RHYME VERSE: its reception and relatability for modern English-speaking culture.

Peter R. Hancock

Bachelor of Arts (Writing)

Institute for Sustainable Industries and Liveable Cities

Victoria University

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of:

Master of Research

22 June 2021

Abstract

Rhyme has substantial presence in the history of English-speaking culture. In each generation of people there are poets and songwriters who have created their own version of rhyme verse to broadcast their viewpoints concerning ideas, emotions, and events. To explore the place of rhyme verse in modern English-speaking culture, we need to consider its reception and relatability for an audience.

This thesis comprises two components: a creative product (Part A); and an exegesis (Part B). The purpose of the creative product is to provide samples of recent rhyme verse, and be a guide for teachers and senior school students relating to composition and presentation of rhyme. In the context of this project, these teachers and students are designated as 'the audience', but curriculum designers and poetry or song enthusiasts may have an interest in the creative product.

Part A, *Verbal Tap Dance: a collection of rhyme verse*, does not set out to offer theoretical research information in an exegetical sense, it intends to be an interrelated study resource for the exegesis to show how rhyme verse can be composed by employing theme as a starting point for creating a poem or song. Furthermore, the creative product includes five contraposed viewpoints (*contraview themes*), which are factors on the decision spectrum that relate to human experiences. These five *contraview themes* are: (i) Conformity or Rebellion; (ii) Respect or Ridicule; (iii) Optimism or Pessimism; (iv) Connection or Isolation; and (v) Reality or Illusion.

As part of an interrelated study resource, both Part A and Part B also concentrate on five essential elements for the composition of rhyme verse: Theme, Message & Meaning, Vernacular, Rhyme Schemes, and Syntax.
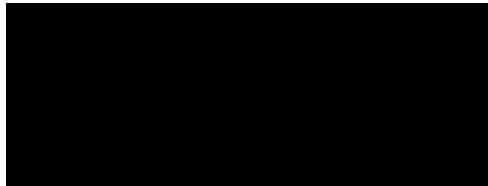
Moreover, creative product and exegesis investigate three delivery avenues (education, entertainment, and advertisement), which have potential to deliver rhyme verse to an audience. Also, the exegesis focusses on cognitive effects of employing rhyme pertaining to memory and positive or negative reaction to rhyme verse.

Student Declaration of Authenticity

"I, Peter R. Hancock, declare that the Master of Research thesis entitled 'RHYME VERSE: its reception and relatability for modern English-speaking culture' is no more than 50,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work".

"I have conducted my research in alignment with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research and Victoria University's Higher Degree by Research Policy and Procedures.

Signature: ██████████████████   Date: 22 June 2021

Contents

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank my project supervisors, Professor Tom Clark and Associate Professor Mary-Rose McLaren for their friendly and dedicated support, plus their expert guidance during the proposal and thesis writing process for my Master of Research: Creative Project. They were open to any question asked or comment made by me, graciously helped me through the exactitudes of thesis protocol, and clarified research policy and procedures.

Also, I acknowledge the expertise and friendly approach of Professor Ron Adams, Associate Professor Debra Zion, and Dr Rose Lucas who were influential in guiding me through higher degree coursework study.

I wish to give a special mention to Professor Robert Pascoe, who was kind enough to read through my research proposal before candidature submission and offer some insightful advice. And, I wish to once again thank Professor Ron Adams who—in the final stage of the thesis—provided his expertise for the logistics of how to question and frame the contextual intention of the exegesis.

Author's Note

My reason for choosing a research project, which has a rhyme verse reception and relatability focus, is to study scholarly and non-scholarly viewpoints from modern English-speaking audiences, particularly among teachers and senior school students. My purpose was to ascertain if they believe rhyme verse is currently relevant for classroom use. I decided to look at a selection of rhyming styles throughout history and mainly: (a) study the representation of rhyming poetry and song over the years for English culture; (b) explore the learning and enjoyment impact of these two forms of rhyme verse; and (c) identify if there is similar thematic content for older style poetry and my recent rhyme verse.

Furthermore, I need to point out that my project purpose did not set out to have rhyme verse pitted against free verse. I am aware that free verse is currently prevalent in English societies around the world; however, this creative product thesis essentially concentrates on reception and relatability of rhyme verse in modern English-speaking culture. Another purpose of this thesis is to largely focus on five essential rhyme verse elements, and feature theme as a commencement approach for writing rhyme verse (poems and songs) – rather than scrutinise all technical particulars of rhyme verse construction. There are many books and websites linked to rhyme that cover this.

There is not always an absolute interpretation or response for creative writing. Consequently, there needs to be leeway for different reactions that can influence understanding or relatability of rhyme verse. As a creative product researcher, I can only be truly certain about what my rhyme verse means, and—based on my experiences and education—offer an interpretation of someone else's work.

An initial sample of how rhyme can be constructed and presented is my poem that features in the title page of Part A for this thesis.

<u>Verbal Tap Dance</u>

Raging
   with his onion face
His stony stare devoid of grace
Windmilling his words
   as he prefers
     to verbally tap dance his way out
      of a conversation
       he set out to casually rouse

PART A   CREATIVE PRODUCT

VERBAL TAP DANCE

a collection of rhyme verse

by

Peter R. Hancock

2022

Preface

People have written rhyme verse throughout the history of English-speaking culture to broadcast ideas, emotions, and events, and—depending on content and composition—the rhyme was well-received or rejected. A rhyming poem or song is constructed to have portions of textual language that recurrently display similar sounds, which are usually located at the end or inside of several lines of verse. This text consists of words that might stand alone—or group together to create phrases—which form a particular structure to deliver ideas, and talk about emotions and events.

Verbal Tap Dance: a collection of rhyme verse is based on knowing the essence of rhyme and how it might be composed; however, it does not intensely pursue intricate techniques concerning traditional ideas of rhyme. Although, it does give insight into the employment of five essential elements needed for the creation of rhyme, and raises the importance of 'theme' as a major aspect for rhyme verse. This guidebook suggests how thematic choice can influence audience preferences. Also, it aims to be a guide for composition of rhyme verse—especially for teachers and senior school students—but the content of this guidebook might be of interest to curriculum designers or enthusiasts of poetry or song.

In this guidebook I only focus on English language recent rhyme verse, provide a non-complex explanation of how it can be composed, and present different rhyming styles of poems and song lyrics to show examples of what can be done. It should become clear how a poem or song lyrics can be constructed to suit thematic content. I have provided some processes to help begin the task of gathering ideas, and to understand the purpose, importance, and consequence of a message. Furthermore, I have offered samples of potential themes that can be used as a starting point for writing rhyme.

Having a consistent theme threading its way through your rhyme verse makes the progression of the content easier to follow. Consequently, words and phrases that are employed must benefit the mood of the rhyme and coherently progress the main idea or significant theme/s.

Grammar plays an important part in writing rhyme, because—in a lot of ways—poetry and song lyrics are usually a concise means of telling a story. There are many literary terms that can help establish the message & meaning of the rhyming poem or song, because without a worthwhile message or coherent meaning it might be difficult to gain popular reception and relatability for your rhyme verse. The sample of literary terms in Part A is limited to those I believe are the most commonly used.

If we consider the five essential elements of rhyme verse—Theme, Message & Meaning, Vernacular, Rhyme Schemes, and Syntax—it becomes clear that each element has a role to play. I have already mentioned 'Theme' and 'Message & Meaning'.

The term 'Vernacular' pertains to the type of voice running through rhyme verse. It relates to common speech patterns used by people in a particular region. This familiarity of speech can sometimes stimulate favourable interest for an audience that comes from the same region, which originated the writing.

From a technical aspect of composing rhyme verse, we need to consider what is known as a 'Rhyme Scheme', which is a way of constructing a poem or song lyrics so that the content follows a rhyming pattern. 'End Rhyme' is a scheme often employed, which has like-sounding words at the end of several lines of the rhyming poem or song. The end rhyme verse is popular with nursery rhymes, many fairy tales, and song lyrics. To get a feel for what it looks and sounds like, re-visit a few of your favourite songs and read in succession each line aloud.

The fifth essential element of rhyme verse is 'Syntax', a grammar term that governs how words and phrases are placed in each line. In other words, Syntax logically arranges placement of what is written, and helps makes sense of the message & meaning concerning the chosen theme.

Thematic considerations are important when thinking about composing a piece of rhyme verse. In this guidebook I explain five examples of contraposed viewpoints (contraviews) as themes that relate to the spectrum of human experience decisions. The five examples of *contraview themes* are: (i) Conformity or Rebellion; (ii) Respect or Ridicule; (iii) Optimism or Pessimism; (iv) Connection or Isolation; and (v) Reality or Illusion. I believe these stand out as the most prevalent decisions we have to cope with in modern times. Also, I speculate that any of these can make an interesting theme for the content of rhyme verse.

The purpose of *Verbal Tap Dance: a collection of rhyme verse* is to give some insight into the character and art of rhyme verse. It offers practical guidance to explore what is needed to write coherent and inventive rhyming poems and song lyrics. Also, it seeks to encourage anyone to have a go at a style of writing that is often considered to be too hard to do, or is written by a particular echelon of talented people. I do not believe this is true, which is why I wrote *Verbal Tap Dance: a collection of rhyme verse*. I hope the content of this guidebook is helpful for discovering ways to compose rhyme verse that presents your ideas, emotions, attractions, uncertainties, or concerns.

Peter R. Hancock

List of Poems & Songs

(Note: underlined titles in this list are songs)

COMPOSITION OF RHYME VERSE

Chapter 1 LITERARY TERMS

What are literary terms? They are approaches that can signpost a meaning or theme in a composition. Purposes for each literary term can vary, but in the main they are used to make a point, or drive the mood or tone of the composition. Alphabetically, here are some of those literary terms.

Alliteration	Allegory	Allusion	Analogy	Antagonist	Anthropomorphism
Characterisation	Cliché	Climax	Diction	Euphemism	Exposition
Fable	Foil	Foreshadowing	Hyperbole	Idiom	Imagery
Irony	Metaphor	Mood	Motif	Onomatopoeia	Oxymoron
Palindrome	Parable	Paradox	Parallelism	Parody	Personification
Plot	Protagonist	Proverb	Pun	Repetition	Satire
Simile	Symbolism	Theme	Tone		

It would take too long to explain all of these literary terms, however they and other terms are readily available to source on sites, such as:

https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english/literacy/Pages/litglossary.aspx

https://www.matrix.edu.au/essential-guide-english-techniques/the-literary-techniques-toolkit/

https://literary-devices.com/

The list above covers many of the terms concerning the composition of creative writing. To get a feel of how some literary terms can appear in writing, the phrase 'source on sites, such as'—which is used above—is an alliteration. 'Alliteration is the repetition of the same or similar consonant sounds in words that are close to one another'[1] but might also be at the start of words.

Here are three grammar terms that are significant in rhyme verse:
- **syllable**: one vowel sound for a unit of pronunciation (examples: *age* is one syllable, *power* is two syllables, *tomorrow* has three, *disconnection* has four, and so on).
- **consonant**: non-vowel sounds of speech (all English alphabet letters other than a, e, i, o, u, and sometimes y).
- **vowel**: The letters a, e, i, o, u, and sometimes y (For example, the 'u' can be an *uh* sound as is in: *cup*, *bum*, *dumb*, *fumble*, *gum*, *hum*, *jump*, *lump*, *mum*, *numb*, *plum*, *sum*, and *thumb*. Also, the words *come* and *some* fall into this category of vowel sound, because the 'o' is projecting the sound 'uh').

---

[1] Literacy Teaching Toolkit, Literacy glossary 2020,
https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english/literacy/Pages/litglossary.aspx

For the composition of rhyme verse, here are simple clarifications for two other literary terms that can be employed:

- *assonance*: repetition of vowel sounds anywhere in a word that has close proximity to another word with similar sounding vowel sounds (examples: 'How good is my look when I put colour in my hair,' or 'It is slow going around a water buffalo on the road.' These sentences focus on vowels sounds 'oo' [look], and 'oh' [slow]).
- *consonance*: repetition of same consonant sounds anywhere in a word or line (examples: 'Green grass grows better when the weather is wet' (*repeating consonants 'g', 's', 'w' and even 'er'*), or 'Monday morning makes me munch on mango muffins' (*repeating consonant 'm'). However, both these sentences could double as alliteration*.

If I have to choose what I believe are important literary terms—or at least more often employed—then I select these nine: cliché, imagery, metaphor, mood, simile, symbolism, personification, theme, and tone. My brief explanations are as follows:

- **Cliché** just means that what has been written has been done too many times for it to stimulate fascination or empathy from an audience.
- **Imagery** is a visual way of describing an idea or emotion, usually employing one or more of the five senses.
- **Metaphor** applies a representative word or phrase to describe something in an indirect way to compare or present an idea, such as: *arrogance is a thin veneer*.
- **Mood** is basically a feeling or atmosphere of the rhyme verse. For example, Optimism or Pessimism—from Chapter 3: Contraview Themes—represent moods, and so does Connection or Isolation.
- **Simile** provides a comparison of one thing to another, such as: *her tongue is like a jackhammer for words*. (Note: if there is 'as a' or 'is like' then it is a simile)
- **Symbolism**: an author can convey a specific message by using an easily recognised gesture, word, location or object to signify something or someone. For example: five interlocking-coloured rings is a symbol for the Olympic Games and designed to represent the international sporting competition. A stethoscope can represent a medical doctor, a white dove stands for peace, and an owl can symbolise wisdom.
- **Tone** is a sense of the author's attitude for the content they are composing: it is how the author feels about it that the audience might be sensing.

The concept of **Personification**—which attributes human traits to non-human things—appears in my poems 'Musical Conversation' (pp. 43-44), 'Kiss on Ice' (p.124), and 'End of the Hall' (p. 118). **Theme** is covered next under the heading Five Essential Elements of Rhyme Verse. The abovementioned literary terms are just a sample of what can be employed in rhyme verse. You can use just one or employ several in the same piece of writing. The key is to experiment with how you compose a rhyming poem or song and see what happens.

Chapter 2 FIVE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF RHYME VERSE

So, you have decided to create a rhyming poem or lyrics for a song, and you have a vague idea of what it could be about. Before writing it, you need to determine what will be the content and look of your rhyme verse. To do this, you need to:

- Select a THEME
- Decide on the MESSAGE & MEANING
- Choose VERNACULAR style
- Determine the RHYME SCHEME
- Structure the right SYNTAX

This will help define: the overall theme, what you specifically want to communicate, the style of tone and voice you think it needs, how it might be constructed, and what words and phrases could be used. You need to consider:

(a) the topic of the rhyme verse --- what is it all about?

(b) what in particular is it that needs to be said?

(c) how you want the poem or song to sound, for example: welcoming, inspiring, casual, questioning, defiant, educative, quirky.

(d) will every line of the poem or song rhyme in a perfect way, or will there be almost rhyming words and phrases at the end, in the middle, or at the start?

(e) what trigger words and phrases will help the audience identify the theme that runs through the rhyme verse, and prompt interest, awareness, and emotion?

All these elements help outline specifics that will form the look and rhyming pattern of a poem or song. Of course, a song is lyrics mixed with music, but at this stage only the words and phrases are being composed. Although, you might want to consider the style of musical beat—that suits your rhyme verse—to aid the construction process.

Will the music be a fast or slow tune? Will it be composed for a solo performance, a band, or an orchestra? Do you want it to be a Ballad, Rhythm & Blues, Rock & Roll, Electronic dance music, Rap, Hip Hop, or a Heavy Metal song? There is every chance that the song content could dictate what style of music your rhyme verse requires. However, for this study resource we will focus on words and phrases and how they will be the foundation to construct a poem or song that best expresses its theme. There are many resources online that address elements to define strong rhyme verse. A good starting point are the websites 'scootle.edu.au', 'poetryfoundation.com', or 'nla.gov.au'.

Theme

What is 'theme'? In simplest terms it is a specific message or meaning that a writer wishes to convey to an audience. This could be about: an event, a series of

occurrences, a concept, one or numerous ideas, an action or several deeds, a person, a crowd of people, one or a group of objects, or information about an historical, current, or future tale. Usually there is a key theme that runs through a piece of writing, but sometimes there can be more than one.

The theme might be factual or fiction, or have a touch of both. Someone might be: giving an account of what they experienced personally, telling what was observed or thought by someone else, or speculating about a particular topic.

A theme that runs through your rhyme verse could be shown as an obvious statement, such as: 'hate is a boomerang', which follows a scene of aggressive altercation. If we look at the sentence 'eyes open, wearing no sunglasses, he clenched his fists, tilted his face towards the sun, and did not flinch', this might mean: (a) he was trying to punish himself; or (b) he was ordered to do it. The theme is a bit indistinct, but it could be: (i) 'guilt is a chain around the soul'; or (ii) 'retribution is justice'.

Importantly, a theme is not the main idea of the rhyme verse, it is a significant message that supports it. For example, if we focus on sweet desserts as the main idea of a poem, a supporting theme could be 'consuming too much sugar can be a health risk'. Therefore, if you as the author have concerns about sugar, you could include in your rhyme verse an obvious message to express your opinion.

Before composing a rhyming poem or song, the author ought to think about what content it will need, and how that content will be characterised. Many ideas can be considered to explore what you want to write about. Next, you should anticipate how the format of your rhyme verse will assist rhyme delivery and convey the content to your intended audience. It might feature feelings and consequences of a personal experience, or be prompted by an event that pleased, intrigued or offended someone.

To begin the process of writing rhyme verse, I have created a strategy that I labelled the *WELL of Themes*, which represents a fourfold approach of *Write*, *Emulate*, *Look*, *Liberate*.

    (a)   **W**rite down some random words or names of objects;

    (b)   **E**mulate (not plagiarise) the writing of a poet or songwriter that you admire;

    (c)   **L**ook around and observe someone or something that interests you;

    (d)   **L**iberate a thought or idea that has been nagging you for some time.

WELL of Themes can be employed for assembling details about a theme to compose a rhyming poem or song. The theme could be anything; although, to start with, I suggest

you choose something that you are familiar with, feel passionate about, and captures your interests. Here are some ideas:

(i)   describe a significant idea or event

(ii)   recall important information

(iii)   comment on a case of humiliation or exclusion

(iv)   acknowledge affection or admiration

(v)   relay the outcome of a competition

(vi)   clarify how <u>you</u> feel about a relationship or belief

(vii)   report on an incident of bullying or cruelty

(viii) convey details about a fascinating activity

(ix)   suggest a better way of doing something

(x)   express concern about the environment, politics or education

(xi)   give your opinion on a topic

(xii)   just write about a quirky thought or action

If we choose a topic that will generate a theme, we can concentrate on aspects that indicate what composition elements we require to distinguish the theme. Will there be characters, actions, ideas, events, and moods that illustrate the essence of the topic?

For example, because Australia is known as a sporting nation, let us select a particular competition as our main idea—cricket—and we can use the theme 'change can be a good thing'.

Cricket in Australia has great local appeal, but Test Cricket is an international sport that has been around since 1877. World Series Cricket (WSC) was established exactly one hundred years later in 1977 as an alternative faster-paced model of the game; however, it did not attract popularity until a certain catchy tune became its anthem during 1978/1979. 'C'mon Aussie C'mon C'mon' (1978) was written by Johnston & Morris as a promotional song to heighten interest in the sport. The theme essence of this anthem style song was to encourage supporters to rally behind the controversial version of cricket. The song helped increase its popularity, with spectators singing the anthem at WSC matches.

The paragraph above shows us some relevant information that could be part of a poem or song about cricket, historical dates connected with the theme, new approach to an old game, or an anthem style song and its purpose. Bearing in mind that WSC was a new style of playing cricket, which had to employ cricketers and attract supporters.

