Poetry – Some Terms and Techniques – Samples from Longfellow

**Alliteration** – the repetition of consonant sounds, most often at the beginning of words – used to create pleasing, memorable sounds.
   “And with wave and whirlwind wrestle!”

**Allusion** – a reference to a character, place or situation from another literary work – used to make the poem more interesting or to give additional meaning
   “Devoured by worms, like Herod, was the town”

**Imagery** – creating a picture with words appealing to any of the five senses – used to make a poem come alive and create an atmosphere
   “I heard the trailing garments of the Night Sweep through her marble halls!”

**Metaphor** – a figure of speech that compares two basically different things – used to bring things to life in unexpected ways
   “The Lighthouse lifts its massive masonry,
    A pillar of fire by night, of cloud by day.”

**Simile** – a figure of speech that uses the word like or as to make a comparison of two seemly yet like things – used to add color to poetry
   “Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,
    Her cheeks like the dawn of day”

**Onomatopoeia** - use of words that sound like what they describe – used to help the reader hear the sounds and for effect
   “He heard the bleating of the flock,
    And the twittering of birds among the trees.”

**Repetition** – refers to repeated sounds, words, phrase, lines and even whole verses- used for emphasis, to add a sense of unity and/or pattern and to make a poem more musical
   “A boy’s will is the wind’s will
    And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.”

**Rhyme** – repetition of the same sounds in words that appear near each other in a poem, often at the end of a line – used to create a musical effect
   “I heard the bells on Christmas Day,
    Their old, familiar carols play”

**Rhythm** - the pattern of beats made by stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of poetry – used to create pleasant musical effects
   “On the shores or Gitche Gumee,
    Of the shining big-Sea-Water”

**Personification** – giving human/animal characteristics to nonliving things creates imagery
   “The vessel in its strength; She shuddered and paused like a frightened steed.”

**Total Effect of a poem is the overall impact of a poem on the reader**
   **Sound** – rhythm, rhymes, alliteration and onomatopoeia
   **Language** – imagery, metaphor, simile, personification
   **Form** – type of poem (narrative or lyrical)
   **Meaning** – feeling, mood, or theme