

Handout 2: Generic differences between poetry and drama

NB these are generalisations!

	Poetry	Drama
1.	Usually shorter: dense, concise	Longer
2.	Can be elevated & literary in style	Tends to be more colloquial because it is dialogue
3.	Words are chosen individually for effect	Less emphasis on every word on the page
4.	Often rhymes	May be verse or prose, or mixed for effect
5.	Written to be read alone (earlier for public performance)	Written to be performed & seen by a live audience
6.	Text is complete on the page, but ambiguity allows possibility of reader completion	Less complete as text: director, actors & audience complete it
7.	Poets may create effects which appeal to all the senses	Sensual effects may be experienced directly. More emphasis on the visual & aural
8.	Less emphasis on syntax which applies to prose	More tied to the sentence form, or at least the conventions of conversation
9.	More scope for impact through the layout of the text on the page	Less
10.	Point of view is often singular & is usually identifiable	No point of view, each character presents their own
11.	Less, possible to have no events	Strong focus on plots, events
12.	Fewer or none	More characters
13.		
14.		
15.		
16.		
17.		
18.		

Helpoint: add any others you can think of