The content of 'C'mon Aussie C'mon C'mon' is also an astute use of rhyme verse for advertising a roll-call of Australian cricket players at the time to boost team player recognition, as seen below:

It's on again this summer
We'll take on every comer
The question is who will make the team?
Will the wild and woolly new boys
beat the test of tried-and-true boys?
There's only just eleven vacancies
Will it be the rocket Rodney Hogg
Or will our Shirley Thompson get the job?
Sure it wouldn't be the same
without them shouting Lillee's name
And they tell me Lenny Pascoe's running hot
For openers we're looking pretty good
With bats like Darling, Hilditch, Laird, and Wood
There's Border, Hookes and others,
and the mighty Chappell brothers
I tell you boys this year we're looking good

Chorus

C'mon Aussie c'mon c'mon
C'mon Aussie c'mon c'mon
C'mon Aussie c'mon c'mon
C'mon Aussie c'mon

(Johnston & Morris 1978)

A large portion of this song is dedicated to delivering a message to promote a different kind of sporting approach to an existing fanbase and attract new spectators to the game of cricket. It does this by instilling expectation, selectiveness, and admiration.

In a different tone, my poem 'Puppy' displays a theme of young canine excitement, which should be apparent by the words and phrases employed.

Puppy
* licking your face*
Seeking your fond embrace
Piddling excitement on the floor
*   Wet pause*

(Hancock 2022, p. 125)

I hope it has a feeling of cuteness mixed with a sense of humour, because if spoken aloud 'wet pause' could mean 'wet paws'. Hey, who doesn't love a puppy? It is when they become the dogs of war that it becomes a problem.

Message & Meaning

Message is closely related to theme in that it carries a specific point that wants to be communicated. This diagram simply shows how an exchange of communication works:
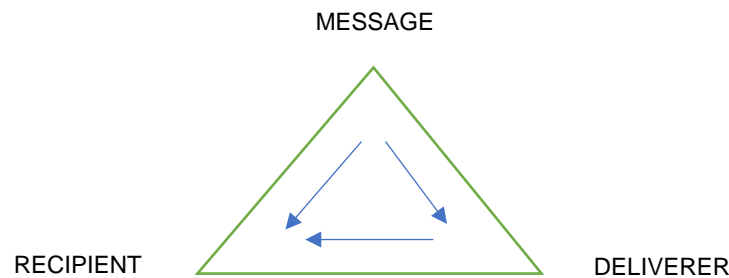
Once the theme is selected, you need to know the 'who', 'what', 'when', 'where' and 'why' of the narrative. Subsequently, you need to decide how details in the rhyme verse are arranged to compose a message that might: describe a personal experience, convey an idea, recount what has happened, speculate on what might happen, offer an opinion about a situation, impart knowledge, and so forth.

Consequently, obvious throughout the message—or at least underlying this as subtext—should be the 'meaning' of what you have written. If a message is delivered via the communication style of rhyme verse, more than likely it will be a concise form of writing, which needs to quickly grab the interest of the audience and hold their attention all the way through.

S.P.I.R.A.L. of Meaning

I suggest that to understand the purpose, importance, and consequence of a message, we need to concentrate on its meaning by working our way through what I have named the 'SPIRAL of Meaning' (Situation, Perception. Intelligence, Relevance, Affinity, Logic). This should help put the meaning into perspective concerning how it relates to an audience.

Situation	At the core of a message there has to be a place, an entity or object, and a reason, which can be known as the 'situation'. This gives a starting point to consider all the elements that form the meaning.
Perception	We need to study the message to contemplate what is seen, heard, or sensed to help determine: who created the message and the reason for it being delivered. This will assist with identifying the meaning.

Intelligence	Next comes the task of knowing what the message actually means. This entails drawing upon appropriate knowledge and experience to determine what the sender of the message is trying to convey.
Relevance	Once the message is understood, the recipient/s of that message must decide what relevance the meaning has for them.
Affinity	A part of the understanding process related to a message can be how recipients of that message connect with its content and intent, such as: does it directly affect them, is it just a courtesy notice, should it be passed on to someone else?
Logic	After noting all considerations for elements of the message, it's time to review the purpose, importance, and consequence for the meaning of that message, which will inform what action, if any, needs to be done.

The two elements *Relevance* and *Affinity* in the list above can have major influence on popular reception and relatability. Moreover, for a meaning to have affinity, it should have ideas and events compatible with the experience or knowledge of the audience. For instance, if I were to write 'how does your sagacity expound the contention of acrimonious proceedings on the West Coast?', then send it to a classroom of Australian teenagers to answer – what do you think they would make of it? I reckon most of them would be thoroughly confused. This style of communication is outdated language. Now, if the message was 'how does your judgment explain the conflict of angry actions on the West Coast?', the message should be a bit clearer – even if the meaning behind it might not be known.

This brings us to *Relevance.* Even if the message is clearer, the question above may not have any significance for a group of teenagers who could be: swimming at the beach, playing sport, shopping for clothes, buying mobile phones, or choosing what to eat for lunch. However, the message above might have some relevance for students studying social behaviours.

It is all a matter of perspective. If a group of teenagers is not interested in the study of social behaviours, then it is pointless to expect them to happily engage with it. Furthermore, whether the main idea or the theme are entirely obvious—or somewhat subtle—depends on author preference. Always remember to know your audience.

Understanding a message or meaning relies on how the construction of composition is done using particular words or phrases—known as 'syntax'—which will be covered later. Also, you need to think about what tone and mood your poem or song will have. Will it be evident in how the words and phrases progress through the rhyme verse?

Will it: involve lots of colloquialisms from a particular region, employ an antiquated style of language, have a modern style of voice, or use invented words in an unusual way? All these communication styles can be characterised as 'vernacular'.

Vernacular

What is vernacular? According to *The Macquarie Concise Dictionary*, it is:

1. native or originating in the place of its occurrence or use, as language or words (often as opposed to *literary* or *learned language*);
2. expressed or written in the native language of a place, as literary works.

<div align="right">(eds. Delbridge & Bernard 1998, p. 1302)</div>

When we talk about vernacular, we need to be mindful of the era it comes from. Are the words and phrases in antiquated language or modern linguistics? Also, we should be aware that literature from a bygone era will contain thoughts and events relevant to the time, which modern people may not understand. So, unless your audience is proficient in old-fashioned ideas and antiquated language, it might make sense to steer clear of composing rhyme verse in an out-dated style of vernacular.

Like any other style of writing, it could be prudent to begin with a theme and syntax that you feel familiar and comfortable with. As far as tone, mood and voice are concerned, you can draw upon the cultural region where you live. How do the locals speak? Do certain words get pronounced differently, even though they are English? Are there expressions they often use? Is there a blend of English and other languages? What customs do the locals follow? What places do they frequent? What are the main or minor beliefs? Having documented all these details, the other question to ask is 'why'.

Speech-patterns are the bedrock of vernacular, and can be identifiers of where a person was raised. In a wider sense, it could be said that text messages in the 21st Century have become their own form of vernacular. Once you have mastered the art of rhyme, using your local area vernacular, you might want to experiment and employ words and phrases from other English culture locations and see how they fit into a particular rhyme scheme. Will they enhance or detract from the essence of the piece?

For instance, the song 'C'mon Aussie C'mon C'mon' could have been included under the heading 'Vernacular', because of the typically Australian speech pattern used throughout the song. The phrase w*ill the wild and woolly new boys // beat the test of tried-and-true boys* is an example. And, of course, let us not forget use of the Australian iconic *portmanteau* 'C'mon'. A *portmanteau* is a word that results from blending two or more words, or parts of words, such that the portmanteau word expresses some combination of the meaning of its parts[2]. In this case, the two words

---

[2] Britannica 2021, Portmanteau word, para. 1, https://www.britannica.com/topic/portmanteau-word.

are 'come' and 'on'. Australians have a habit of using blended words to describe people, places, and situations. One of my portmanteau words is *contraview* (p. 9). 'The Hummingbirds' team song was composed in the context of Australian rules football, and employs some Australian vernacular to deliver its message.

> *Hummingbirds*
> *Hummingbirds*
> *Football all the way*
> *Aussie Rules*
> *We're no fools*
> *Watch the game we play*
>
> *Keep on guard*
> *Tackle hard*
> *Spread our wings and fly*
> *It's no dream*
> *We're the team*
> *Keep our spirits high*
>
> *Hummingbirds*
> *Hummingbirds*
> *Don't forget our name*
> *Mark the ball*
> *Build the score*
> *Winning is our aim - Oi!*

<div align="center">(Hancock 2022)</div>

There are some trigger words and phrases that should help an audience know what vernacular it is. The phrase 'Aussie Rules' (line 4) is a giveaway. Also, 'mark' (line 16) is another typically Australian word meaning to grab a football—from the air—after it has been kicked. Of course, there is always the last word in the song 'Oi!'.

Rhyme Schemes

A rhyme scheme informs the verse pattern that words and phrases in a poem or song will follow. This study resource concentrates on what can be considered four of the most common versions of rhyme scheme: (i) perfect rhyme; (ii) end rhyme; (iii) slant rhyme; and (iv) internal rhyme (or middle rhyme) – see examples in Table (A).

<div align="center">**Table A**</div>

Scheme	Rhyme verse	Explanation

Perfect	Is it right
	   for me to write
	      about a secret rite?
		It is *perfect rhyme* if every word at the end of each line has the same sound and an equal number of syllables – in

		this case it is only one syllable. Another example of perfect rhyme words could be: defend, pretend, depend, befriend, or descend, which have two syllables each.
End	A nasty email on a weekend from a very close friend can feel like a betrayal with each offensive detail	We can see each end word matches the rhyming sound of at least one other word. They do not have same end word sounds or number of syllables; therefore, it is *end rhyme*.
Slant	Ducklings yellow on parade Parrots with rainbow display Bluebird blends with azure sky Blackbird stands out on white Pigeons so dull and grey Penguins two-tone on ice stage	Because the end words do not have exact rhyming sounds ('ade' & 'lay', 'y' & 'ite', 'ey' & 'age') it is called a *slant rhyme*. Although, as a twist, there is a portion of *internal rhyme* in this verse – 'yellow' and 'rainbow'. Nonetheless, it is still mainly *slant rhyme.*
Internal or (Middle)	Toast with a hint of marmalade Drinking lemonade so unafraid A renegade over the barricade on a hand-grenade escapade	The words *marmalade*, *unafraid*, *barricade*, and *escapade* all rhyme at the end of each line. *Lemonade*, *renegade*, and *hand-grenade* also rhyme with the words above, but are located in the middle of their lines. This occurs three out of four times in the verse. For this reason, it is not referred to as *end rhyme*. *Note: these rhyming words all have three syllables, however— like end rhyme— internal rhyme scheme words need not have a matching number of syllables.*

Many nursery rhymes, advertisement jingles and songs use end or slant rhyme for their construction. Occasionally, a song will have several rhyme schemes as a way of positioning their words and phrases among the verses to achieve better recognition.

To follow the pattern of rhyme verse, we assign a letter to each similar sounding word. For example, if we look at the end words of my slant rhyme poem 'A Sound', the pattern would look like this *abcbdddb, as shown* below:

> *A sound (a)*
>   *so far away (b)*
> *A needle (c)*
>   *in a stack of hay (b)*

If I am asleep (d)

   then it is only an echo of a dream (d)

      that haunts me (d)

         when I am awake (b)

(Hancock 2022, p. 140)

How often—and in what sequence—different rhyme schemes are used depends on how an author wants to treat the progression of the piece. I believe the predictability of end rhyme rhythm makes it easier to follow and recall the narrative, but you should not be opposed to employing other kinds of rhyme scheme. However, the best practice is to experiment with different ways of constructing your work and see what feels right for the rollout of the message.

If perfect rhyme or end rhyme do not work, try slant rhyme or internal rhyme, which have similar sounding words. For instance, there is an often-quoted two syllable word that supposedly has no perfect rhyme match – 'orange'. Of course, you could get an almost matching rhyme with words such as: range, strange, change. However, the 'o' sound is not present. So, this would mean it is slant rhyme, because without two syllables these words can only rhyme with the second syllable of orange.

Other examples of slant rhyme where the final sound in some words are vocally similar—whether the starting letter is or is not the same—are:

beanie/penny		cat/cot	drone/drain	flop/flip	flower/shower	hat/hit
hop/dip	help/kelp	meal/male	rooster/dumpster		sledgehammer/windjammer	
text/next	telephone/xylophone		treat/trait	unstable/edible		went/want

How you use these words in a rhyme verse, which might also form part of a rhyming phrase, is known as 'syntax'.

Syntax

As seen above in 'Message & Meaning', syntax plays a major role in the construction of rhyme verse. Syntax is the way we arrange words and phrases in writing to make sense of the message. So, I believe it is important to use words and phrases that suit a particular vernacular and will fit a specific rhyme scheme. However, certain words and phrases—if they are overdone—can also be a limiting factor for understanding the meaning of the message. It could distort the purpose of the theme and give a different perspective of the main idea. For instance: 'wet elephants are grey and their offspring are grey'. Does this mean dry elephants are not grey, or that their offspring have to be wet to be grey?

Of course, an audience might have their own opinion of what a piece of rhyme verse means – this is always a possibility. Here is an example of rhyme verse syntax with a definite purpose. It is a rhyming mnemonic that progresses through a timeframe of dawn to sunset skies. I have used this mnemonic for many years, and it goes like this:

Red sky in the morning *Sailor take warning*	tells of bad weather coming
Red sky at night *Sailor's delight*	meaning good weather is on the way

According to the US Department of Commerce: NOAA, 'this old saying actually has a scientific explanation'[3]. One way of arranging syntax in rhyme verse can be a linear narrative, such as that in my poem 'Build'.

Tops that bite

Drag on tights

Make sure it's vogue

Do it tough

Strut your stuff

Model your body tone

Climb the steps

Do the reps

Reach

pull and push

Join the dots

Do the squats

Tuck in that tush

Tear down fat

Build up muscle

Watch it bulge and flex

Circuit training

Body straining

What test for me next?

Push the load

Increase airflow

Bathed in healthy sweat

Stretch your shape

Spot the weight

The mirror never forgets

(Hancock 2022, p. 89, lines 14-19)

---

[3] Augustine & Smith n.d., U.S. Department of Commerce: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), https://www.esrl.noaa.gov/gmd/grad/about/redsky/.

This poem arrangement is very clear in its reasoning – it conveys the progression of a person going through the process of exercising. The imagery is compelling and each line flows into the next one in a logical and well-defined manner, which should be the case with proper syntax. However, as an example of jumbled words jeopardising interpretation of meaning, the next sentence does not follow proper syntax and it is not well-defined. 'Jumper your I very like much coloured' is not proper syntax for the message. It should read something like this; 'I very much like your coloured jumper', or even 'I like your coloured jumper, very much. Even though the same words are used, we can see how the sentence flows and makes logical sense when suitable syntax is employed.

This does not mean that unusual content rhyme verse cannot be composed. In this guidebook I have some poems that are quirky, such as 'Thunderipple'. If we look at the first two verses, it should be obvious the poem uses invented words and phrases to deliver its message, but this does not mean it avoids following appropriate syntax rules.

> *Thunderipple*
> *Flipple the flop*
> *Alphadipple*
> *Zipple the crop*
> *Mensascramble*
> *Fasterchipple a think*
> *Sensoramble*
> *Masteripple a kink*
>
> *(Hancock 2022, p. 148, lines 1-8)*

It is all right to play around with some quirky ideas and events, however always try to use proper syntax progression in your rhyme verse, otherwise it might mean your message and meaning will be misunderstood.

If we focus on the purpose of syntax—a fundamental part of English grammar—then jumbling words outside the boundaries of proper syntax can jeopardise reception and relatability for a modern English-speaking audience. It would be similar to trying to understand text or speech in an unknowable foreign language. Furthermore, even a famous rhyming nonsense poem such as Lewis Carroll's *Jabberwocky* (1872) adheres to proper syntax regardless if message and meaning are not entirely clear – as shown in the sample following: *Beware the Jabberwock, my son! // The jaws that bite, the claws that catch! // Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun // The frumious Bandersnatch!*

Author Note: *At this juncture, I must point out that mentions of my poetry or songs—throughout the five contraview themes sections—might only provide a brief excerpt of the actual rhyme verses to give an indication of the rhyme structure or significant details about that particular piece. Of course, the full poem or song can be viewed in this guidebook at the pages referenced. For example, 'Thunderipple' (p. 148)*

Chapter 3 CONTRAVIEW THEMES

Further focussing on themes for rhyme verse, this chapter concentrates on five examples of contraposed viewpoints—that I call *contraview themes*—as a guide to show what might be employed to form content of a rhyming poem or song.

Section 1: Conformity or Rebellion

Conformity or Rebellion relates to a decision by someone to comply with expected behaviour and ways of thinking, or choosing to ignore defined principles and commit to a life ruled by their own personal values. As an example, driving motivation behind 'war'—which usually is a preference for the status quo, or an urge to choose a preferred direction of different ideals—falls within this category.

Two verses from my poem 'Purple Night' (pp. 39-40), show implications of war and a lack of humanity. This rhyme verse below is written in current English vernacular, which should make it easy to read for a modern readership.

> *A promise was denied (a)*
> *A clan sharpened their pride (a)*
> *Sorry came along too late (b)*
> *Bane awash in your eye (c)*
> *You followed the war cry (c)*
>   *and left me at our gate (b)*
>
> *A spark on the hill (d)*
> *The wolf had its kill (d)*
>   *and stripped caring bare (e)*
> *All minds were lost (f)*
> *All their bodies crossed (f)*
> *Death streaked their hair (e)*
>
>   *(Hancock 2022, pp. 39-40, lines 19-30)*

My intent for the line *a clan sharpened their pride* is referring to the sharpening of weapons destined for use in war against an enemy to protect a way of life. Then there is *a spark on the hill* and *the wolf had its kill* to represent gunshots and cannon fire, plus the metaphor of soldiers being a pack of homicidal animals.

The second last line of the excerpt above refers to *bodies crossed*, and it is supposed to indicate male corpses fallen on top of each other. However, I realise that it could be construed as having religious connotations. That is the nature and beauty of poetry – once it leaves the poet's custody it is open to different interpretation, which can still hold true to its intended message.

This portion of the poem has an end rhyme scheme of *aabccb ddeffe*, which means the first verse is structured so the first two lines end as *aa* rhyming pattern, then the third line is *b* rhyming with the last line – also *b*. The fourth and fifth lines are *cc* end rhyme. This end rhyme scheme is repeated for the second verse, but has different sounding end words. Also, it should be noted that *cc* is exhibiting slant rhyme with *aa*.

Here is an excerpt of my song 'The Tide Comes' (pp. 53-54).

First, we have:

> *We composed explosive words*
>
>   *in the corner café trench*
>
> *Wanted to be free as birds*
>
>   *and have our thirst for life quenched*
>
> *We thought we had it all worked out*
>
> *Playing among books and grapevines*
>
> *We thought we could change the world*
>
>   *But all that changed was our minds*

Then we have:

> *Fire of youth burned in our hearts*
>
> *Revolution flooded our thoughts*
>
> *Saw the future in star charts*
>
> *We fought the fight in high courts*

And:

> *Bridge*
>
>   *We woke up late one morning*
>
>   *Our banners covered in red*
>
>   *We couldn't raise our past*
>
>   *Liberty had lost its head*
>
>   *The flag sagged at half-mast*
>
>   *Every drummer was dead*

> (Hancock 2022, pp. 53-54, lines 5-12, 23-26, 31-36)

Symbology and metaphors are present in the lyrics of this song, which expresses meanings entrenched in non-free-world perspective, yet the message ought to be accessible to a person of modern English-speaking culture.

It might be apparent that the lines *we composed explosive words // in the corner café trench* represent a group of dissidents sitting in a public dining venue to compose battle plans. However, it might not be so obvious that the phrase *playing among books and grapevines* refers to reading literature about philosophical views and civil rights while drinking wine. The sentiment in this part of the song originates from my history studies in 2017 while learning about the French Revolution (1789) and its catchphrase *liberté, égalité, fraternité* (liberty, equality and fraternity).

