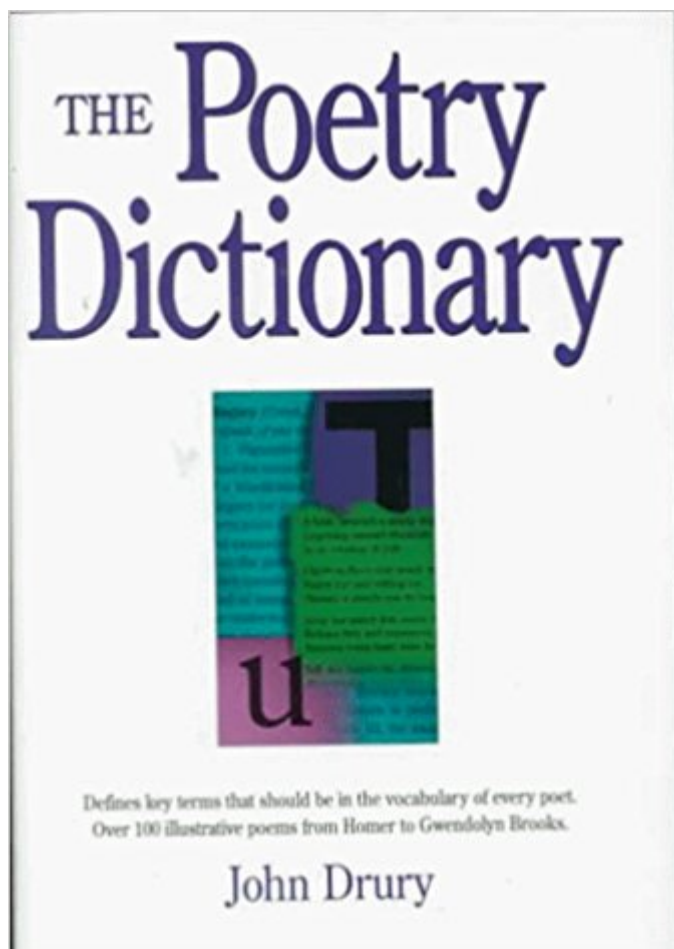


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# The Poetry Dictionary



## Synopsis

This compendium of definitions, thorough descriptions and examples of poetry clarifies the rich and complex language of poetry writing.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 336 pages

Publisher: Story Press; 1st edition (September 15, 1995)

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## Customer Reviews

An invaluable aid to anyone interested in reading or writing poetry. Arranged alphabetically, as you would suspect, the book covers forms, poetic movements, the elements of poetry, and rhetorical devices. My highest recommendation. A continuing source of information and inspiration.

From Abecedarium (a poem arranged according to the alphabet) to Word (the basic unit of the sentence) The Poetry Dictionary takes us on a journey of discovery. Along the way we encounter such familiar terms as Poem, Carol and Muse and unfamiliar terms like Drott Kavanaugh (an Old Norse stanzaic form) and Synecdoche (a figure of speech in which a part of something indicates the whole). We find old standards penned by the likes of William Shakespeare and Robert Browning but also see lesser-known verse by Woodrow Wilson and Agha Shahid Ali. Such a book cannot, however, be created by a single man. The acknowledgments make it clear that many individuals contribute to the dictionary. Even Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Lord Byron pitch in, providing translations for Francois Villon's "The Ballad of Dead Ladies" and Dante Alighieri's "Francesca of Rimini" respectively. Throughout the dictionary, related terms are grouped into major entries and subordinate terms are placed within larger entries. Terms that appear elsewhere as individual

entries are preceded by asterisks, creating a web of connections that shows how the elements of poetry are intertwined. Each entry provides a pronunciation guide and a definition in the first paragraph. Additional paragraphs give more information. Many entries contain one or more model poems that illustrate poetic forms or devices. Most of the examples are whole poems, but some are excerpts from longer works. The Poetry Dictionary may be read as a guide to the practice and history of verse or as an annotated anthology of model poems.

If you are a professional, aspiring or amateur poet, this book is a must have. Part anthology, part dictionary, part encyclopedia, it provides indispensable and clear advice. There is inspiration on practically every page!

Asked to provide a reference book for a grad stu who lacked acquaintance with poetry, but was taking a first course in it, I bought and read several of the highest rated books. John Drury's was far and away the best, providing an alphabetical arrangement of glossary, and definitions supported by multiple, clear (and pleasingly unusual) examples. Prosody, always a tricky subject, made as clear as possible, contemporary song lyrics (see SONG) treated with intelligent respect -- it also simmers with an infectious delight in all kinds of poems. I bought another copy for the student, so I could dip often into this book for pleasure, as well as enlightenment.

This text is beautifully organized; it's intriguing, and leads the reader on from reference to reference, poem to poem. It's littered with examples and a wide variety of poems, citing old works as well as contemporary reworkings of old forms, Neruda and Keats under Odes, Passerat (16th century) and Weldon Kees (20th century) under Villanelles. Definitions are clear and easy to understand. A fun read, a great resource.

Drury's book is a practical and useful book for not only writing poetry, but for teaching poetry. His definitions and examples are practical, clear, and unaffected, unlike some of the other more convoluted handbooks. A definite must have for any poet or teacher of poetry

I have the earlier (1995) edition of this book and should probably buy the second edition. This is a wonderful book, fun to use. As in a dictionary, the terms defined are in alphabetical order, but explanations are often a page long. The entries vary from need-to-know information such as the 5-page explanation of "rhyme," to the perhaps-never-need-to-know ones such as "hudibrastics." A

very useful, very enjoyable book.

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