

Name:

Date:

**ANALYZE CRAFT AND STRUCTURE** → STANZAS IN POETRY

Poems, like prose, are organized by separate ideas. Instead of paragraphs, however, poems are broken into stanzas. A **stanza** is a group of lines that focuses on one idea.

A **line** of poetry includes all the words in one row. The poet carefully chooses where to break lines in order to create rhythm, rhyme, or emphasis. Sometimes a complete sentence is on one line. At other times, however, a sentence breaks across two or more lines.

Stanzas are separated by spaces. Stanzas in a poem may all have the same number of lines, or stanzas may have different line lengths. The number of lines determines the type of stanza.

- A **couplet** contains two lines.
- A **quatrain** contains four lines.
- A **sestet** includes six lines.
- An **octave** features eight lines.

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the poem below. Then, answer the questions that follow.

I've felt the warmth of sun in summer  
 Its heat radiating in my direction  
 Above my head, a distant drummer  
 It hugs me with its kind protection.  
 And when mild storms have passed on by  
 They share with me a rainbow sky.

I keep those moments close at hand  
 To bring me strength in winter's hold  
 I've kept them when my needs demand  
 Their memories to blanket cold.  
 And then remember, sitting still  
 What life can be without the chill.

1. How many stanzas does the poem have?  
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2. How many lines does each stanza have? What type of stanzas are they—couplets, quatrains, sestets, or octaves?  
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3. Give an example of how the poet breaks lines to create rhythm, rhyme, or emphasis.  
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**DIRECTIONS:** Read the poem. Then, answer the questions that follow.

I sat one day inside the park;  
 The sun was bright—the leaves were dark;  
 I'd come there for just one pursuit  
 To play my quiet, tuneful flute.

But then I heard  
 A song of bird  
 Or was it saying  
 Guitar playing?

I quickly saw a glad occasion  
 To accept the invitation  
 From the player I'd just met  
 To join and form a sweet duet.

1. How many stanzas does this poem have?

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2. How many lines does each stanza have? What type of stanzas are they—couplets, quatrains, sestets, or octaves?

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3. Give an example of how the poet breaks lines to create rhythm, rhyme, or emphasis.

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