In the third verse above, the phrase *saw the future in star charts* is a tongue-in-cheek snub at stories of Adolf Hitler believing advice from astrologers during the Second World War. Although, *star charts* could also relate to mankind looking towards space as a place of freedom for adventure and discovery. The lines *we woke up late one morning // our banners covered in red* refer to the aftermath of the rebellion when everyone realises it is over and many people have been killed.

Another situation that falls within *contraview themes* of Conformity or Rebellion, is the craving to see something different away from the place where you live. If we focus on travel that employs ancient sea-faring ships, even without the benefit of today's nautical technology ancient mariners learned how to traverse vast expanses of oceans and navigate treacherous waters. Their purpose was to trade their wares, explore new territories for resources, or wage war. This embodies the basis for rebellion against the status quo, which could involve curiosity, scarcity, or a revolt against cruelty.

Mariners utilised the stars to guide them and used crude fathom detectors to prevent hull breaches. The lighthouse is a classic example of preventative measures to avoid dangerous situations in a maritime environment. Traveling across open ocean can be very hazardous, as some lines from my rhyme verse 'Nordic Ice-ships' (p. 38) show in the excerpt below:

> *Nordic Ice-ships*
>
> *propelled by straining biceps*
>
> *following the hope*
>
> *a hope that is feathered*
>
> *sunken eyes hollow*
>
> *in faces aged and sea weathered*

Thor's icy breath

breathing frozen death

blue lips kiss the night

no pyre in this hell

for a proper farewell

to bolster Viking pride

Three days lonely are gone

when all food disappeared

our wooden ship is long

but something wrong

is here

<div align="right">(Hancock 2022, p. 38, lines 1-6, 13-18, 25-29)</div>

We are now better able to: predict weather patterns and seismological events, grow and raise food in dedicated areas based on scientific research; stockpile knowledge, tools, clothing, and fuel; or store food and water for famine, fire or drought conditions.

These actions are resultant upon our assessment of the environment and what we need to do to survive. If you decide to write a rhyme verse poem or song about a particular sea or ocean—regardless of whether it has historical or contemporary focus—try using something similar to the abovementioned factors. It can enhance the mood and tone of the piece. Maybe with a bit of research you can describe vessels of an era, and authoritatively emulate characters engaged in sea-faring journeys.

Bearing this in mind, Conformity or Rebellion delves into the aspect of fitting into an expectation of behaving or thinking, or breaking away and dwelling on the fringe of society. It can mean doing something you enjoy, or being forced to participate in an uncomfortable or boring exercise. You might be good at doing something and can indulge yourself all you want, or for some reason you are not allowed to engage in that particular activity, so you rebel and do it anyway.

The poem 'She's' (Hancock 2022, p. 42) is an unrelenting *abcb* (ballad meter) quatrain—emphasising the sound *ung*—which shows someone who wants to always get her own way, even if it means upsetting everyone around her. It seems the female in the poem needs to be rebellious against polite etiquette of social interaction to achieve her goals. Also, the background of her decision to be unruly is not known, which means the subtext of her situation can be anything the audience assumes it to be.

In this section we can not only see conventional or traditionalism behaviour and attitude, it shows what thinking outside the *pyramid* can do in relation to who or what we have observed regarding ideas and events that gave us a moment of clarity or a flash of fascination.

Many human interactions can affect the way we think and what we do. This section contains poems and songs that call attention to aspects of human nature, which decide whether we do as we are told, or break away from traditionalism expectations and conventional ideas—depending on our prior and current experiences—to determine our future. Conformity or Rebellion covers themes such as: searching for a better life, coping with an existing lifestyle, and compliance with or opposition to authority.

In my rhyme verse 'Just the Same' (Hancock 2022, p. 34), it is evident that the characters are vagrants, or persons known as 'hobos' (a term probably derived from travelling stowaways from Hoboken in the USA, or a contraction of 'homeless body'). They are not what most of the population would call ordinary citizens of society. In fact, these homeless people mainly live at the fringe of communities, occasionally working, most times existing in appalling living conditions. Whether they are rebels or victims of social norms, they still form connections even in isolation from the general population of a city. Of course, the lifestyle of a hobo—intentional or not—could be known as what I call *existence conformity*. In other words, a person or persons can willingly or unwillingly conform to a way of life even though they may or may not have chosen it.

'Just the Same' has the feature of straddling three of the five *contraview themes* (Conformity or Rebellion, Respect or Ridicule, and Connection or Isolation), and we will revisit this poem later in Respect or Ridicule.

'Suicidal Sparrows' (pp. 55-56) is a non-gender specific song about someone living in unappealing accommodation. The rhyme verse is a metaphor for disadvantaged people running into trouble because of their circumstances. It portrays a derelict person dwelling in a run-down hostel that has deteriorating walls and floor covering. The room is infested with rampant bugs. After a debilitating night of malcontent, the person is contemplating the merry-go-round of life, wishing to change the way they live.

Words and phrases employed in this song suggest that the character is hovering near the fringe of no return. From the content of the song, is not clear whether this lifestyle was originally their choice or if the derelict situation is out of their control. Nonetheless, the person in 'Suicidal Sparrows' is trying to cope with dire circumstances, as the words below show:

tobacco stains on my ceiling
in a tide of whiskey senses reeling
lying on a mattress past its prime
down in self-pity and derelict grime
trying to remember what happened last night
street light glow makes the walls alive
neons flash through my window
bury my head in a stained pillow
How did I get to be so low?

<div align="right">

(Hancock 2022, pp. 55-56, lines 18-26)

</div>

If we look at this end rhyme scheme, it is a nine-line verse written in *aabbccddd* rhyming couplet, except there is an extra '*d'* rhyming line at the end of the verse. The full song has *ababcdcd* octave rhyme scheme for the chorus (lines 10-17), which juggles end & slant rhyme. The bridge is an *abcaa* quintet in which only lines 27, 30 and 31 rhyme – it is the same rhyme scheme as Judith Wright's poem 'Woman to Man', and I suppose you could call it a *five-line split tercet* rhyme scheme.

'Musical Conversation' (pp. 43-44) is a staggered look *abcb* (ballad meter) quatrain, which is personifying musical instruments by attributing thoughts and emotions to the sound they make, and the type of musical arrangements for which they are mainly used. For example, lead guitars are frequently used for heavy metal music solos, whereby—more often than not—they are played to generate loud, shrill, and frenetic chords that can be joined by bellowing vocals – in other words, screaming a narrative at an audience. With this focus on sounds made by musical instruments, 'Musical Conversation' demonstrates how human perception can attribute human behaviour (personification) to the use of musical instruments, and how these interpretations can shift from conformity to rebellion, as seen below:

Piccolo
       nags in my ear
Clarinet
       is agreeing
Tympani
       clears its throat
Cymbals
       yell out a warning

Violin
       pours out its heart
Viola
       joins in the sadness
Trombone
       seems confused
Flute

> *Trumpet*
>
> *displays its madness*
>
> *wants me to know it's sad*
>
> *Saxophone*
>
> *offers condolences*
>
> *Harp*
>
> *has thoughts far away*
>
> *Cello*
>
> *moans intolerances*

<div align="right">*(Hancock 2022, pp. 43-44, lines 9-16, 25-40)*</div>

'Signal' (pp. 49-50) is a slant rhyme song about civil rights, collapsing society and environmental concerns all wrapped up in one composition. It tells of not conforming to authoritarian pressure, and wanting to rebel against 'The System'. It is worth noting that this rhyme verse is a song and has a definite melody attached to it. Therefore—even though there is not the same number of syllables for all the lines—when it is sung it all works out, because of pauses and lengthening of words to fit the musical beat.

> *Chorus*
>
> *We can signal sisters and brothers*
> *We ain't gonna take it anymore*
> *Taking our destiny in our hands*
> *We're the new generation for sure*
>
> *When the storms quit blowing around us*
> * and the ocean falls back on the shore*
> *When we're both in a sea of trouble*
> * and the wolf's howling at our door*
>
> *Bridge*
>
> *The water-hole is receding*
> *The honey-pot is going bad*
> *Everybody's cheating*
> *And the world is going mad*
>
> *Establishment trying to make the word*
> *It wants imagination to slow*
> *Too much concrete all around us*
> *How are the trees gonna grow?*

<div align="right">*(Hancock 2022, pp. 49-50, lines 9-16, 25-32)*</div>

All poems and songs coming next are my rhyme verse samples that fit the *contraview themes* of Conformity or Rebellion, which relate to choosing between defined principles or pursuing personal values.

PEN MAYHEM

A car backfire at 4am
I'm already awake thinking of mayhem with a pen
Words move around like a hyena pack
Laughing at dawn and ready to attack

Prepared for more adversity
Full-on hot shower flushes away after-sleep
A nagging thought intercedes
Am I being who I really want to be?

Shrug into my street clothes
Straighten up into clone of fabricated pose
Dark suits strut by like funeral crows
I fake a good morning as the rainbow erodes

Hi-rise kennels for barking trade
Commercial raids, fortunes made
One company rises as another one falls
Hungry small investors hit finance brick walls

Led around by dollar collar
Poverty-proof under corporate umbrella
Caught in arena of image and greed
Is this the life I really need?

Stocks go up, index comes down
Fiscal frenetic movement at top end of town
Clang goes the bell on the market carousel
Honeyed carrot options for the hard sell

Restrictions and predictions
Portfolio storybooks and money addictions
Merchant marionettes bend agenda trend
Doing more mayhem with a pen

HUMAN JETSAM

Hills of intense green

Not a fence to be seen

Sky blue devoid of cloud

Homeland to make you proud

Meandering rivers clear and sweet

Native strawberries at my feet

Birds singing angel harmonies

Perched in nature-lung trees

Blooms of colour deep

Fragrance to make you weep

Horizon that begs adventure spark

A magnet for youth question mark

Feet itching for a fling

Stretch the ties of belonging

Discovery beckoned me to roam

Forsake my ancestral home

But fascination came undone

Treasure and fame did not come

JUST THE SAME

> *Mosquitoes and persistent flies*
> *Sick of railroad goodbyes*

Grimy and weather-beaten faces
Stench of human sweat
My memory stretches two days gone
It's easier to forget
Joe and Spud snore close
Red wine breath escapes
Blisters on their silent toes
Huddled in the wanderer's cape
Sunrise is a welcome stranger
Treatment for aching bones
Cockroaches come in search of food
      while the fleas groom their homes

Spud lets rip a fart
There's no decorum by the tracks
Joe snorts and shifts his weight
        onto his sore festered back
Ambrose cries in his sleep
Night wanderings prickle with regret
He doesn't say much as he weeps
Just that she left

Who was she?
Was it Alice or Mary or Kitty?
So very long ago
      in some long-ago city

King of the road
  is our common nickname
Wearing a floppy rabbit-skin crown
    on the imposing freight train
Years of built-up life
  cover a slow shuffling frame
This town or another
  it makes no difference
      it's just the same.

RED RAIN

We moved slow into the night
Our senses sliding on the edge
Trees and darkness before our sight
Shadows danced and menaced ahead

We kept our human wedge together
Advancing not far apart
Covered in oppressing weather
Fighting accelerating hearts

The air smelled of decay
The ground stank of death
We made slow headway
  trying to disguise each breath

It was black and damp up front
But the blackest was behind
Our instincts foreshadowed the hunt
No moon – nearly blind

Like unwanted relatives
Outcasts of the clan
Fate decided who lived
Would a teenager become a man?

Chances can come up poor
  for crisp green recruits
    whose footfalls are unsure
        in the wake of long-term brutes

We brutes with reactions like a cat
  inside our moonlit picnic
Eyes reflecting hollow black
  using every jungle trick

We too were once green
  and had to learn quick
    to slide between the trees
        and tame undergrowth so thick

Every muscle on the defence
Taut but strung out on a thread
Trained to ignore conscience
Taught that 'it's us or them'

Our new batch were so scared
Caught up in the real deal
Volunteers so unprepared
No training could teach how they'd feel

Home fills our dreams
Horror fills our day
We hear blood curdling screams
  but can't shut them away

Some wet themselves first tour
Frayed nerves and innocence at fault
Focus of rare platoon humour
The brunt of manhood insult

At midnight The Point went down
We knew anyone could be next
We balked at every sound
Our imaginations flexed

Five went down yesterday
It happened so damn fast
We were soaked in red rain
Caught by the jungle blast

We wore black and jungle green
  but not black and green enough
Attacked by figures unseen
  come to call our bluff

  Death cracked and came from above
  Humanity ransacked – all senses on adrenalin shove

One thought, one action
  must live - the only course
Engage with subconscious reaction
  and reason with deadly force

We were finally on song
  and grasped the idea
Get on with the job, move along
no rage, no sympathy, no fear

Madness broke free of its yoke
We had to answer the call
Dawn coughed and Mars awoke
We had to dance in his military ball

It was time for us to leave
It was our turn again
We walked through the arena of trees
  scarred and dripping red rain

NORDIC ICE-SHIPS

Nordic Ice-ships
propelled by straining biceps
following the hope
a hope that is feathered
sunken eyes hollow
in faces aged and sea weathered

Drum beat of fate
vibrates
dull in my ear
and stirrings of hate
inflate
my growing fear

Thor's icy breath
breathing frozen death
blue lips kiss the night
no pyre in this hell
for a proper farewell
to bolster Viking pride

It's been a dark age
since we vented our rage
I miss the face of my mate
her blonde sea of softness
cheeks of rose redness
makes my warrior blood race

Three days lonely are gone
when all food disappeared
our wooden ship is long
but something wrong
is here

Chill water too salty
frosted rigging faulty
this place here is so cold
oarsmen are grumbling
numb fingers keep fumbling
Odin! I feel so very old

PURPLE NIGHT

On a troubled deep land
There came a quiet man
   who walked so calm and brave
Songbirds raised a sound
The trees bowed down
 The north winter behaved

He strolled into my heart
   with his smile and laugh
      and carried my love away
He built our home and bed
In springtime we wed
  and made love every day

But dark clouds rolled in
  and covered everything
     with so much anger and hate
Sorrow crowded his eyes
We watched the sun rise
Silent in lover's embrace

A promise was denied
A clan sharpened their pride
Sorry came along too late
Bane awash in your eye
You followed the war cry
  and left me at our gate

A spark on the hill
The wolf had its kill
  and stripped caring bare
All minds were lost
All their bodies crossed
Death streaked their hair

A shade came with morning
Tears came without warning
The unsaid word was spoken
I ran on heart and hope
It wasn't enough though
I found you brittle and broken

On that hillside over the glen
So high, green and red
 nearing the end of the day
Where you fought for history
 and died at my feet
 with no love on your face

A home cut by half
My heart pines for your laugh
Your touch is a pillow beside me
The sun will again rise
 and set into purple night
 while I covet a memory

PECKING ORDER

Leaping upon a roof
Beak like open scissors
Feathers ruffled in the wind
Eyes searching like binoculars

Tail vertical and flicking
Wary and on full alert
You land upon the clothesline
  and poop on my best shirt

There is no decorum
Just natural instinct
Diet overrides all else
Every worm tries to shrink

But your senses are refined
Precise with your neb drill-bit
You dive upon the earth
  and fiercely peck at it

Others soon join you
The commotion is frenzy
Each in the pecking order
  trying to secure a feed

The sky grows dim
Tree branches call
Waning daylight
  signals time to withdraw

Flutter and flap
Wings spread into flight
  to the shelter of leaves
    to bed down for the night

SHE'S

She has abrasive personality

    with jackhammer tongue

She is evasive and silly

    if the phone hasn't rung

She's unrelative at times

    when her ego is stung

She is seductive and needy

    when her mood is unsung

She's unhappy about her age

    and tries to act young

She is unpredictable

    and a little overstrung

MUSICAL CONVERSATION

French Horn

      is telling me secrets

Snare Brushes

      whisper to me

Double Bass

      is patting me on the back

Lead Guitar

      screams at me

Piccolo

      nags in my ear

Clarinet

      is agreeing

Tympani

      clears its throat

Cymbals

      yell out a warning

Bass Bassoon

      mutters to itself

Baby Grand

      is conversational

Xylophone

      plays the fool

Triangle

      keeps me inspirational

Violin

      pours out its heart

Viola

      joins in the sadness

Trombone

      seems confused

Flute

      displays its madness

Trumpet

 wants me to know it's sad

Saxophone

 offers condolences

Harp

 has thoughts far away

Cello

 moans intolerances

  In the end they all join in

   no longer rejection prone

  and lean against each other

   together they're not alone

WHERE I'VE BEEN

Where I've been

 Where I've been

You can't imagine

   what I've seen

Where I've been

Where I've been

Trading blue denim

   for jungle green

Where I've been

Where I've been

They sent me to kill

   still in my teens

Chorus 1

   Machine gun reflexes

   Sweat washes my back

   So many insects here

   Hell opens a crack

   Black cut-out figures

   stained red on the ground

   Caught by itchy triggers

   No peace to be found

Where I've been

Where I've been

You can't imagine

   my secret dream

Where I've been

Where I've been

Trading my innocence

      on dirty sheets

Where I've been

Where I've been

I had to thrill

      still in my teens

<u>Chorus 2</u>

      Orange scream

      Shattered dream

      Twisted birth

      Huddled in the earth

      Sons and daughters

      Orders are orders

      Just didn't know

        friend from foe

Bridge

      Jungle Power

      Jungle Power

        coming again

Where I've been

Where I've been

Living belly down

      among poisoned trees

Where I've been

Where I've been

Thought I fought

      for what I believe

Where I've been
Where I've been
My whole world
     took absence of leave

Chorus 3

    Metal friend
     speaks again
    Working overtime
    Step across the line

    Suffocating
    Humiliating
    Flinch in sunlight
    Panic at night

Where I've been
Where I've been
You can't imagine
    how life treated me

Where I've been
 Where I've been
Thought I was helping
    to create a dream

Where I've been
Where I've been
I've made a life
    that wasn't me

Chorus 4

    I come back home
     to this sleepy town
    Unliving faces
     staring me down

47

Try to relate

Life closes in

Ares ruled my fate

I don't fit in

Bridge

Jungle Power

Jungle Power

coming again

Where I've been

Where I've been

I traded blue denim

for jungle green

Where I've been

Where I've been

I had to kill

still in my teens

Where I've been

Where I've been

Wanted to live

but couldn't leave

life is so empty

inside of me

SIGNAL

Swinging from the tree of knowledge

Fingers combing the air

Gaunt unmasked mortality

Fortitude laid bare

Red on black and back again

Flames on torso like wood

Smoke drifts from the cavity

Parody stands where flesh once stood

1st Chorus

    We can signal sisters and brothers

    We ain't gonna take it anymore

    Taking our destiny in our hands

    We're the new generation for sure

When the storms quit blowing around us

   and the ocean falls back on the shore

When we're both in a sea of trouble

   and the wolf's howling at our door

We're gonna take it slowly

Ain't putting my manhood on the line

A delicate flower won't grow in the desert

Crushed dandelions won't fly

2nd Chorus

    Gonna create my own history

    Ain't going down no boss's road

    Band together sisters and brothers

    Wait for the signal to explode

Bridge

The water-hole is receding

The honey-pot is going bad

Everybody's cheating

And the world is going mad

Establishment trying to make the word

It wants imagination to slow

Too much concrete all around us

How are the trees gonna grow?

Too busy looking for freedom

Can't stop long for happiness

Something stinks in Eden

Hide the sweet smell of success

Repeat 1st Chorus

VALLEY OF WOLVES

Welcome to the cold
   at the end of my street
The angels have claws
   and the gospel has teeth
There's sand in my hands
   and wind at my feet
My heart is bare
My soul has nothing to eat

The ceiling-fan
   keeps turning oppressive heat
Lava of emotion
   flows right out of me
Is it love burning
   in her eyes that I see
Or is it her blood yearning
   to break out and be free?

Chorus

      In the valley of wolves
       skip over the land
      Shrug off confrontation
       and take a long stand
      Travel along barefoot
       heels light in the sand
      Keep moving fast forward
       as long as you can

So you cop some shit
   in your daily routine
Do you always
   have to drag it all home?
You treat our love
   like a broken machine
You act as if
   you live all alone

I started dreaming
    when I was only five
I started giving away
    at twenty -nine
I started leaving
    to make it all right
At the end of the day
    I want to be fine

Repeat Chorus

Welcome to the waste
    at the end of my street
The classrooms have scars
    and the gutter has teeth
Blisters on my hands
Life ordinary
My cupboard's bare
Just chewing on defeat

Reach out and touch
    the world on even ground
Wealth is fine
    but passion beats a full wallet
Remember that love
    has no real workaround
What you feel and desire
    is not what you'll get

Bridge

        Please don't leave me
        Please don't scream
        I feel so old
        Out in the cold
            is no place to be

Repeat Chorus

THE TIDE COMES

We came from local street shadow
   and bathed in universal light
Had so much to give and grow
Wanted to make it all right

We composed explosive words
   in the corner café trench
Wanted to be free as birds
   and have our thirst for life quenched

We thought we had it all worked out
Playing among books and grapevines
We thought we could change the world
   But all that changed was our minds

<u>Chorus</u>

     The tide comes in and then goes out
     Wind crosses this solemn place
     The sun rises and then goes down
     Freedom fire leaves its charcoal trace
     We fought and won our end of town
      until it blew up in our face

Pioneers and patriots
Flag of freedom on our backs
Riding high on rebel chariots
Truth stamped into our tracks

Fire of youth burned in our hearts
Revolution flooded our thoughts
Saw the future in star charts
We fought the fight in high courts

But time finally wore us down
No more civil rights to plead
We had to do a turnaround
There was no-one left to lead

Repeat Chorus

Bridge

We woke up late one morning
Our banners covered in red
We couldn't raise our past
Liberty had lost its head
The flag sagged at half-mast
Every drummer was dead

Repeat Chorus

SUICIDAL SPARROWS

spiderwebs strung across the door

killing cockroaches on the kitchen floor

sunken eyes like holes in the snow

thinking how much lower can I go

stereo working on overtime

silverfish taken a carpet ride

same old song playing over and over

using last week's news as toilet paper

How could you feel any older?

Chorus

     suicide sparrows

     and screaming drills

     attitude too narrow

     after cheap thrill

     backstreet mongrels

     barking at the city roar

     back away from seedy hotels

     don't need this shit anymore

tobacco stains on my ceiling

in a tide of whiskey senses reeling

lying on a mattress past its prime

down in self-pity and derelict grime

trying to remember what happened last night

street light glow makes the walls alive

neons flash through my window

bury my head in a stained pillow

How did I get to be so low?

Repeat Chorus

Bridge

well my tired body feels like shell

noises in the background

pound me like a railroad nail

I tried to escape from this living hell

but in the end I always fell

<u>Repeat Chorus</u>

Section 2: Respect or Ridicule

Human interaction is a fundamental basis for all communities. Without interaction throughout history, we would be living alone in a dark and damp cave or a crude shelter that is inadequate protection against inclement weather.

With *Respect or Ridicule*, this pairing of themes has to do with how people treat each other. There can be admiration for a job well done or a selfless charitable act, however when there is a difference of opinion, action, or appearance, the opposite can happen. A flippant remark concerning someone's dress sense, speech pattern or food tastes, could cause social interaction to escalate into vindictive behaviour towards vulnerable people in a society, or prompt group hatred for different cultural preferences.

Logically, if there is no interactive togetherness, it reduces the prospect for exchange of valuable ideas or the benefit of integrated action. Moreover, lack of respect can have dire consequences for personal rights and well-being.

'Safe Star' (pp. 66-67) is an end rhyme poem that spotlights an uncomfortable topic of someone who has been abused. It progresses through thoughts and aspirations that haunt a young person who has become withdrawn from the outside world.

> *Dreams of a little girl*
>   *in a box under the bed*
> *Everything she thought*
> *Everything she said*
>
> *They filled a circus of hope*
> *Dressed in party pink chiffon*
> *But then she couldn't cope*
> *Too much trouble going on*
>
> *She came with apologies*
> *Eyes drilling the ground*
> *Her body thin and crumpled*
>   *said sorry without a sound*
>
> *Skin full of memories*
> *Eyes created for tears*
> *Too much company and talk*
>   *and her mind disappears*
>
> *A small cuddle in hiding*
> *~ waiting for a safe star*
>
>   *(Hancock 2022, pp. 66-67, lines 5-20, 40-41)*

How people react to each other is dependent on perception and communication. Whether it is believed the details of that communication are factual or fabricated can determine the response. This can be the downside of human interaction, which could give rise to ridicule. Although humans have tamed much of their environment and many laws of nature, it seems we have difficulty in taming the vindictive part of ourselves.

We have to remind ourselves that we are not alone. It is not human nature to be a physical and emotional island. Humans are biologically designed to interact with each other – even if that means in a negative way. We are pre-wired to be wanted. More often than not, humans seek out the company of others—sometimes strangers—searching for like-minded people to express what they know, or find out what they wish to know. This interaction could generate respect or ridicule.

'So Clinical' (pp. 73-74) is an *abab cdcd ebeb* slant rhyme song concerning a failing relationship that oozes ridicule. Someone is letting their partner know that they believe he or she is not telling the truth about what they feel.

> *You promise all the world to me*
> *Stop handing me a line*
> *When the time comes to leave*
> *You ain't gonna change your mind*
>
> *How can you see if I am hurt*
>   *when your back is turned away*
> *A look can mean a thousand words*
>   *and won't hide what you won't say*
>
> *You say it's really me you want*
> *Stop playing with my mind*
> *There ain't nothing left to bond*
> *You and me have lost our shine*

<div align="center">

(Hancock 2022, pp. 73-74, lines 1-12)

</div>

One way of communicating our ideas and feelings is to write them down or give voice to them, then release those sentiments into the atmosphere of human interaction. There they can: cause a disheartening downpour of lament, kiss us with a cool breeze of reassuring whispers, show melancholy sunset or joyful sunrise on the far horizon, wrap us in the comfort of a warm summer's day, cover us with a winter blanket of restlessness, remind us of the cruelty or fulfilment of destiny, or open our minds to the unexplored wonders of the universe. Even so, at least thoughts and emotions will get out there.

In Contraview Themes: Section 1, there was mention of a poem titled 'Just the Same' (p.34), which could have been allocated to the poem list of this section. The poem is about hobos trying to make ends meet while inhabiting unpleasant places along railway lines. These impoverished characters can receive mixed reactions from people in a community, which can alternate between sympathetic admiration to outright ridicule. This can be due to a hobo's dishevelled appearance, their personal hygiene, or unusual traits they sometimes exhibit. An excerpt from 'Just the Same' is shown below:

> *Spud lets rip a fart*
> *There's no decorum by the tracks*
> *Joe snorts and shifts his weight*
> > *onto his sore festered back*
> *Ambrose cries in his sleep*
> *Night wanderings prickle with regret*
> *He doesn't say much as he weeps*
> *Just that she left*

<div align="right">

(Hancock 2022, p. 34, lines 15-22)

</div>

In a society there are morals and ethics, which are meant to keep the population on a path of honesty and respect. Sometimes individuals or crowds deviate from that path and could do harm to themselves or other people. A social person needs to be mindful of the feelings and rights of others. This means listening and identifying what are the main concerns of those around us. When doing this, we should give everyone a fair hearing before judging their words or actions. Lack of respect (ridicule) is not the way to go.

'Ancient Land' (pp. 61-62) relates to someone thinking about the region where they live that has a long history of Indigenous people. This person is confused concerning how to feel about the situation. Although, they have been in the country for some time—or might have been born there—they do not regard themselves as a rightful local.

> *Why am I so conflicted?*
> *I feel my soul is damned*
> *Why is my tongue so silent?*
> *Why do I steady my hand?*
> *I am not a true native*
> > *of these Indigenous lands*
> *It's hard for me to take sides*
> > *wearing modern logo brands*
> *I try not to get involved*
> > *in sacred land demands*

In understated stages
   subcontinent drifts away in time
Tide rises through the ages
Ancient ideas form in ancient minds
However, modern pages
   do not reflect the spirit lines

<div align="right">

(Hancock 2022, pp. 61-62, lines 9-18, 45-50)

</div>

'Woman on a Train' (p. 65) covers the aftermath of an exhausting shopping day for an elderly person who is trying to stay awake on the trip home. The excerpt of this poem is a combination of slant rhyme for lines 1-6 & 10-12, and end rhyme for lines 17-25. The rhyme pattern is not even. We can see the staggering of rhyming lines: sometimes grouped together and other times stretched apart. Yet there is rhythm to how it is arranged.

Jammed in a windowless corner
Wary henhouse eyes wander
Support stocking clad legs
   angled at sixty degrees
Synthetic carpetbag
   wedged between her knees

She starts to sway in unison
   with rocking rhythm of the carriage
Eyelids beat an S.O.S. message

Clutching fingers loosen
   on plastic variety store bags
Tired body sags
Chin struggles to her chest
Features fold into rest
She finally succumbs
   to journey sleep
     that slowly creeps
        up unawares and numbs

<div align="right">

(Hancock 2022, p. 65, lines 1-6, 10-12, 17-25)

</div>

This *contraview themes* section offers rhyme verse regarding topics such as: a clash of ancient and modern, adversarial human behaviour, an introverted existence, a different way of life than the community norm, and the end of a shopping day. There are so many likely opportunities branching out from existence, and many possibilities waiting for inner reflection. How do you want to avoid ridicule and be respected? Try writing some rhyme verse poetry or song lyrics to release your ideas and feelings.

ANCIENT LAND

Rising sun and setting day

Cyclone off the coastline

Freezing heights and burning bush

Tradition bound to ghost life

Deadly co-existence

   with dry and flooding land

Suicide persistence

   on squeaky golden sand

    Why am I so conflicted?

    I feel my soul is damned

    Why is my tongue so silent?

    Why do I steady my hand?

    I am not a true native

      of these indigenous lands

    It's hard for me to take sides

      wearing modern logo brands

    I try not to get involved

      in sacred land demands

    I leave it to the experts

      and their community plans

Years roll on and time flies

History plants new seeds

People live and people die

Culture clash in the outback

   committed to past deeds

   Self-righteous domination

   Integration summation

   Pale hallucination

It's strange for me to sit here

  on this lucky land

It's odd for you to watch me

  trying to understand

I was born in recent times

The progressive age was rife

History seemed a dreamtime

I am living the good life

It's strange for me to live here

  on this far and wide Earth

With everything I've seen

  and all that I have heard

Had to do what I was told

  until I had my own voice

No option being raised

Being born was not my choice

In understated stages

   subcontinent drifts away in time

Tide rises through the ages

Ancient ideas form in ancient minds

However, modern pages

  do not reflect the spirit lines

WALKING CANE

The wooden walking-cane

broods near the door

waiting to be used again

no more *tap tap tap* on the floor

    worn finger grips

    cold, dry, upset

    no more salty drips

    of nervous finger sweat

crooked and gnarled

like former owner

who snapped and snarled

pretending to be a loner

    it rests

    head hung low

    it detests

    being ignored so

figures waft by

fast and self-assured

showing youth in their eye

young bodies self-cured

    a new master is far off

    the cane has to wait

    for a throaty, rattling cough

    and lopsided, exaggerated gait

but wood can last many lives

not so mortal flesh

a walking cane can be revived

made as new

smooth

fresh

GAUNTLET OF LOVE

It's the age-old tale of opposites in love

      who face the prejudice of family gauntlet shove

Two people who have to endure cruel tradition darts

      because unwavering love has run away with their hearts

WOMAN ON A TRAIN

Jammed in a windowless corner

Wary henhouse eyes wander

Support stocking clad legs

   angled at sixty degrees

Synthetic carpetbag

  wedged between her knees

Occasionally

    she stares unfocused

        through millipede-rimmed glasses

She starts to sway in unison

  with rocking rhythm of the carriage

Eyelids beat an S.O.S. message

She fights shopping fatigue

Pink padded shoulders drop

  under floral jacket

           covering lilac camisole top

Clutching fingers loosen

  on plastic variety store bags

Tired body sags

Chin struggles to her chest

Features fold into rest

She finally succumbs

  to journey sleep

    that slowly creeps

        up unawares and numbs

SAFE STAR

Softer than hello
Louder than goodbye
Younger than morning sun
Higher than evening sky

Dreams of a little girl
   in a box under the bed
Everything she thought
Everything she said

They filled a circus of hope
Dressed in party pink chiffon
But then she couldn't cope
Too much trouble going on

She came with apologies
Eyes drilling the ground
Her body thin and crumpled
   said sorry without a sound

Skin full of memories
Eyes created for tears
Too much company and talk
   and her mind disappears

Life cavorts around her
She crouches in a corner
Dressed in religious black
   like a professional mourner

Distant places beckon
Jealousy is a burr in bed
Decisions are new tension
A path she fears to tread

Contact is ink and text
   delivered in newspaper
Outside is a contest
   with nothing there for her

Time is a cosmic glamour
   testing the silver lining
Life is a figment of *bon jour*
   imagination rising

Craving gives a tremor
Approach of terror striding
Feeling safe from afar
A small cuddle in hiding
      ~ waiting for a safe star

THIRTY MILLENNIA

My hands clench with the pull of rage

      My words hover with the stink of hate

My history is blood on the page

       My aspirations suffocate

Your offer is a barbed wire fence

      I'm circled by a tainted moat

Each day is pigment suspense

       wearing an ivory cannibal coat

A home does not need walls

      Brotherhood doesn't need a vote

Thirty millennia of story calls

       through zero potential growth

Between stars and underground

      Across legend of campfire oath

From mountains to waves that pound

      The raven doth nevermore quoth

BIRD HUE

Ducklings yellow on parade

Parrots with rainbow display

Bluebird blends with azure sky

Blackbird stands out on white

Dove so white on grass green

Flamingos gather like pink trees

Red robin with scarlet chest

Orange young beaks in feeding nest

Pigeons so dull and grey

Penguins two-tone on ice stage

Sparrows mainly brown and small

Peacock tail-feathers are best of all

EARTHWART

Barbarian and waterfall
       in a bottleneck of time
In the company of strangers
       I find my own mind
Circumnavigating the globe
       due east shuts its gates
The ecological warrior
       fights pollution and waste
Civilisation waiting
       for a moonbeam from above
Humanity spins on a wheel
       playing roulette of love
Wild thoughts soaring on the wind
       searching for a place to land
Apocalypse in the pulpit
       heaven escapes your hand
Too much shame in the basement
       soaked in rueful tears
So much blame in the penthouse
       cover both your ears
Tight lid on your conscience
       compassion disappears

TERRA FIRMA BLUES

planet views—commercial zoos—earthorama—dalai lama—worldscape—red tape—
global trends—outdo friends—fortune threads—hunting heads—terrain space—same
old race—at fever pace—humanity gone without a trace.

SMACKETY WHACKETY II

smackety whackety

      summery blue

smackety whackety

      wintery too

airy glarey

      fairy fluff

huffy puffy

      bluffy tough

seedy greedy

      needy fed

flashy crashy

      smashy red

SO CLINICAL

You promise all the world to me

Stop handing me a line

When the time comes to leave

   you ain't gonna change your mind

How can you see if I am hurt

   when your back is turned away

A look can mean a thousand words

   and won't hide what you won't say

You say it's really me you want

Stop playing with my mind

There ain't nothing left to bond

You and me have lost our shine

Chorus One

     We've become so clinical

         So damn consultative

     Don't believe in miracles

         So damn overrated

     We've become so critical

         So damn compensated

     We are so inflexible

         So damn regulated

Look at all the time we wasted

It's about time we faced it

Look at all the pain we tasted

Tell me what broke our main thread

No need to be my one and only

You don't have to waste your time

We don't need to be a couple of lonelies

Loving someone new is no crime

I just want to talk about it

   and not shrug off the moment

I don't want to be by myself

I don't want to be so lonely

Chorus Two

     We've become so insatiable

         So damn intoxicated

     Life's so impractical

         So damn complicated

     We've become so cynical

         So damn irritated

     We are so predictable

         So damn inundated

     We've become so clinical

         Too busy with invading

     We are so tyrannical

         In the shadows always waiting

LONG ROAD TO HOME

Cold touch of memory's kiss
In between towns again
Met my nemesis
  on a runaway train

Without making a sound
  I waited for it to come
It followed me around
  red-eyed and highly strung

When it finally left
  I showered alone
    and knew it was time
      for me to go home

<u>Chorus</u>

    On the long road to home
    No idea what I'll find
    You always told me so
    Never paid any mind
    Caught behind the smokescreen
    I lie in bed and grieve
      for the death of sanity
        and all I had to leave

Don't know what you're thinking
It's not part of my day
Way too busy drinking
  to cast a thought your way

Attention in your face
Living magazine dreams
Pawn of the human race
Nothing is what it seems

Bruise to vanity
  when fame balloon comes down
Losing humanity
  in honeymoon breakdown

Sunlight in the doorway
Silhouette on the blind
It will not go your way
  if you leave love behind

Hypnotic eyes of green
Long hair like maple leaves
Craving catastrophe
  wherever she has been

In land of make believe
  where life is a disguise
I'm the lowest I've been
  since you left my side

Bridge
    Uncover the windows
      and expose
        the courtyard gallows tree
    Defend my tomorrow
      and swallow
        all the sorrow in me

ASK TOO MUCH

My life is a back-and-forth train
This indecision is driving me insane
When it should be done it falls apart again
I'm gonna go outside and slip between the rain
      and let go all my pain

Chorus
      I'm on my belly
        with a gun against my head
      If I move the wrong way
        my future could be dead

      Common sense tells me
        stand back from what's going down
      No need to panic now
        relax and look around

Every night we stare across the room
We share nothing common in this four-wall tomb
Our passion used to echo like a sonic boom
Now it's becoming thunder and gloom
      I think we've sealed our doom

Repeat Chorus

I don't know just when it came
But it's been ages since we thought the same
When I think I've finally figured out the game
I realise that our hearts have become tame
      and we are both to blame

Repeat Chorus

Has our time been all in vain?
Confusion's reigning deep inside my brain
If we ask too much we will only strain
Push too hard and misery will remain
      with nothing left to gain

My life is a back-and-forth train

This indecision is driving me insane

When it should be done it falls apart again

I'm gonna go outside and slip between the rain

      and let go all my pain

Repeat Chorus

My life is a back-and-forth train

This indecision is driving me insane

When it should be done it falls apart again

I'm gonna go outside and slip between the rain

SPIDERWEB TEST

Kangaroo…oo…oo
Kangaroo…oo…oo
Hippety Hop
Hippety Hop
Let's see what you've got

Chestnut ma…a…re
Chestnut ma…a…re
Run Horse Run
Run Horse Run
Avoid the shotgun

Hammerhe…e…ad
Hammerhe…e…ad
Swim Fish Swim
Swim Fish Swim
Move fast with fish limb

Chorus

    Deep sea ocean
    Mountaintop crest
    Desert sand dune
    Animal pest
    Colour wing tune
    Spiderweb test

Albatro…o…oss
Albatro…o…oss
Fly Bird Fly
Fly Bird Fly
Soar high in the sky

Timberwo..o..olf
Timberwo..o..olf
Howl Dog Howl
Howl Dog Howl
Let's see how you prowl

Copperhe…ead

Copperhe…ead

Slide Snake Slide

Slide Snake Slide

In long grass you hide

<u>Repeat Chorus</u>

Bridge

       Feather, scale, and hair

       Water, land, and air

       Burrow, nest, and lair

       World without compare

<u>Repeat Chorus</u>

COOL TO HOT

Choose education
Understand art
Put yourself out there
Open up your heart
Always greet and meet
   that's where it starts

Had my moment
Brief time on stage
Poured out my words
   in a brave way
Couldn't make them hear
   what I had to say

<u>Chorus</u>
       Search mountains far and wide
       Draw a peace sign in the sky
       Forge a world of liberty
       A place for souls to rise
       Hip hop the flip flop
       Show us just what you've got
       Feet up on the top shelf
       Switching from cool to hot

I ooze poetry
Yeah…I do
But this is a song
I write them too
I'm into this one
It's for you

Hold onto the rhythm
Take up the tune
The beat is fragile
Words of Brigadoon
Dance upon the clouds
Your soul will swoon

<u>Repeat Chorus</u>

Poison in the soil

Plastic bags on the shore

Bad taste in the air

Graffiti on the wall

In cage of boon rust

In nouveau Roman fall

<u>Repeat Chorus</u>

Section 3: Optimism or Pessimism

Optimism or Pessimism ~ here is where we all have a stake in *contraview themes* of human experience. Either people are happy with their situation or they wish for something better than their position in life. This could be on a personal level or expand to a local, national, or world-wide context. Also, I believe this *contraview themes* section effectively covers all other sections, whether it means: preferring the status quo or wanting to upgrade a boring lifestyle, having self-esteem or being ridiculed, living in a pleasant environment or wishing for rain in a drought-stricken area, being happy with scientific laws of nature or having faith in a lucky charm.

