When analyzing poetry, you may be asked to determine the poem’s **Rhyme Scheme**. A rhyme scheme is the pattern of rhymes that appears at the end of a poem’s lines. To determine a poem’s rhyme scheme, look at the last word of each line in a poem’s stanzas.

### Types of Rhyme Schemes

Below are some common rhyme schemes:

- **Alternate Rhyme**: \( A B A B \)
  
  Here is an example from “Neither Out Far Nor In Deep” by Robert Frost:

  The people along the **sand**
  All turn and look one **way**.
  They turn their back on the **land**
  They look at the sea all **day**.

- **Ballade**: \( A B A B C B C \)
  
  Here is an example of this old French verse form from “Ballade of Modest Confession” by Hilaire Belloc:

  Painting on Vellum: not on silk or **hide**
  Or ordinary Canvas: I **suppose**
  No painter of the present day has **tried**
  So many mediums with success, or **knows**
  As well as I do how the subject **grows**
  Beneath the hands of genius, that **anoint**
  With balm. But I have something to **disclose** —
  *Painting on Vellum is my weakest **point***.

- **Coupled Rhyme (or Rhyming Couplets)**: \( A A B B C C \)
  
  Here is an example of a Coupled Rhyme or Rhyming Couplet from Shakespeare’s “Sonnet 18”:

  So long as men can breathe or eyes can **see**,
  So long lives this and this gives life to **thee**.

- **Enclosed Rhyme**: \( A B A A \)
  
  Here is an example of an Enclosed Rhyme from John Milton’s “Sonnet VII”:

  How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of **youth**, 
  Stol’n on his wings my three-and-twentieth **year**!
  My hasting days fly on with full **career**,
But my late spring no bud or blossom shewth.

- **Simple Four-Line Rhyme: A B C B**
  Here is an example of a Simple Four-Line Rhyme from “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” by Samuel Coleridge:
  
  It is an ancient **Mariner,**
  And he stoppeth one of **three,**
  By thy long grey beard and glittering **eye,**
  Now wherefore stopp’st thou **me**?

- **Limerick: A A B B A**
  Here is a Limerick from the famous Mother Goose collection “Hickory, Dickory, Dock”:
  
  Hickory, dickory, **dock,**
The mouse ran up the **clock**;
The clock struck **one,**
And down he **run,**
Hickory, dickory, **dock.**

- **Monorhyme: A A A A**
  Here is an excerpt from Dick Davis’s “A Monorhyme for the Shower”:
  
  Twenty odd years have turned to **air**;
  Now she’s the girl I didn’t **dare**
  Approach, ask out, much less **declare**
  My love to, mired in young **despair.**

- **Terza Rima: A B A B C B C D* C D* E^ D* E^ E^**
  Here is a section of Percy Shelley’s Terza Rima “Ode to the West Wind”:
  
  O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's **being,**
  Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves **dead**
  Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter **fleeing,**
  Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic **red,**
  Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O **thou,**
  Who chariotest to their dark wintry **bed**
  The winged seeds, where they lie cold and **low,**
  Each like a corpse within its grave, **until**
  Thine azure sister of the Spring shall **blow**
  Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and **fill**
  (Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in **air**)
  With living hues and odours plain and **hill**
  Wild Spirit, which art moving **everywhere**
  Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh **hear**!
• **Triplet: A A A**

Here is a triplet from Shakespeare’s “The Phoenix and the Turtle”:

To this urn let those *repair*
That are either true or *fair*;
For these dead birds sigh a *prayer*.

• **Villanelle: A B A  A B A  A B A  A B A  A B A  A B A**

Here is an excerpt from Edwin Arlington Robinson’s Villanelle “The House on the Hill”:

They are all gone *away,*
The House is shut and *still,*
There is nothing more to *say.*

Through broken walls and *gray*
The winds blow bleak and *shrill:*
They are all gone *away.*

Nor is there one to-*day*
To speak them good or *ill:*
There is nothing more to *say.*

Why is it then we *stray*
Around the sunken *sill?*
They are all gone *away,*

And our poor fancy-*play*
For them is wasted *skill:*
There is nothing more to *say.*

There is ruin and *decay*
In the House on the *Hill:*
They are all gone *away,*
There is nothing more to *say.*

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1. This poem and all other poems retrieved from the Poetry Foundation: [https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems)