

Rhythm in Poetry

Rhythm can change the mood of a poem. Think about the way sports announcers speak: They usually start talking faster and louder when something exciting happens in the game.

Clap along to the beat of the beginning, middle, and ending stanzas of the poem.

1

The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that day:
The score stood four to two, with but one inning more to play.
And then when Cooney died at first, and Barrows did the same,
A sickly silence fell upon the patrons of the game.

Did this stanza make you feel:

a. sad **b.** happy **c.** scared **d.** other: _____

2

But Flynn let drive a single, to the wonderment of all,
And Blake, the much despised, tore the cover off the ball;
And when the dust had lifted, and the men saw what had occurred,
There was Jimmy safe at second and Flynn a-hugging third.

3

Then from 5,000 throats and more there rose a lusty yell;
It rumbled through the valley, it rattled in the dell;
It knocked upon the mountain and recoiled upon the flat,
For Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.

Did your rhythm change from the second to third stanzas? How?

4

Oh, somewhere in this favored land the sun is shining bright;
The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light,
And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout;
But there is no joy in Mudville - mighty Casey has struck out.

What is happening in this stanza?

How does this stanza feel different from the first three?

Chances are, you wanted to clap a little faster along 2 and 3 stanzas. How does a faster rhythm make you feel?