Shelter is also a primary concern for us. Styles of dwellings have changed throughout the years, and, depending on the environment, have been improved to resist the onslaught of annoying or catastrophic climate. These factors can elicit optimism or pessimism where living conditions are concerned. Never forget that we erect shelters and fences to protect ourselves from predators (human and non-human). You might say we have developed habits to conquer our habitat.

The song 'Broken Land' (pp. 96-98) is a rumination on the ordeal of being a rural farmer or grazier in the harsh and dry regions of Australia. Some farmers have not seen rain for years, but many of them have to persevere with decreasing crops or dying livestock. This is an epic song that rolls out heartbreak and anguish in verse after verse to reflect the ongoing emotional drain of long-term drought circumstances. The first seventeen lines show a pessimistic view of an Australian rural farmer's life.

> *Times are bad and the farmers had*
> *a rough time of it all*
> *What we need to do*
> *is to try and help them through*
> *or rural life will fall*
>
> *Families pray for a city wet day*
> *common for you and me*
> *Moving around*
> *like shadows on the ground*
> *frustration for company*
>
> *Can only stare at the land laid bare*
> *their backs against the sky*
> *It's mighty hard to continue*
> *when your best won't do*
> *enough to make a tough man cry*
> *don't want to see a tough man cry*

(Hancock 2022, pp. 96-98, lines 1-17)

At the optimistic end of the human experience spectrum, 'Cheery Song' (pp. 99-101) is an uplifting example for human interconnection. The song lines I have selected give an overall impression of the positivity embodied in this rhyme verse. It goes through ideas and events of what many people think is important to their lifestyle and well-being. You will notice that not every verse has the same number of lines. This is because lines 18-22 of the full song are the second half of the chorus. A chorus in a song can have a different chord structure than verses and can vary syllable count, number of lines, and/or line length.

The summer is so warm

No more cold winter storms

  Everything is shiny and new

Food tastes so great

We are all losing weight

  Your clothes look good on you too

  There's nothing to defend

  We treat each other as a friend

    Disease is an illusion

    There's no more confusion

  The good times never end

The mirror is a buddy

No-one's a fuddy-duddy

  Opportunity always knocks

Everything lost can be found

The kids love having you around

  Public transport is up on blocks

Distance has been worn down

Cities are like country towns

  No more chained to the sink

Grins replace every frown

A beanie is the new crown

  and your shit doesn't stink

(Hancock 2022, pp. 99-101, lines 7-12, 18-22, 53-64)

These rhyme verses in 'Cheery Song' present an insinuation of what can establish value and acceptance, which is in the sphere of optimism. Although, knowing human nature, I suggest that if these expectations are not evident for people we know, it could trigger ridicule, which is a crossover to the previous section of Respect or Ridicule.

Another feel-good piece of rhyme is the poem 'Sugar Signal' (p. 94), which involves our proclivity for desiring certain types of food that make us feel better. I think eating a favourite food can encourage an optimistic view of being alive. Here is a taste of how this rhyme verse goes:

> *Lime jelly green*
> *with vanilla ice-cream*
> *and blood red plums*
> *Rally race taste*
> *around your plate*
> *chasing biscuit crumbs*
>
> *(Hancock 2022, p. 94, lines 7-12)*

Humans are sentient beings. We are self-aware and have ability to ponder the intrigues of life, and question natural laws that affect our existence. With this self-awareness comes perception that we can live in harmonious circumstances or exist in unpleasant and hostile conditions. These next two short poems ponder situations that could influence our sense of existence – for better or worse.

'Ignition' (p. 92) is a poem that covers environmental awareness and how the power of weather can put on a spectacular display. It indicates observations of what nature can do to generate sensible respect for its fury. Optimism for lightning is 'Wow, it is a spectacular electrical-charge display! Pessimism is 'Oh No, it is going to do damage!'.

> *Lightning strikes*
> *Tree trunk ignites*
> *Matchstick of nature*
>
> *(Hancock 2022, p. 92)*

Whether this weather occurrence is seen to be hazardous or not, could depend on audience opinion. The tree might not have been fully set ablaze, but if it was it could just fizzle out. However, three more scenarios might be the case: (1) the burning tree starts a bushfire; (b) the tree was a five-hundred-year-old, heritage listed specimen; or (c) it was a family favourite fruit bearing tree. This poem is a sample of how meaning can be open to interpretation, which could give it either an optimistic or pessimistic view without altering the core message. The next poem, 'Beauty of Memory' (p. 88)—which is a couplet, end & slant rhyme scheme—clearly fits within the outlook of optimism and needs no more explanation than that.

Beauty of memory is in the air
     Graceful height of summer is in your hair
          I can see bloom of spring in your smile
             and promise of forever in your eyes

                          (Hancock 2022, p. 88)

The slant rhyme song 'Goodtime Attack' (p. 95) is a cheeky take on good times. It portrays someone wanting to break out of their current circumstances, bury their past and live a more exciting lifestyle, which equates to optimism.

Get outta my face
No more heartbreak school
Gonna take it to the max
Live life to the full
Got places to go
Living by new rules
I'm free at last
Tearing up my past

          (Hancock 2022, p. 95, lines 21-28)

Here is a slant rhyme poem named 'Human Race Recipe' (p. 93), which is an esoteric angle on a cooking recipe—using old sayings as the ingredients—to demonstrate the idea of interrelationships. The content of this poem is mainly optimistic, but two instances of pessimism intrude (lines 3-4, 16). And, like a recipe, this poem progresses through ingredients, which in a perfect world could be needed to help humans survive.

Take the eggs of creation
Add to them the spice of life
Separate the bitter essence
  or your mixture will be in strife
Pour in the milk of kindness
Sprinkle with the fruits of labour
Add the salt of the earth
  then stir with gentle humour
Blend in the seeds of virtue
Further moisten with tears of glee
Fold in the arms of forgiveness
  and add a touch of humility
Bind the mixture with racial conscience
Portion into individual nation
Let them bake under the sun of centuries
  and hope we rise to the occasion
                        (Hancock 2022, p. 93)

POEMS

REBOOTED MIND

Woke up on Tuesday
  Thinking it was Sunday
Birds were so vocal
  Having a fun day
Opened the curtains
  to sunshine glow
Spring had arrived
  putting on a show
Winter clouds
  all gone away
Blossom splendour
  in Monet display
Warmth of sun
My face alive
Body tuned-up
Rebooted mind
Opened the door
A new day portal
Outside came in
  and made me feel immortal
Air so crisp
Vision so clear
Wanted to hug a tree
  and embrace the atmosphere
Butterfly on nose
  released a belly laugh
Full bloom red rose
  flags the right path

BEAUTY OF MEMORY

Beauty of memory is in the air

      Graceful height of summer is in your hair

      I can see bloom of spring in your smile

      and promise of forever in your eyes

BUILD

Tops that bite

Drag on tights

Make sure it's vogue

Do it tough

Strut your stuff

Model your body tone

Climb the steps

Do the reps

Reach, pull and push

Join the dots

Do the squats

Tuck in that tush

Tear down fat

Build up muscle

Watch it bulge and flex

Circuit training

Body straining

What test for me next?

Push the load

Increase airflow

Bathed in healthy sweat

Stretch your shape

Spot the weight

The mirror never forgets

LIVE FOREVER

Do you really want to live forever?

What would you do if you could?

Would it be something joyful and clever

  or ridiculous in a crazy mood?

Will you still remember your history

  as family and friends fall away?

Will you get bored with all the stories?

What will happen when there is no more to say*?*

SPRING AT LAST

Spring at last

Rain cleans the land

Insect cheer squad

Birds strike up the band

Flowers stretch and bob

Ancient ferns fan

Old man Sol smiles down

Mother Nature expands

IGNITION

Lightning strikes

Tree trunk ignites

Matchstick of nature

HUMAN RACE RECIPE

Take the eggs of creation

Add to them the spice of life

Separate the bitter essence

   or your mixture will be in strife

Pour in the milk of kindness

Sprinkle with the fruits of labour

Add the salt of the earth

   then stir with gentle humour

Blend in the seeds of virtue

Further moisten with tears of glee

Fold in the arms of forgiveness

   and add a touch of humility

Bind the mixture with racial conscience

Portion into individual nation

Let them bake under the sun of centuries

   and hope we rise to the occasion

SUGAR SIGNAL

Mango diced
Banana sliced
  into chocolate custard
Quartered sandwich
Cheese and ham with
  Hot English mustard

Lime jelly green
  with vanilla ice-cream
    and blood red plums
Rally race taste
  around your plate
    chasing biscuit crumbs

Bubbles of rice
Cinnamon and spice
Milk poured over the top
Shaved almonds toasted
Fresh chestnuts roasted
Sprinkled brown sugar signals the lot

SONGS

GOODTIME ATTACK

Don't get in my way
I'm grabbing me some fun
Got some living up ahead
Got bad times on the run
So don't get in my way
Don't remind me what I've done
I'm heading down the track
Having a good-time attack

Chorus

       Got bad news on the run
       ~~Aint~~ Ain't answering to no-one
       Gonna be my own man
       Got a good-time plan

Don't get in my way
I got the blues at my back
The future's coming up
I'm heading down the track
So don't get in my way
I'm having a good-time attack
I'm heading down the road
In good-time overload

Repeat Chorus

Get outta my face
No more heartbreak school
Gonna take it to the max
Live life to the full
Got places to go
Living by new rules
I'm free at last
Tearing up my past

Repeat Chorus

BROKEN LAND

Times are bad and the farmers had
   a rough time of it all
What we need to do
   is to try and help them through
         or rural life will fall

Families pray for a city wet day
   common for you and me
Moving around
   like shadows on the ground
         frustration for company

Can only stare at the land laid bare
   their backs against the sky
It's mighty hard to continue
   when your best won't do
         enough to make a tough man cry
         don't want to see a tough man cry

1st Chorus

         So how do you tell a man
            he's got to leave his land
                  the place where he was born
         Could you be the one
            to say it's over and done
                  there's no use fighting anymore

         You can sell a plan
            to a hungry man
                  bad fortune is the key
         Under a leathery hide
            a farmer still got pride
                  he don't want your sympathy

Can't disguise when a lifetime dies
   people got nowhere to run

96

Dreams burnt out
  faith dried out
       beneath a ruthless sun

New day brings unwanted things
  a farmer don't want to know
How the hell do you tell
  the ones you love
       it's over, we have to go

Lend a hand to this broken land
  don't turn your backs away
If they can't raise food
  we're all going to lose
       they need support today
        or they won't be able to stay

2nd Chorus

     So how do you tell a man
      he's got to sell his land
         the place where he was born
     Could you be the one
      to say the time has come
         your life's no good anymore

     Easy to sell a plan
      to an angry man
         frustration is the key
     Behind a sun worn hide
      a man's still got pride
         he don't want your sympathy
        but could use some charity

Years of toil working outback soil
  keeping his family loyal
It's more than heat
  red dust at his feet
       that makes a man's blood boil

Crops don't raise, stock can't graze
   heartbreak is daily fare
A hard life for living
   could be forgiven
         thinking someone up there don't care

He slowly sips through sundried lips
   little water that remains
The man on the land
   needs a helping hand
         before he's driven insane
            a man could go insane

Bridge

               How do you tell a man
                 to leave his land
                     a place where he was born
               Could you be the one
                  to say it's all done
                     his way's no good anymore

A weary man can only stand
   on his tortured land
If he cannot fight
   nature's might
         with earth and not sand

Only dam he knows
   is the curse that flows
         facing one more cloudless day
If the rains don't come
   there'll be no-one
         stock and feed will fade away
            crops will blow away

<u>Repeat 1st Chorus</u>

CHEERY SONG

The sun is shining

Clouds have silver linings

   Mother Nature goes with the flow

The birds are all nesting

Everything is interesting

  The world is putting on a show

The summer is so warm

No more cold winter storms

  Everything is shiny and new

Food tastes so great

We are all losing weight

  Your clothes look good on you too

<u>Chorus</u>

           Here is a cheery song

            Everyone can sing along

                The words are uplifting

                The upbeat keeps shifting

           The music goes on and on

           There's nothing to defend

           We treat each other as a friend

                Disease is an illusion

                There's no more confusion

           The good times never end

We can all win a bet

Your neighbour is a benefit

  Your car drives like a dream

Bad news never rings

Everybody laughs and sings

   We dance barefoot in a stream

We untangle twisted fate

The in-laws are looking great

   Lotto can't wait to phone us

There's no more doom and gloom

The kids clean up their room

   Your health hands you a bonus

Repeat Chorus

You are a whiz at cooking

Your partner is good looking

   You don't need to sleep at night

It's a holiday every day

Entertainment is not far away

   The world is just right

Your glasses are obsolete

Everybody loves their street

   and cheers the same team

Dogs don't bark, they hum

Babies don't suck their thumb

   Lunch is peaches and cream

Repeat Chorus

Good tidings cross the land

Ants move away to desert sand

   A mountain is but a hill

Nothings appears to be worn

We invented self-mowing lawn

   Ageing is slowed down by a pill

The mirror is a buddy

No-one's a fuddy-duddy

   Opportunity always knocks

Everything lost can be found

The kids love having you around

   Public transport is up on blocks

Repeat Chorus

Distance has been worn down

Cities are like country towns

   No more chained to the sink

Grins replace every frown

A beanie is the new crown

   and your shit doesn't stink

All art is sublime

No more pressure to be on time

   Every garden has a special gnome

All politicians become mimes

No more tough peaks to climb

   There's better fun at home

Section 4: Connection or Isolation

This section of *contraview themes* considers—at one end of the human experience spectrum—the willingness of a person to interact with other individuals in their specific group or with an unfamiliar collective. The opposite can be a self-imposed desire to avoid people or unpleasant situations, or there could be unwanted isolation brought on by uncontrollable circumstances.

We all have to live somewhere. That somewhere is our local environment, and can be harmoniously comforting, frustrating and uncomfortable at times, or extremely hostile and dangerous. How you interact with your environment depends on residents, visitors, amenities, entertainment facilities, businesses, enforcement organisations, and climate. All these factors in your area influence whether you are connected or isolated.

'Coastline Getaway' (pp. 131-132) is about leaving congestion of a city and finding the openness of a coastal setting. The person in this song does not seem to really belong in the location, but has come there to think things through.

Walking on the beach
Among rising sound
Under winter clouds
Sliding all around

Itch covers my skin
Thought in empty hand
Arms down by my side
And boots in the sand

Birds crying overhead
Waves crash against rocks
Cracked voice and feelings
Put behind mind locks

Jumper up neck high
Beanie pulled down tight
Lips and sight straight-line
Mood as black as night

(Hancock 2022, pp. 131-132, lines 1-16)

If we look at a situation where a person does not seem to fit in with the surrounding society—as in my poem 'Drab II: The Kettle Beckons' (pp. 119-120)—it becomes clear we are not all connected to each other; some people can be dislocated from the environment.

'Drab II: The Kettle Beckons' conveys the scene of a man who has difficulty leaving his house. He feels anxiety about getting out of bed, sifts through his questions and doubts, and apprehensively thinks about going outside. However, the open front door lets in a cacophony of sounds, so he slams it shut and decides to make a pot of tea.

Night-fits subside
Grey of new day looms
He turns on his side
Resists the need to resume

But the voice from within
*   whispers and wheedles*
Walls amplify tremors
The mirror needles

A chord of possibility
*   echoes outward*
A ghost of memory
*   pushes him forward*

He pulls back the curtain
Daylight is a joust
The front door creaks open
His thoughts slip out

Car horns blare
People speed by
The sun is a spotlight
*   to expose a life*

The door slams shut
This is not the time
The shaking abates
He closes his eyes

The kettle beckons
Not so the street
A cosy teapot
*   pours elixir of retreat*

(Hancock 2022, pp. 119-120, lines 1-8, 29-36, 41-52)

It might be supposed that the man in the poem suffers from 'agoraphobia', which is a fear of crowded or open spaces. The assumption is correct, because I wrote this particular piece of rhyme verse after seeing a documentary on this mental condition.

It is well-known that the majority of humans have an inherent desire to belong to a place and/or a community. This next piece of poetry 'Still' (p. 106) is indicative of how we want to position ourselves within the situational boundaries of connection or isolation. I have composed the poem as a generic representation of a native from a hereditary location, who desperately seeks confirmation that it is possible to still belong to a particular place even though it has been annexed by a conqueror.

> *time stands still*
> *on this lonely hill*
> *closing my eyes*
> *so silent*
> *standing by*
> *waiting for my tribe*
> *to take me aside*
> *and tell me*
> *this place is still mine*

<div align="center">

(Hancock 2022, p. 106)

</div>

My poem 'Kiss on Ice' (p. 124) shows that a poignant message about life situations can be delivered using the concise form of rhyme verse. In this case it is end rhyme, which personifies certain objects as being connected to a particular mood or circumstance.

> *Persona*
> *~ in a wardrobe*
> *A Kiss*
> *~ delivered on ice*
> *Confusion*
> *~ in a backpack*
> *Freedom*
> *~ buried under rice*
> *Death*
> *~ listed on a wall*
> *Reality*
> *~ behind closed eyes*

<div align="center">

(Hancock 2022, p. 124)

</div>

'Lemonade' (p. 117) depicts collateral of lost innocence in war zones where isolation from the greater community can sometimes foster a connection of dangerous liaisons for smaller groups. In this poem, adults realise that their determination to do battle has hardened the young people around them who—probably—are imitating the adults.

Futility and debris
  piled up to junior knees
    look into their smoke-filled eyes
      it's our own guilt
        reflecting back in anger
          in the dying light
            as schoolyards forget how to play
              community frets
                as the children trade lemonade
                  for cigarettes
                    whiskey and grenades

<div align="right">

(Hancock 2022, p. 117)

</div>

In the bridge of my song 'Shades of Grey' (p. 130), we see a message about how particular situations can have an emotional impact. Also, it speaks about how isolation can be detrimental to our well-being.

You can't always avoid the light
You can't stay afraid of the dark
Don't live in deserts without human voice
Sooner or later it's gonna leave its mark
  ~ It's bound to leave its mark

<div align="right">

(Hancock 2022, p. 130, lines 16-20)

</div>

'Victoria' (p. 110) was composed during the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020. It alludes to the pandemic restrictions in Victoria, Australia, but at face value could be a generic tale about wanting to bring connection back to someone named Victoria.

