

Consonance

- Consonance is the repetition of consonant sounds.
 - While many mistakenly only identify it as the repetition of the ending consonant sound, consonance is not limited to where it can occur in a word; the repetition may be present in the beginning, middle or ending consonants.
 - Consonance is the overarching category or “umbrella” that encompasses all sound devices involving repetition of consonants. Other more specific forms of consonance include alliteration. Alliteration is the repetition of consonant sound on the stressed syllables. Assonance, however, is the opposite of consonance, being that it is the repetition of the vowel sound on stressed syllables in a group of words.

Examples:

“pitter patter” and “glass boss”

Another example is from “Out-Out”, by Robert Frost:

The buzz-saw snarled and rattled in the yard
And made dust and dropped stove-length sticks of wood,
Sweet-scented stuff when the breeze drew across it.
And from there those that lifted eyes could count

Note: Above, the “D” sound: “and,” “made,” “dust,” “dropped,” “wood” is repeated.

Slant rhyme is a form of consonance as it involves repetition of the stressed ending consonant, but not repetition of the vowel sound. For example, “Good Food” constitutes slant rhyme. In this sense, consonance can create a sort of pseudo rhyme.

Another example is from Emily Dickinson's “T’was later when the summer went”:

’Twas later when the summer went
Than when the Cricket came—
And yet we knew that gentle Clock
Meant nought but Going Home—
’Twas sooner when the Cricket went
Than when the Winter came
Yet that pathetic Pendulum
Keeps esoteric Time.

Notice the repetition of the “T” sound as well as the consonance of “came,” “time,” and “home”.

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