L.O. Explore how poetic language affects the reader

Let's read the first half of the poem again...

The Highwayman

PART ONE

I

The wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty trees,

The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,

The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,

And the highwayman came riding—

Riding—riding—

The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn-door.

II

He'd a French cocked-hat on his forehead, bunch of lace at his chin,

A coat of the claret velvet, and breeches of brown doe-skin;

They fitted with never a wrinkle: his boots were up to the thigh!

And he rode with a jewelled twinkle,

His pistol butts a-twinkle,

His rapier hilt a-twinkle, under the jewelled sky.

III

Over the cobbles he clattered and clashed in the dark inn-yard,

And he tapped with his whip on the shutters, but all was locked and barred;

He whistled a tune to the window, and who should be waiting there

But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,

Bess, the landlord's daughter,

Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.

IV

And dark in the dark old inn-yard a stable-wicket creaked

Where Tim the ostler listened; his face was white and peaked;

His eyes were hollows of madness, his hair like mouldy hay,

But he loved the landlord's daughter,

The landlord's red-lipped daughter,

Dumb as a dog he listened, and he heard the robber say—

V

"One kiss, my bonny sweetheart, I'm after a prize to-night,

But I shall be back with the yellow gold before the morning light;

Yet, if they press me sharply, and harry me through the day,

Then look for me by moonlight,

Watch for me by moonlight,

I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar the way."

VI

He rose upright in the stirrups; he scarce could reach her hand,

But she loosened her hair i' the casement! His face burnt like a brand

As the black cascade of perfume came tumbling over his breast;

And he kissed its waves in the moonlight,

(Oh, sweet, black waves in the moonlight!)

Then he tugged at his rein in the moonlight, and galloped away to the West.

Alfred Noyes used many poetic techniques when he wrote The Highwayman. With a partner, look at your own copy of just the **first** stanza and look for any of the following techniques.

Alliteration - the repetition of **consonant** sounds, usually at the beginning of words.

Metaphor - A figure of speech which compares one thing to another by describing it directly as *being* that thing.

Simile - A figure of speech which makes a comparison between two things using the word *like* or *as*.

Use of colour – used a lot in this poem

Repetition – words or lines that are repeated

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So what did Alfred Noyes intend for readers of his poem?

Let's look at the first examples of **alliteration:**

torrent of darkness among the gusty trees

ghostly galleon

road was a ribbon

Remember that a poem is meant to be read aloud, and when these lines are, we can hear a strong beat - the alliteration contributes to rhythm of the poem.

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Now use the poetic techniques prompt sheet to find examples of each technique and **explain what effect** they have on you as a reader.

e.g. *'Ghostly galleon' and 'the road was a ribbon' are both examples of alliteration. They help give the poem its rhythm and beat.*

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Turn to a partner and summarise what has happened in the poem so far.

Can you predict what might happen next?

Use this interactive version of the poem to revise the different poetic techniques and find out what happens next.

The Highwayman