Victoria
You know it's cold outside
Victoria
It's a turning tide
Victoria
You need to stay inside
Victoria
It's much warmer here tonight
Victoria
It's safer by my side
Victoria
There is no more place to hide
Victoria
We just need to ride
it out

<div align="right">

(Hancock 2022, p. 110)

</div>

POEMS

STILL

time stands still

on this lonely hill

closing my eyes

so silent

standing by

waiting for my tribe

to take me aside

and tell me

this place is still mine

SLEEP IT THROUGH

Meeting at a midnight rendezvous

You bring everything that upsets you

All shook-up and not knowing what is right

A threadbare ball of string winding uptight

Poured out your sorrow like a fountain

Fears like a rockslide down an unclimbed mountain

I hold your hand so you know I'm here

I stay quiet and don't interfere

   with the outpouring of your grief

You slump on my chest and cry on me

I feel helpless but it's nothing new

I just let it all wash over you

'til you're exhausted and sleep it through

CROWDED SHELF

There are things in this world

   you might not understand

Don't shy away from them

   consider them in your plan

You may not need everything

  so, take your time if you can

    Let curiosity

      give you a better mind

    Let generosity

     share whatever you find

      There'll be sometimes

        when you'll go through hell

      Don't be ashamed

       to ask for some help

      Always stay alert

      Keep yourself well

      Be individual

       on a crowded shelf

Your life will put up a fight

There will be lows and highs

Stay strong and don't be shy

See the world through your eyes

Don't be fooled by disguise

Just be cautious and wise

Let your open smile

    build up rapport

Let your open heart

    be your passport

Stand up for what you believe in

Don't let anyone howl you down

Pay attention to opinion

But stay firm and hold proud your ground

Love is your greatest sum

It is the best you have

Give yourself to someone

  that makes you feel glad

Be kind to your mum

Look after your dad

    Let someone listen

      to the truth you speak

    Let someone be

      the quiet time you seek

Don't be one of those guys

  addicted to surprise

    hooked on goodbyes

But end up alone

  with zero in their eyes

VICTORIA

Victoria

You know it's cold outside

Victoria

It's a turning tide

Victoria

You need to stay inside

Victoria

It's much warmer here tonight

Victoria

It's safer by my side

Victoria

There is no more place to hide

Victoria

We just need to ride

it out

BROKEN WINGS

Her imagination plays in a closed backyard
Thoughts travel a dead-end road
It's a struggle to juggle what she needs to do
Her mind trudges through remembrance snow
Attention slung loose

There's a devil deep down inside
It tries to scratch free
Packed thoughts unfold
Skin stamped with misery
Touch too often sold

Blue eyes reflect like glass beads
Her whole life is insolvent
There are no viable offerings
Exchange goes silent
Lips move like broken wings

The time is never right
Nothing is ever as it seems
Recriminations rise and float to the top
She wishes and daydreams
The scenarios never stop

She traded away too much
Walls creak accusation
Now her chest rests on empty
We lose the conversation
She doesn't remember me

The bed gives no explanation
Her pillow holds no quarter
The telephone stays quiet
She feels like a piece of memorabilia
        that no-one wants to buy

HE WEPT

He wept. He promised a new start.
He slept. But in his heart
                                        he was lying

He had no intention
  of giving in
He forgot to mention
  the den of sin
        he was living in

He cried. He was so lonely.
He lied. But it was only
                                        to survive

He was committed
  and couldn't break free
His resources limited
        a backpack full of hostility
                covering instability

He yelled. He shackled his fear
He rebelled. He tackled the new year
                                        grovelling

The days blew in and out
  with regularity
His thoughts riddled with doubt
        a slave to charity
                devoid of clarity

He shuddered. His spirit was broken.
He stuttered. Because the words spoken
                                        could not make it right

His reflection
  a bumbling drone
His introspection
        a crumbling cornerstone
                left standing alone

He broke a vow. He sacrificed his pride
He spoke of now. But had no more time
                                        and he wept

MIND TRANCE

I'm leaving from Australia
Got a ticket to Canada
Do me a favour
           water my plants and feed my cat
I know Canada is cold
But the scenery is gold
I'll do as I'm told
           and wear a warm coat and hat
I hear The Rockies are great
  and Calgary is first rate
Won't spend too much
           I'll write to keep in touch
The reason why I am going
  is to check what I'm doing
And to get some distance
           from my home mind trance
It is not about you
It's really all about me
Got to leave down south
           and work things out
I just have to get away
Don't know how long I will stay
Got to take stock
           and forget about the clock
I know it seems so sudden
I imagine it's rough and
It's OK
           if you don't want to wait

THIRTEEN WAYS TO ENGAGE IN CONVERSATION

1

words deliver

like two rivers

from different direction

give them space

2

favourite discourse

build a waterfall

of commonality

spillway of gossip haste

3

excuse me

will you talk to me?

4

my throat is not scared

nothing will be spared

adventure of speech beckons

safari debate with me

5

family is eager

familiar

and aware of your proclivity

to constantly natter

6

a party advertised

enticement not to fail

a response will come

from eager tongue

7

stop

prop

look

talk

8

can you help me

     my conversation is in need

          dialogue with me – please

9

interesting information to share

     meet me somewhere

10

club for chatting

     not hitting

          but maybe hitting on

11

this theme

that theme

     begging for vocalisation

          group association

12

more than one mouth open

     at the same time

sounds making sense

          converting to ideas so intense

       reaching for mutual understanding

13

Crowds circumspect

     hanging around

          bursting dialect

   vernacular spectacular

FEATHER OF LOVE

A gentle breeze
of spirit brushes my face
in your eyes I see
a warmth
that cannot be replaced

A feather of love
floats through our lives
hesitant and so fragile
renewing itself
with every sunrise

Your heartbeat
is the only sound
there is no pain or sorrow
I love you here and now
please don't ask about tomorrow

A thousand words
are in your smile
a hundred meanings
in your touch
when our bodies coincide

A chime of oneness
rings through our lives
harmonious light
building on itself
when our hearts beat the same time

Your hand appears
when I'm lost and cold
you pull me close to you
and offer me your soul
it's enough, here and now will do

LEMONADE

Futility and debris
  piled up to junior knees
    look into their smoke-filled eyes
      it's our own guilt
        reflecting back in anger
         in the dying light
           as schoolyards forget how to play
             community frets
               as the children trade lemonade
                 for cigarettes
                   whiskey and grenades

END OF THE HALL

My lap is your armchair

My arms are your shawl

My chest is your pillow

My body your wall

My lips are your path

I'm your warm bath

  at the end of the hall

DRAB II: The Kettle Beckons

Night-fits subside
Grey of new day looms
He turns on his side
Resists the need to resume

But the voice from within
  whispers and wheedles
Walls amplify tremors
The mirror needles

A cacophony of questions
  bombard his mind
He avoids suggestions
  and takes his time

One shoulder, then two
A chest exposed
Legs slide to the floor
He fidgets into his clothes

> *Shuffle and wince*
> *Worn path to the sink*
> *Chipped crockery and will*
> *Rusted life link*

Arthritic hands
  hold an almost empty glass
Coke bottle eyes
  strain over technology passed

The compass of reason
  is stuck on south
Music of simple times
  fills the house

A chord of possibility
  echoes outward
A ghost of memory
  pushes him forward

He pulls back the curtain
Daylight is a joust
The front door creaks open
His thoughts slip out

He's been there before
Disorder reigned
He tried to endure
  but slid back again

Car horns blare
People speed by
The sun is a spotlight
  to expose a life

The door slams shut
This is not the time
The shaking abates
He closes his eyes

The kettle beckons
Not so the street
A cosy teapot
  pours elixir of retreat

HOME

There's a place by the door
reserved for old worn familiar shoes
Passing through the entrance instils confidence
      a sense of belonging ensues

Lanes of ownership often made trip
on boulevard strip of carpet
Plaster expanse sky to avoid prying eye
      no reason to fret

Cells of rest with walls ever honest
a place for weary recline
Summer defence hatch with timber food-cache
      a secure cave to dine

Old friend aperture leading to comfortable furniture
a haven of peace
Drop into chair arms to enjoy old charm
      sink into pleasant release

Soak up environment once again content
among objects of familiarity
Look around and know you have found
      enclosed serenity

CLIMBER'S CURSE

When I look to the horizon
I can't focus my eyes on
the distant form
riding out the storm
huddled against a cliff

    It's tough to move forward
    my body feels awkward
    wind seems solid
    face is gelid
    legs and arms are stiff

Got to keep going
can't throw the towel in
help is required
but I'm so tired
need to retain one thought

    The shape up ahead
    gotta be alive, not dead
    not far now
    have to make it somehow
    toughest weather I've ever fought

The distance is shrinking
can't help thinking
Could it be any worse
up here on Climber's Curse?
Almost fell once near the top

    Must get across the ridge
    my body's like porridge
    all feeling gone
    instinct makes me go on
    when I just want to drop

We'll need a hot meal
after this ordeal
gonna make it for sure
just a few steps more
must be chilled to the bone

    I can sense her emotion
    It's no place to be alone
    her body is trembling
    her mind is remembering
    she lets out a pitiful groan

I finally reach her
through the weather barrier
brown eyes plead
staring up at me
I'm going to have to carry her

    Foolish to wander away
    but what can you say
    when finally reunited
    with a mother's love?
    A calf doesn't know any better

KISS ON ICE

Persona

      ~ in a wardrobe

A Kiss

      ~ delivered on ice

Confusion

      ~ in a backpack

Freedom

      ~ buried under rice

Death

      ~ listed on a wall

Reality

      ~ behind closed eyes

Persona

PUPPY

Puppy

  licking your face

Seeking your fond embrace

Piddling excitement on the floor

     Wet pause

PRISON BARS

Once upon a time
   you were my only mission
But now it feels like I'm looking
   through the bars of a prison

You unlocked the chains
   that life put around my heart
But it seems like a merry-go-round
   since we drifted apart

Tell me what it would take
   to make it right again with you
I'm willing to try one more time
   although, can we make it soon

Chorus

      Sun filters through hill trees
      So much has come to pass
      Give me the bottle please
      I need to drown some scars

      Flood out bad memories
      Cut up roots of the past
      Forest trees surround me
      Their trunks are prison bars
       around my soul and heart

Old actions bite deep
   every time I think about you
I try hard to cast them out
   but there is nothing I can do

Cafes are lonely

Goodbye letters display my shame

Your photograph chastises me

Do you still remember my name?

If I could make it better

   and erase toxic words spoken

I think I know what's the matter

   but my spirit is broken

<u>Repeat Chorus</u>

Bridge

   I still love you in the morning

   I still love you late at night

   You have to give me something

      to make it feel all right

   Because my life is failing

      just trying to get by

<u>Repeat Chorus</u>

RAW HONESTY

We are like two opposites
but the attraction is getting weak
our lives are at threshold
maybe we're not so unique

Differences stand out clearer
little things put us on edge
it's harder to live up to
our young lovers' pledge

The thread between us stretches
but hasn't yet broken
could go beyond its limit
by shrouded words yet unspoken

Chorus
 Lying next to you is simple
 it's the waking hours that seem strange
 sometimes you don't know me
 I can see it in your face

 Yeah, I know it ain't been easy
 we've been through shaky times
 you fell in love with a stranger
 it took time to realise

Bridge 1
 I know life can change
 Time takes your heart and does a rearrange

I tried to give you all I had
it wasn't good enough
my life began to stray
I twisted down a different path

I reach for the early years
like a security blanket
times were maybe too good
now we're heading for burn-out

I lie awake shivering

at the thought of losing you

but if I remain here too long

I could wind up hurting you

Repeat Chorus

Bridge 2

We can't ignore what's gone before

The pleasure and all the pain

Would we try if we had the chance again?

Repeat Chorus

I'm strangled by love

running out of breath

gasping for unknown freedom

I guess I owe you nothing less

I find myself elsewhere

my senses are so raw

moving through the light

like a shadow clinging to the wall

I'm running out of answers

haven't got a clue what to do

I thought we would go on forever

does it feel the same for you?

Repeat Chorus

Bridge 3

I'm not complaining

how you treated me

but just for once

we need a little raw honesty

Repeat Bridge 1

Repeat Bridge 2

SHADES OF GREY

Don't cry if you get stardust in your eyes

Don't try to wipe it away

Nothing survives on only black and white

We all have to live through the shades of grey

<u>Chorus</u>

          Don't tell me who I should be

          I've lived around the world

           in cheerless society

          And that's no good

          No good for me

          What's that you say

          It's just shades of grey

Is the subject greater than the form?

Do you listen to all the words?

Is the music playing in your head?

Are you really blind to the rainbow birds?

<u>Repeat Chorus</u>

Bridge

          You can't always avoid the light

          You can't stay afraid of the dark

          Don't live in deserts without human voice

          Sooner or later it's gonna leave its mark

          ~ It's bound to leave its mark

Maybe it's time you opened up your eyes

Use your ears to hear the tears

Smell decay in your own backyard

I can feel the pain of the local fears

<u>Repeat Chorus</u>

COASTLINE GETAWAY

Walking on the beach
Among rising sound
Under winter clouds
Sliding all around

Itch covers my skin
Thought in empty hand
Arms down by my side
And boots in the sand

Birds crying overhead
Waves crash against rocks
Cracked voice and feelings
Put behind mind locks

Jumper up neck high
Beanie pulled down tight
Lips and sight straight-line
Mood as black as night

Chorus
     Coastline getaway
     Deep time at lands-end
     Coastline getaway
     Sleep in and pretend
     Feelings in a towel
     Nerves on the mend
     Coastline getaway
     Won't break but I'll bend

Victim tide rolls in
Clouds hiding the moon
Head for the cabin
Darkness falls too soon

Fallen desire
In suburban sinkhole
Roaring open fire
Matching roaring soul

A mind tries to break

Tries to make amends

It tries to escape

From hell it opens

Flames dance mockery

Each feeling exposed

Cocoon retreat

Solitude gate closed

Bridge

    We got into some trouble

    It wasn't good for anyone

    I did what I had to do

    It wasn't perfect, but it's done

<u>Repeat Chorus</u>

CRAZY LITTLE BEAT

Cover the mirror

Close the door

Hear the roar

once more

Nerves on dread hooks

Overdrawn looks

Empty your glass

Let the time pass

Great winding path

Dark tunnel mask

Praying for dawn

Ride out the storm

<u>Chorus</u>

     Crazy little beat

      dancing with my head

     Crazy little beat

      keeping me from bed

     Crazy little beat

      down in my heart

     Crazy little beat

      keeping us apart

Island in the sun

  for everyone

    that's what I wish

      not glass bowl fish

Clock strikes midnight

Mind so uptight

Panic humming

Feel it coming

The great onslaught

Clamorous thought

Can't ring the bell

   to fix yourself

<u>Repeat Chorus</u>

Under blanket

Paying word debt

Wrapped in music

Scotch whisky sick

Rollercoaster

Horror poster

So way out there

Shelter most far

Just watching life

   by riverside

Bobbing on tide

Just getting by

       ~ afraid to make plans

       ~ out of control man

<u>Repeat Chorus</u>

Bridge

      You put up with me

        when song comes around

      You put up with me

        when my mood is down

      I don't know why

        you hang around

<u>Repeat Chorus</u>

Section 5: Reality or Illusion

This section of *contraview themes* explores human history concerning verifiable observation, indistinct perception, and unwavering belief. The contradiction of supposed awareness can date back to traditions from ancient Egypt, Greek and Roman mythology, Nordic presumptions of nature, Middle Ages folklore, and includes the craft of theatrical legerdemain and tribal witchdoctors – to name a few. Our capacity for imagination is equally as profound as our intellectual aptitude to grasp the reality of our human experiences. In other words, our thoughts and actual experiences during waking hours show us what is real. However, when compared with the content of our slumbering dreams, sometimes it might be difficult to know what reality is or recognise illusion. Many of us follow our desire to generate something that is outside the scope of actuality by producing and/or watching fictional entertainment.

'Sick in Bed' (p. 145)—a slant rhyme poem—demonstrates how feverish illness for an eight-year-old can alter perception of reality by drawing upon fictional entertainment. That eight-year-old was me, and the influencing entertainment was a movie named 'Hans Christian Anderson' (1952). The movie content had a final scene where mythical characters visit a dying Hans Christian Anderson who is lying in bed. A similar scenario was played out during my fever moments. Here are a few lines to show this:

> *stretched your net*
> *across growing sponge*
> *jumbled mind, somersault plunge*
>
> *wings of velvet wisp*
> *brushing supernova cheeks*
> *soaked flannelette sheets.*
>
> *zuzz of delirium*
> *makes aching body rise*
> *hold tight to the turnstile*
>
> *gnomes of story past*
> *frolicking across a side-table*
> *one-eyed teddy in twisted fable*
>
> *early morning tide*
> *the bough breaks*
> *removes the shakes*
> * ~ innocence left in its wake*
>
> <div align="right">*(Hancock 2022, p. 145, lines 4-9, 16-18, 22-25),*</div>

Here are some lines from 'Land of Foozelpod' (pp. 146-147), which is a rollicking slant rhyme poem in the tradition of nonsense poetry. It is a humorous look at the fragile border between reality and illusion, ever present for all of us.

> *A land called Foozelpod hides*
> *but not that far away*
> *It exists between black and white*
> *in round corners of grey*
> *If you look through coloured glass*
> *and do not blink too fast*
> *you might see it there*
> *But if you yawn or cough*
> *what you see will scurry off*
> *The land could disappear*
>
> *The folk are not afraid*
> *just sensible and wary*
> *And the animals love to play*
> *Some blue*
> *some miniature*
> *others quite hairy*
>
> *There are oceans of lime green*
> *Islands like jellybeans*
> *Beach-sand soft as popcorn*
> *Plants that smile and wave*
> *Flowers that giggle and misbehave*
> *Trees stand tall and sing at dawn*
>
> *(Hancock 2022, pp. 146-147, lines 1-22)*

Scenes or ideas of reality or illusion can be employed as themes for a poem or song. The content of Edward Lear's Nonsense Poetry could be categorised as illusory. His famous poem 'The Owl and the Pussy-cat' (1871) is a good example of rhyme verse, with phrases such as: *the Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea // in a beautiful pea-green boat // they took some honey, and plenty of money // wrapped up in a five-pound note.* Logically, these scenes are not reflecting any event that is real.

The song lyrics for 'Nasties in the Night Mist' (pp. 152-153) are a *rhyme-frolic* with a supernatural theme. The concept was developed when watching episodes of the television show 'Buffy the Vampire Slayer' (1997-2003), which spawned the line in the chorus *rubbing shoulders with the dead*. Rhyme verses in the song are not intended to specifically focus on any particular character from the show. Rather, the content tries to convey an otherworldly aspect using many supernatural characterisations.

136

Cool phantasm
  in the devil's chasm
      walk along with a ghost
Seven-headed Hydra
  there to guide ya
      touring with satanic host

Shy werewolf
  on a crypt roof
      baying at the silvery moon
Bad boy Dracula
  he's at the back of ya
      he don't eat with a spoon

Midnight school
  Headmaster ghoul
      flunking corpse biology
Playtime graveyard
  Frankenstein's bodyguard
      standing seven foot three

Maiden in the well
  Different kind of spell
      by the evil west witch
Gift wrapped mummy
  Dress sense so crummy
      Death can be a real bitch

<div align="right">

(Hancock 2022, pp. 152-153, lines 1-12, 26-31, 38-43)

</div>

Maybe you have a favourite television show or movie that is based on imaginary characters, which could become inspiration for your rhyme verse poem or song? Authors potentially have *carte blanche* to write anything they want – whether that is factual, imaginative, or quirky. The starting point of writing might come from something overheard or seen. Inspiration for a rhyme verse poem or song could stem from a favourite television show or movie that is based on fictional characters or real people.

