

About Poetry: Rhyme Scheme

A rhyme scheme shows the pattern of words at the end of a line in a poem. It uses letters to represent the sounds. Words that sounds alike, or rhyme, have the same letter. The letter A represents the first group of sounds, the letter B represents the second group, continuing until the end of the poem.

Example:

Time to Rise

by Robert Louis Stevenson

A birdie with a yellow bill A
Hopped upon my window sill, A
Cocked his shining eye and said: B
"Ain't you 'shamed, you sleepy-head!" B

A group
bill
sill
B group
said
head

The words "bill" and "sill" are the first group of ending words. Since they have the same sound, or rhyme, they are both marked with the letter A. The words "said" and "head" rhyme, but do not rhyme with either "bill" or "sill." They are a new group and marked with the letter B.

Example:

Fairy Bread

by Robert Louis Stevenson

Come up here, O dusty feet! A
 Here is fairy bread to eat. A
Here in my retiring room, B
Children, you may dine C
On the golden smell of broom B
 And the shade of pine; C
And when you have eaten well, D
Fairy stories hear and tell. D

A group
feet
eat
B group
room
broom
C group
dine
pine
D group
well
tell

Determine the rhyme scheme for the following poems.

Looking Forward

by Robert Louis Stevenson

When I am grown to man's estate A
I shall be very proud and great, A
And tell the other girls and boys B
Not to meddle with my toys. B

At the Sea-Side

by Robert Louis Stevenson

When I was down beside the sea A
A wooden spade they gave to me A
 To dig the sandy shore. B

My holes were empty like a cup. C
In every hole the sea came up, C
 Till it could come no more. B