This next poem, 'Soul Cheap' (p. 144), considers illusory concepts about musings of a troubled soul. All odd number lines are slant rhyme, and almost every even number line has end rhyme. This excerpt gives an eccentric view of what the poem is all about:

Walk enigma street
Consider how far it goes
Find where it leads
  under the veil of shadow

You can just see me
    where wild weeds grow
Bathe in the creek
    of rejection and sorrow
Drink from the stream
    of beg, steal, and borrow
Your soul is cheap
    for a bet in blood casino

(Hancock 2022, p. 144, lines 1-6, 11-16)

An eccentricity can be known as a 'quirk', which could be explained as a strange aspect of personality or behaviour, which can relate to human or non-human activity. When a quirky aspect is attributed to people, it is not necessarily a bad thing – it might be appealing rather than objectionable. Quirkiness could be as mildly interesting as: putting tomato sauce on breakfast cereal, feeling uncomfortable around the letter 'Z', having different human names for plants in a garden, an elephant hugging a cat in its trunk, or a dolphin nurturing a baby shark.

However, at the other end of the quirky spectrum, it can become precarious, with events such as:

- lightning regularly striking the same patch of landscape – your backyard;
- the same noxious weed growing in the same spot in a vegetable patch – no matter what is planted there, or how many times the area is weeded;
- someone slapping a person's face every time they mention a particular object;
- a large rodent always chasing the same dog that is part of a roaming pack.

My song 'Doomerang' (pp. 150-151) presents a surreal and quirky outlook on what humans can imagine or believe. It employs couplet style poetry composed mostly in slant rhyme and the bridge is purely end rhyme.

Spirits dance and follow ley lines
Forest folk remember fey times
A comet streaks across sunset sky
Changing life reflects in the moon's eye

Chorus

   I walked out of ancient hot desert
   You came from shadowy old forest
   We weathered the difference together
      in a place between now and forever
   But the cosmic seams ripped apart
   Blackhole is the galaxy's heart

Raging wind howls out your name
Closed angel wings won't be the same
Don't cry because it's never easy
* spending time on a god's knee*

Bridge
*   Arcane teaching binges*
*   A heated word singes*
*   Truth and belief falter*
*   Love bleeds on the altar*
*   Humanity cringes*
*   and falls off its hinges*

(Hancock 2022, pp. 150-151, lines 1-4, 9-14, 19-28)

Many of the rhyme verses—in this *contraview themes* section—seem as though they are speculations to do with Psychiatry or Psychology, which are two diverse and complex scientific topics. Famous psychiatrists can be quoted, such as: Benjamin Rush; William James; Sigmund Freud; or Carl Jung. Or, psychologists such as: cognitive expert Elizabeth Loftus, and talk show host Phillip 'Dr Phil' McGraw can be cited to enter the realm of distressed minds and dig deep into their psychological burdens. However, that is not the purpose of this study resource, which is about composition of rhyme verse. If anything, I would recommend examining *Surrealism*. It deals with putting aside rationality and delves into the unconscious mind to extract emotionally driven issues, which queries reality and Illusion. One aspect of surrealism is 'automatic writing'[4], which could release some ideas to develop at a later time.

Nevertheless, tales about illusionary themes can be entertaining when employing the rhythmic pattern of rhyme verse. When I observe something that does not look or sound real, it usually prompts me to write a poem or song that is a quirky reaction to the incident. Keeping senses open to what happens in a surrounding location can provide information for a rhyme verse poem or song. However, always be ethical about what details you put in your composition. Respect personal privacy of people and be sure you have factual evidence if your rhyme verse is an exposé.

---

[4] Surrealist Writing Techniques, Surrealism Art, http://www.surrealismart.org/history/writing-techniques.html

A SOUND

A sound

    so far away

A needle

    in a stack of hay

If I am not asleep

    then it is only an echo of a dream

      that haunts me

        when I am awake

WELL-DEEP EYES

She was shy
   and fell into a daydream
There was decline in her disguise
She had the voice of a stifled scream
Vultures replaced butterflies
She could not appease the denial squeeze
A rehearsed lie propped up her pretext alibi
She spent each night hugging her knees
   among thoughts she could not reconcile

A mind full of unease
Consciousness became deep freeze
A curtain billowed between Socrates and Ares
Scented candles promised release
She closed her well-deep eyes
Saw storm cloud skies
Slowly she started to cry
     lost in an illusion tide

SILENCE

Darkness
   is soothing velvet on cheek
Stillness
   is moving through parody

A chill creeps in
   through skin and bone
I can't let you in
   if I'm on my own

Sound is tangible
Silence is absorption
I approach a rule
   with caution

My image follows me
   at every turn
All my ill deeds
   rise and churn

A door is ajar
   but it's cold inside
I know where you are
   (so I hide)

FIVE STONES

Five stones

Colours and shapes

Texture and sound

Flat or jagged

Smooth and round

Close your eyes

Roll stones through your fingers

Smell millennia dust

Feel the past that lingers

Five stones

from five different places

Assembled

showing five different faces

Brown, grey white

Chalky, hard, tough

Sparkling, gritty, pitted

Cracked, oblong, rough

Five stones

made of ancient stuff

SOUL CHEAP

Walk enigma street

Consider how far it goes

Find where it leads

    under the veil of shadow

You can just see me

    where wild weeds grow

Come and greet me

    with shovel and wheelbarrow

Treasure bleeds

    under black-striped rainbow

Bathe in the creek

    of rejection and sorrow

Drink from the stream

    of beg, steal, and borrow

Your soul is cheap

    for a bet in blood casino

All wagers cease

    on a bone-filled pillow

You'll replace me

    in Dante's Inferno

SICK IN BED

stretched your net

across growing sponge

jumbled mind, somersault plunge

wings of velvet wisp

brushing supernova cheeks

soaked flannelette sheets.

zuzz of delirium

makes aching body rise

hold tight to the turnstile

sound of scratching

under the bed

persistent hatchet in my head

blue striped pyjama top

floating on petroleum jelly lagoon

real life came all too soon

gnomes of story past

frolicking across a side-table

one-eyed teddy in twisted fable

curtain folds grow faces

severe whispers sneer

wardrobe playing Hitchcock in my ear

early morning tide

the bough breaks

removes the shakes

　　　　~ innocence left in its wake

LAND OF FOOZELPOD

A land called Foozelpod hides
   but not that far away
It exists between black and white
   in round corners of grey
If you look through coloured glass
   and do not blink too fast
       you might see it there
But if you yawn or cough
   what you see will scurry off
       the land could disappear

The folk are not afraid
   just sensible and wary
And the animals love to play
Some blue
   some miniature
       others quite hairy

There are oceans of lime green
Islands like jellybeans
Beach-sand soft as popcorn
Plants that smile and wave
Flowers that giggle and misbehave
Trees stand tall and sing at dawn

The air is full of enchantment
Weather is pure delight
Each day full of amusement
   and peaceful rest at night
If you get to visit Foozelpod
   be nice to inhabitants and land
They think we are a bit odd
   because they rarely meet humans

Everything is delicate and curious
Not what we are used to
Try not to make too much fuss
   and do not eat too much food
All fruit is soft and sweet

Vegetables bright and delicious
You can drink tangy rainbow juice
  from an amethyst cup

It will be so breathtaking
  but remember your age
      your home
         and your name
Foozelpodlings collect things
  so you might lose who you are
     in a fun season tricky game

Be careful and do things right
  and you will have a good visit
But if you are rough and impolite
  there is a dark side to Foozelpod wit

 What was cute, caring and coy
  may turn nasty and mean
A sense of jingle, joke and joy
  will no longer be seen

Beautiful will get ugly
Nice will turn bad
Curious becomes hostility
Delighted becomes mad
Laughter changes to snarling
A tooth becomes a fang
Dancing changes to stalking
A crowd forms into a gang

If you made an error of tact
Start coughing and blinking fast
  and hope you escape unscratched
    or you will be stuck in Foozelpod past

THUNDERIPPLE

Thunderipple

Flipple the flop

Alphadipple

Zipple the crop

Mensascramble

Fasterchipple a think

Sensoramble

Masteripple a kink

Underwhipple

Triple the glue

Overshipple

Gripple the blue

Evergrumble

Blunderhipple a score

Cleverthumble

Sunderpipple a core

Dreamburble

Blipple the bleep

Steampurrble

Clipple the sheep

Coatalesson

Rainbowdripple the zone

Quotasession

Mainglowlipple the tone

THE GIRL

She engraved her presence there
        elegantly poised across the room
Long flowing jet-black hair
        her face painted like the moon
No others could compare
        my eyes stretched full zoom
She returned my welcome stare
        her head tilted and amused
Draped across the chair
        like exotic flower in bloom

    The girl
        behind the enticing smile
    The girl
        cloaked in cultural style
    The girl
        with triangular eyes
    The girl
        framed as the gallery's prize

SONGS

DOOMERANG

Spirits dance and follow ley lines

Forest folk remember fey times

A comet streaks across sunset sky

Changing life reflects in the moon's eye

Sky shimmers and displays sad blue

Deep water is the shade of passionfruit

With so many things to see and choose

There is just so much to break and lose

<u>Chorus</u>

      I walked out of ancient hot desert

      You came from shadowy old forest

      We weathered the difference together

        in a place between now and forever

      But the cosmic seams ripped apart

      Blackhole is the galaxy's heart

Feel the bongo-beat stir and start things

Let the music pluck your heartstrings

And if you don't like how it sounded

  find your own tune to keep it grounded

Raging wind howls out your name

Closed angel wings won't be the same

Don't cry because it's never easy

  spending time on a god's knee

Bridge

Arcane teaching binges

A heated word singes

Truth and belief falter

Love bleeds on the altar

Humanity cringes

   and falls off its hinges

Repeat Chorus

NASTIES IN THE NIGHT MIST

Cool phantasm

  in the devil's chasm

      walk along with a ghost

Seven-headed Hydra

  there to guide ya

      touring with satanic host

Shy werewolf

  on a crypt roof

      baying at the silvery moon

Bad boy Dracula

  he's at the back of ya

      he don't eat with a spoon

Chorus

      Nasties in the night mist

      Rubbing shoulders with the dead

      Dropping names off the fright list

      Dancing in the field of the tainted

      Mister Death grimly reaps

      As the willow weeps

      Heavy dudes playing for keeps

Bareback Medusa

  Horned Appaloosa

      take a unicorn ride

Dead zombie chained

  on a ghost train

      Necromancer by my side

Midnight school

   Headmaster ghoul

       flunking corpse biology

Playtime graveyard

   Frankenstein's bodyguard

       standing seven foot three

Repeat Chorus

Faces in the night

   The lady in white

       goosed by invisible man

Dark time fuss

   Active incubus

       Poltergeist unwanted fan

Maiden in the well

   Different kind of spell

       by the evil west witch

Gift wrapped mummy

   Dress sense so crummy

       Death can be a real bitch

Repeat Chorus

PART B   EXEGESIS

INTRODUCTION

This thesis comprises two components, a creative product and an exegesis. It aims to explore the reception and relatability of rhyming poems and songs in modern English-speaking culture. To do this, the creative product—*Verbal Tap Dance: a collection of rhyme verse*—supplies samples of recent rhyme verse and presents guidance on the essence and composition of rhyme. The exegesis intends to employ scholarly and non-scholarly sources, and seeks to discover how relatable rhyme verse is to educators, students, and the public of modern English-speaking culture.

For the purpose of this project, teachers and senior school students are the collective demographic focal point, and these people are designated as the 'audience'. However, curriculum designers and poetry or song enthusiasts might be interested in the contents of the creative product. Moreover, the word audience—for this thesis—represents both reader and listener. Also, the term 'verse' is used to mean a stanza for poetry as well as a verse in a song.

In keeping with the product focus of this thesis, it is worthwhile here to reaffirm that rhyme verse is a brief series of words and phrases—over several lines of text—that have occasional same or almost the same sounding words according to a pattern known as a rhyme scheme. These verses can be in the form of poems or song lyrics and create a rhythmic flow of content.

For the research context of rhyme verse reception and relatability, Part A intends to be an interrelated study resource for the exegesis by presenting samples of recent rhyme verse to consider comprehension and composition aspects of rhyme. However, beyond the limits of this project the creative product is meant to be a stand-alone guidebook. Therefore, the 'Preface' belongs solely to the creative product and does not expound exegetical matters in relation to reception or delivery of rhyme verse.

Whenever one of my poems or songs is mentioned in this thesis, the inclusion might only be an excerpt for the purpose of indicating significant details. The full poem or song can be viewed at the page/s nominated in the citation, for example: 'Thunderipple' (Hancock 2022, p. 148). For this thesis, I advocate theme—whether that comes from a word, scene or feeling—as a starting point approach to choose a topic for rhyme verse.

Moreover, the creative product presents five essential elements of rhyme verse, which are: Theme, Message & Meaning, Vernacular, Rhyme Schemes, and Syntax. Also, it identifies five contraposed viewpoints that are designated as *contraview themes*:

(i)   Conformity or Rebellion

(ii)   Respect or Ridicule

(iii)   Optimism or Pessimism

(iv)   Connection or Isolation

(v)   Reality or Illusion

These *contraview themes* depict the dynamics of emotion and perspective that can be employed for the content of rhyme verse, and inform what creative direction—and mood—might drive a rhyme verse message and meaning.

The exegesis will investigate factors that could have varying degrees of influence on audience reception and relatability of rhyme verse. At times, the exegesis will borrow relevant concepts from *Verbal Tap Dance: a collection of rhyme verse*. Also, there will be crossover text from creative product to exegesis as part of the investigation into composition elements that are essential for reception and relatability of rhyme verse.

The word 'reception' is a key point of this creative writing project, it pertains—in general terms—to how rhyme verse can be received by an audience. In other words—for the purpose of this thesis—reception simply refers to gaining access to rhyme verse and how an audience treats it. The exegesis (p. 161) provides pragmatic approaches concerning evidence and viewpoints for reception and relatability of rhyme verse. This also accounts for influencing factors that could significantly affect how rhyme verse is received and treated in the context of education, entertainment, and advertisement.

This creative writing project intends to review motivations—mine and others—for composing a selected group of rhyme verse. Also, it will explore characteristics of obvious message and sub-textual meaning, and deliberates on the aspect of popularity in the context of rhyme styled poetry and song. From a composition perspective, the exegesis revisits the five essential elements of rhyme verse to investigate how these elements might impact the writing of rhyming poems and songs. When poetry or song are mentioned throughout this exegesis, it is intended that rhyme verse should also be included as a part of these two styles of writing.

Furthermore, the exegesis focusses on three avenues for delivery of rhyme verse; (a) education; (b) entertainment; and (c) advertisement, to ascertain what type of reception can be gained from each of the delivery avenues. Also, the exegesis investigates whether the employment of rhyme has any benefit for an audience.

The methodology part of this thesis presents a framework designed to gather, analyse, incorporate, and program my poems and songs into a guidebook of rhyme verse, and introduces a process for introspectively assessing how and why I have written my selected rhyming poems and songs.

METHODOLOGY

Creative Product

Theme Compilation Method

Literature Research Methodology is to read through, analyze and sort literatures in order to identify the essential attribute of materials (Lin 2009, p. 179). As part of my literature analysis, I developed an off-shoot of Literature Research Methodology— which I call *Theme Compilation Method (TCM)*—that tracks shared themes and viewpoints in pieces of writing to ascertain similarities or differences of thoughts and emotions. This helps to aesthetically arrange compositions—about various feelings, styles, perceptions, and standpoints—into thematic groups for a collection of works.

In some ways, *TCM* reflects the principles of Comparative Analysis. Walk (1998) explains that:

> compare-and-contrast papers, in which you weight A and B equally, may be about two similar things that have crucial differences (two pesticides with different effects on the environment) or two similar things that have crucial differences, yet turn out to have surprising commonalities (two politicians with vastly different world views who voice unexpectedly similar perspectives on sexual harassment) (para. 1).

Moreover, Walk says, 'a Frame of Reference is the context within which you place the two things you plan to compare and contrast; it is the umbrella under which you have grouped them' (1998, para. 4). My Frame of Reference umbrella is *TCM*, which concentrates on discovering shared or different themes—within rhyme verse—and tries to define what the author had in mind when the work was composed.

A poem or song might contain a single thread of emotion or idea, or it could have several themes intertwined within its lines. I employed *TCM* to allocate poems or song lyrics into one of the five *contraview themes* headings, which usher the audience along various paths of my personal speculations or experiential learning. Each poem or song was examined to determine its overarching message that would reflect the essence of one of the five *contraview themes*:

    (i)   Conformity or Rebellion (C or R)

    (ii) Respect or Ridicule (R or R)

    (iii) Optimism or Pessimism (O or P)

    (iv) Connection or Isolation (C or I)

    (v) Reality or Illusion (R or I)

I sorted through the content of each poem and song, looking for thematic trigger words and phrases, particular emotive effects, speculative viewpoints, emphatic standpoints, or educational topics.

Using this data, I then compiled the rhyme verse pieces into categories – each category representing one of the *contraview themes* sections that epitomised the overriding message of each poem and song. For example, 'Red Rain' (Hancock 2022, pp. 35-37) was distributed to Conformity or Rebellion, considering significant reasons for instigation of war, such as: steadfast decision to conform to conditions, customs and laws of an existing society or state; or determination to rebel against the existing society and form a new way of living.

'Spring at Last' (Hancock 2022, p. 91) was allocated to Optimism or Pessimism, because it represents flora and fauna, weather, and sunshine existing in harmony. Just reading the words makes me optimistic, because I can recall the onset of spring freshness in the air after the rain during my youth when I was more of an outdoor person observing nature.

Another example of allocation to an appropriate section is the song 'Broken Land' (Hancock 2022, pp. 96-98), which could have gone into Connection or Isolation, because land can instil a sense of connection and belonging. However, due to the content of this song—about the effect of unrelenting drought on a farmer—it can also cause a feeling of hopelessness. Therefore, employing *TCM*, I believe 'Broken Land' has a pessimistic viewpoint, which is determined by thematic trigger words and phrases such as, *times are bad*, *pray for a city wet day*, *land laid bare*, *beneath a ruthless sun*, *broken land*, *can't raise food*, *red dust*, and *little water that remains*. Although the essence of the song—long-term drought—could trigger an empathetic focus (sense of connection) for imagery and participants depicted in the content, I feel pessimistic about the continued viability of farming in such a harsh environment. This is why I allocated the song 'Broken Land' to Optimism or Pessimism.

Table 1 below shows my *TCM* method for allocating poems and songs into one of the five *contraview themes* categories.

Table 1

Title	**C or R** Trigger words and phrases	**R or R** Trigger words and phrases	**O or P** Trigger words and phrases	**C or I** Trigger words and phrases	**R or I** Trigger words and phrases
Red Rain (Hancock 2022, pp. 35-37)	decay/death/ menaced/ oppressing/ foreshadowed				
Spring at Last (Hancock 2022, p. 91)			cleans/cheer/ band/smiles		
Broken Land (Hancock 2022, pp. 96-98)			bad/bare/ruthless/ broken/red dust/ little water		

Ask Too Much (Hancock 2022, pp. 77-78)		indecision/ stand back/ panic/thunder/ gloom/doom/ tame hearts/in vain/ strain / too hard			
End of the Hall (Hancock 2022, p. 118)				lap & armchair/ arms & shawl/ chest & pillow/ lips & path/ warm bath	
Doomerang (Hancock 2020, pp. 150-151)					passionfruit sky/ now and forever/ cosmic seams/ angel wings/ a god's knee

The process of *TCM* informed the positioning of rhyme verse in my creative writing product *Verbal Tap Dance: a collection of rhyme verse*. Also, I employed another process of studying and reviewing aspects of literature—such as my rhyme verse—to determine choices for specific ideas, word & phrases, or writing structures that I used to convey my message and meaning.

Introspective Exploration of Composition

I have used what I call *Introspective Exploration of Composition (IEC)* as a research method to assess my work. It helped me focus on: (a) what I think an individual or group's action has been; (b) my speculations of what people might do in certain situations; (c) aspects of environmental impact; and (d) my quirky contemplations.

Also, to a large extent, this method focussed on message and meaning—in the context of theme—to disclose what motivation and intention I had for writing a poem or song. Employing *IEC*, I concentrated on a selection of my poems and songs to recall what I meant by the words and phrases used in the composition. Moreover, I questioned what I was doing and thinking at the time of developing the piece of work, and contemplated my emotional and artistic response to the finished rhyme verse.

Part of the process included questioning whether people would understand what I was writing, and how it might be received from an aesthetic or educational point of view. From my own education experience, I know that the technical minutiae of rhyme verse construction, such as: meter, scansion, alliteration, consonance, or assonance can be taught in classrooms using curriculum defined information.

However, the purpose of this creative writing project is to mainly concentrate on thematic ideas and events that can drive rhyme composition, which is a significant factor for the reception and relatability of rhyme verse. That is why I decided to compile *Verbal Tap Dance: a collection of rhyme verse* as a guidebook that predominantly focusses on theme rather than traditional strict conventions of rhyme creation.

To do this, I revisited basic and more sophisticated rhyme verse, especially work that gained successful reception. In this thesis I employ my rhyme verse to explain rhyme construction. Although I greatly focus on thematic content choices, *IEC* also has potential to detect the mood of the piece created by the theme's message and meaning, and inform the style of the rhyme verse by identifying the form (rhyme schemes, literary devices, line placement, and so forth).

When I was deciding on methodologies, I had no particular intention of employing theoretical principles specifically based on the area of 'reception', however there are parts of *Reception Theory* from Hans Robert Jauss' 'Toward an Aesthetic Reception' that fit my research when he says:

> the application of the principle of pure causal explanation to the history of literature…dissolved the specific character of the literary work into a collection of influences that could be increased at will (1982, p. 8).

I agree with Jauss that 'pure causal explanation' principle could give a skewed perspective of the overall literary character of a rhyme verse piece, and produce a never-ending string of events and motives for why the piece was written. Therefore—to circumvent any confusion concerning the possibility of increasing the number of influences for a piece of literary work in the form of rhyme verse—I have created a new framework of limited factors that could influence rhyming poetry or song. These factor categories are five *contraview themes*, and three avenues of delivery, which I believe are contextual essentials for exploration of rhyme verse composition and reception.

IEC also helped me to focus on what the chosen theme for a poem or song signified during my process of writing, and what it means for its inclusion on a particular list in one of the five *contraview themes.* To make this determination, I needed to consider the purpose of each theme. So, I re-visited my reasoning behind the *contraview themes*, which is choices that people make (positive or negative).

This reasoning is reflected in Chapter 3 of the creative writing product guidebook *Verbal Tap Dance: a collection of rhyme verse*. Allocating selected poems and song lyrics to a theme gives prospect for a better review of my intended message and meaning. Also, for every section of *contraview themes* there is a preamble to offer thoughts on what each of the themes signify, and express why representative samples of my rhyme verse appear at that location.

IEC prompted contemplation about how I can adopt a particular word or phrase, emulate someone's work, or jot down some thoughts pertaining to an object or scene as part of my process for writing rhyme verse. Also, *IEC* method gave me insight into how I accumulate content for the creation of my work and store it in notebooks until it

can be part of a poem or song and recorded (tangibly or electronically). This brought the research one step closer to explaining how my creative writing product informs the exegesis component of my thesis by querying processes and production that are essential elements for a study resource.

While there might be similar means to collect information for writing rhyme verse, it stands to reason that what information I gather for my poetry and songs might not be the same as what other people gather for theirs. This can be evidenced by comparing the end product of different authors, which can show how dissimilar some content of rhyming pieces can be, even though similar data was available. I tend to employ infrequently used words and phrases in my work, and this means my recent rhyme verse characteristically contributes to creative writing literature in a distinctively individual way.

During the research—and the *IEC* process for my creative work—I reacquainted myself with a fundamental writing habit I have that mainly considers three things: (i) a word that interests me; (ii) an intriguing overheard comment; or (iii) a fascinating image, which will trigger the writing of a poem or a set of song lyrics. This questioning of how I approach my rhyme verse is exemplified in 'a word that interests me', which could double as a title for the rhyme verse, a thumping end word or phrase for the poem,[5] or be in the first line of the chorus for a song. Furthermore, *IEC* alerted me to how an 'intriguing overheard comment' more often than not becomes a line of the poem or song that breeds similar thoughts.[6] I found myself comparing some of my more recent rhyme verse with other work I have done. I now know that my creative perspective is driven by experiential learning, suppositions, subjective preferences, and a tendency to employ selections of sophisticated and appropriate words and phrases, which are interspersed among straightforward or basic words and phrases typically presented in the bulk of contemporary English language rhyme work.

A good example of my work is 'Verbal Tap Dance' (p. 6), which forms part of the thesis title. Some more examples are: Thunderipple (p. 148), Earthwart (p. 70), Pen Mayhem (p. 32), Soul Cheap (p. 144), Nordic Ice-ships (p. 38), Land of Foozlepod (p. 146), Doomerang (p. 150), Signal (p. 49), Smackety Whackety II (p. 72), Red Rain (p. 35), and Sick in Bed (p. 145). Considering my experience is different from others—and that my suppositions and preferences will likely differ from what other people think—my process of gathering information for my rhyme verse has to be deemed as a unique approach.

---

[5] 'The mirror never forgets' (Build, Hancock 2022, p. 89) was a phrase said in a TV program about the rigours of being a ballet dancer.
[6] 'I just have to get away' (Mind Trance, Hancock 2022, p. 113) is a phrase overheard in a cafe.

Exegesis

My exegesis follows a line of enquiry for reception and relatability of rhyme verse for modern English-speaking culture. It periodically employs concepts from the creative product—in an interrelated study process—to investigate factors that influence reception and relatability of rhyme verse, such as those in Chapter 2: Five Essential Elements of Rhyme Verse. The exegesis also presents scholarly literature findings and non-academic professional deductions. For analysis of literature sources, I have borrowed elements of the meta-framework in 'Innovative Data Collection Strategies in Qualitative Research' conceptualised by Onwuegbuzie, Leech, and Collins (2010).

Also, Onwuegbuzie, Leech, and Collins talk about 'analyzing and interpreting sources that inform a literature review or, as it is more aptly called, a research synthesis' (2012, Abstract). For a Master of Research: Creative project, this method of study (research synthesis) progresses an innovative research approach. It supports the pragmatic aspect of studying not only scholarly literature, but also non-scholarly sources to discover evidence and viewpoints—by academics and the public—concerning reception and relatability of rhyme verse.

Robert C. Holub has a similar view to the research approach of this creative writing project when he proposes, 'utilizing rhetoric as much as logic in seeking to persuade by analogy, rather than coherent argument' (1984, p. 12). My creative writing project does rely on explanatory rhetoric and thematic logic to qualify factors that can influence rhyme verse, rather than just relying on arguing an academic point. The project also follows a systematic line of enquiry that explores the effectiveness of recent rhyme verse to achieve positive reception and relatability. There is evaluation of three avenues for delivery of rhyme and their influence to potentially be either a *popularity enhancer* or a *popularity suppressant* for the reception of rhyme verse. In other words, Holub's approach to research allows for public commentary by experts to be a part of this creative project line of enquiry.

Combining the Onwuegbuzie, Leech, and Collins (2010) 'research synthesis' with Holub's (1984) rhetoric and logic approach gives this creative writing project a better chance of capturing a wider set of influencing factors. Although the principle of Reception Theory is not a dominant contributor for this thesis, I must mention that Robert C. Holub says, 'a paradigm that once guided literary investigations is discarded when it no longer satisfies the requirements posed for it by literary studies (1984, p. 1)'. Holub also says, 'each paradigm defines not only the accepted methodological procedures with which critics approach literature – the "normal" literary scholarship within the academic community – but also the accepted literary canon (1984, p. 1)'.

With many educators preferring to employ the western canon for literature studies rather than recent literary works, these statements by Holub align with my view that researching more than just scholarly information gives a greater range of testimony for factors that could influence the reception and relatability of recent rhyme verse. Moreover, public commentaries can present deliberations and opinions—in non-academic contemporary language—that highlight whether rhyme verse has popular or unpopular reception.

Furthermore, Holub also says, 'a new paradigm...replaces the obsolete approach until it, in turn, proves unable to cope with its function of explaining past works of literature for the present' (1984, p. 1). Considering my original rhyme verse is recent work, I had a similar thought, which is why I used *Theme Compilation Method (TCM)* and *Introspective Exploration of Composition (IEC)* as new research methods to assess poems and songs in my creative product.

From 'Qualitative Analysis Techniques for the Review of the Literature' proposed by Onwuegbuzie, Leech, and Collins (2012), I have employed two of the four 'source of information' analysis techniques from under the heading 'Documents' (p. 11). The two techniques chosen are as follows:

1. Secondary Data Analysis for 'analyzing pre-existing sources or artifacts' (Table 2, p. 12).
2. Theme Analysis 'involves a search for relationships among domains, as well as a search for how these relationships are linked to the overall cultural context' (Table 2, p. 12).

Combined, these two analysis techniques form a significant part of my study framework for using both scholarly literature and public commentary as a basis for my research. Secondary Data Analysis supports my research approach to use pre-existing sources rather than doing interviews of my own, and Theme Analysis caters for the thematic focus on rhyme verse reception and relatability for modern English-speaking culture.

According to James P. Spradley (1979), the word 'domains' is a term to define 'larger units of cultural knowledge' (p. 94), and in the case of Theme Analysis for cultures he speaks of 'kinship', 'material culture' and 'social relationships' concerning 'conceptual themes that members of a society use' (p. 185) – all good topics for rhyme verse.

Plus, I expand on Spradley's concept by suggesting that a poet or songwriter—when collecting content for rhyme verse—could be thought of as a researcher that fits one of Spradley's (1980) three categories: 'participant observer' (pp. 53-58), 'nonparticipation observer' (p. 59), or 'passive participation' (p. 59). These three categories could be extrapolated for the context of reception, because a participant can be an author, the audience, or a deliverer of rhyme verse.

Although the concept of 'domains'—defined in Spradley (1979, p. 100)—is used as a search parameter in the process of ethnographic analysis, I have adapted that concept to focus on academic standpoints, professional opinions from successful poets or songwriters, and commentary by poetry or song experts.

An example of gauging the degree of reception and relatability for rhyme verse—in the style of song—is to investigate participants in the entertainment industry and how that industry creates, delivers, or rates songs.

For instance, the *Billboard Hot 100* music charts are compiled by using data from sales, airplay, electronically monitored data, and audience impressions (Billboard Charts Legend 2021). By employing data from deliverers and buyers of songs, this chart ranks the popularity of reception for particular songs.

Even though it is preferential decisions by people that establishes reception, I have not done an in-depth analysis of social or cultural behaviours, because it is not the objective of my research to extensively deliberate on reasons why reception exists. The main focus of this project is to substantiate whether reception of rhyme verse is apparent in connection with the three delivery avenues of education, entertainment and advertisement.

Nonetheless, after seeing interviewee comments in various sources,[7] it is clear that there can be an element of sociology and cultural behaviour connected to reception and relatability, such as: lack of self-confidence in one's own ability, confusion about expectations, and peer group pressure.

Onwuegbuzie, Leech, and Collins say, 'in the context of the research synthesis, the informants are the researchers' (2012, p. 17). This assertion emphasises that an interviewee's input can be important for accumulating life experience data, which can be used for research.

However, I made a research approach decision to not undertake study participant interviews of my own, because my initial exploration into the three purposes of this thesis—composition, reception and relatability of rhyme verse—found ample studies and professional commentaries to support my creative writing project.

Consequently, I chose to use existing scholarly literature, professional reports, and public commentaries in my research to study what factors could influence the reception and relatability of rhyme verse for modern English-speaking culture.

---

[7] See in this thesis: Rhyme Verse Composition: Choose Vernacular Style (p. 177) & Delivery Avenues for Rhyme Verse: Education; Teachers (pp. 189-192), and Education: Students; 'poetry' and 'song' (pp., 192-196).

As well as discovering public attitude towards the reception of poetry (including rhyme verse), the method of research synthesis—employed for a review of scholarly literature—uncovered how some teachers and senior school students evaluate the merit of poetry within an education system. Several research sources advised that there are educators and students who willingly avoid engagement with poetry.

There are teachers who believe they are not skilled enough to teach it, and some students say they have difficulty learning poetry and that it is unimportant for their studies (refer to footnote 7). Also, this exegesis draws upon content of the creative writing product—*Verbal Tap Dance: a collection of rhyme verse*—to exercise an interrelated process of studying essential elements for composition of recent rhyme verse.

RECEPTION AND RELATABILITY OF RHYME VERSE

WHAT IS RHYME VERSE?

Rhyme has been used to convey ideas, events and emotions. It might be a couple of lines of text, be spread over a few pages, or span many pages. Preferential length of rhyme pieces has changed over the years. Under the next heading, I review particular times in English history when rhyme has significance.

Historical Overview of Rhyme

Looking at the presence of rhyme verse throughout English history, it can be seen that rhyme has varied reception and relatability—concerning expression of ideas, emotions, and events—depending on the demographic authorial source creating the writing within a particular region. Consequently, it is only by knowing the meaning of words in rhyme verse that we can recognise its message and decipher its overall meaning. If the words and phrases are antiquated and rarely used today, a modern audience will have trouble understanding the poem. Also, trying to get past the characteristic archaism of older poetry will more than likely stifle appreciation of the poem's content.

Antiquated poetry—such as that in the western canon—is often employed for literary studies. It covers a wide range of styles and themes, but is western canon material truly relatable for a modern audience to learn rhyme verse? I think perhaps, at first read, many people of today might not be familiar with the content, including some of the people designated as 'audience' for this thesis.[8] It would need a teacher who is not reluctant to teach poetry to translate the unfamiliar vernacular of older poetry and how it relates to ideas and events of today.

Even poetry reviewers during Coleridge's time were not in favour of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. It is thought to be 'too long, according to most of Coleridge's contemporaries among the critics reviewing the *Lyrical Ballads of 1798*, in which it first appeared' (Creed 1960, p. 215), and 'the reviewers…disliked its archaisms and the obscurity of its confused imagery' (Creed 1960, p. 215).

Yet, every so often, poetry by poets from the Romantic era—such as Wordsworth, Coleridge and Blake—contains words and phrases that resemble current English vernacular that could interest a modern audience. However, generally the rhyme verse from this era can be difficult to read. In other words, contemporary language has fewer linguistic obstacles for a modern audience.

If we focus on late 18th & early 19th centuries, it is apparent that the rhyming text is written in a different way than what is authored today. It needs an accomplished teacher to impart the cadence of older poems by reading it aloud.

---

[8] Teachers and senior school students.

Of course, reading a poem aloud is valid for any style of poetry to help demystify its rhythm – whether it is traditional, modern, or a form of experimental rhyme. Although, at times, the lengthy poem 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' (The Norton Anthology of Poetry, 3rd edn., p. 568) exudes a modernistic turn of phrase, such as:

> *And now there came both mist and snow,*
>
> *And it grew wondrous cold:*
>
> *And ice, mast-high, came floating by,*
>
> *As green as emerald.*
>
> *(Coleridge 1798, Part 1, lines 51-54)*

The last seven lines of Tennyson's 'Claribel' poem (Poetry Foundation 2020b) follow an *aababcc* rhyme scheme that has *eth* at the end of each line, and the start of each end word seems tantalisingly familiar.

> *Her song the lintwhite swelleth,*
>
> *The clear-voiced mavis dwelleth,*
>
> *The callow throstle lispeth,*
>
> *The slumbrous wave outwelleth,*
>
> *The babbling runnel crispeth,*
>
> *The hollow grot replieth*
>
> *Where Claribel low-lieth.*
>
> *(Tennyson 1830, lines 15-21)*

To fully understand the content, a modern audience needs to translate words such as:

- *lintwhite* (linnet, a songbird)
- *mavis* (French for songbird)
- *callow* (inexperienced, immature)
- *throstle* (a song thrush)
- *lispeth* (origin of word unknown, but could mean the thrush had a defective birdcall – which can be analogous to a lisp in humans)
- *grot* (grotto or crypt)

The above attempt at translation shows how challenging old-fashioned poetry can be for modern English-speaking people.

An article by Benjamin Markovits in The Guardian says:

> TS Eliot wrote that great works of art exist in a timeless continuum. By this standard, *Childe Harold* is certainly not a great work of art – it has dated. But even to Byron's readers it would have appeared old fashioned. The poem took Spenser as a model, and was written deliberately in archaic language (2011, para. 9).

This archaic language would pose a translation challenge for a modern audience. If for example we examine an excerpt from Lord Byron's 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage' (Byron, Lord 1812), we can see—like Tennyson's 'Claribel'—the wordage and phrasing is out of sorts with today's English language, and it can be an effort to read.

> *Childe Harold was he hight—but whence his name*
> *And lineage long, it suits me not to say;*
> *Suffice it, that perchance they were of fame,*
> *And had been glorious in another day:*
> *But one sad losel soils a name for aye,*
> *However mighty in the olden time;*
> *Nor all that heralds rake from coffined clay,*
> *Nor florid prose, nor honeyed lines of rhyme,*
> *Can blazon evil deeds, or consecrate a crime.*
>
> *(Byron 1812, Canto I, III, p. 16)*

The words *hight*, *perchance*, *losel*, *florid*, and *blazon,* plus the phrase *nor all that heralds rake from coffined clay*, do not readily impart their meanings. However, once deciphered, it becomes apparent the poem signifies that the assumed early renown of Harold's life does not offer forgiveness for an implied ignoble deed done later in life.

If some of its terms are reworked for a modern audience, then *hight* translates as *called*, *perchance* becomes *maybe*, *losel* converts to *loser* (or *worthless person)*, *florid prose* equates to *elaborate prose*, and *blazon* can be *parade* or *promote*. If the line *nor all that heralds rake from coffined clay* is inspected for its meaning, we can assume it tells us that no amount of dignity from one's good deeds, or heritage privilege, can repair damage done to a reputation due to a recent shameful act.

Viewing my poem 'Purple Night' (Hancock 2022, pp. 39-40), and revisiting the translated words and phrases of 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage', thematic similarities can be seen denoting war and humanity (and the lack of humanity) that are implied in Byron's poem.

Although my poem is only one example of recent poetry writing, it can show how any modern rhyme verse might be easier to follow than older rhyme verse. As I have said on page 165, contemporary language has fewer linguistic obstacles for a modern audience; therefore, recent rhyme verse taught in the classroom can be an asset to complement older style poetry.

When we speak of war poetry, Laurie J Laker says, 'the men who went to war in The Great War did so on the back of great stories and noble words' (2014, p. 60, para.3). Logically, this is possibly true of any war.

Wilfred Owen's 'The Next War' derives its content from his participation in World War I (1914-1918). He employs metaphor to relate what it was like to take part in the conflict – using phrases such as: 'odour of his breath', 'spat at us with bullets', and 'coughed shrapnel', which convey the rigours of battle. Owen also uses the word 'scythe' to metaphorically depict the symbolic tool of The Grim Reaper who personifies death.

> *Out there, we've walked quite friendly up to Death,-*
> *Sat down and eaten with him, cool and bland,-*
> *Pardoned his spilling mess-tins in our hand.*
> *We've sniffed the green thick odour of his breath,-*
> *Our eyes wept, but our courage didn't writhe.*
> *He's spat at us with bullets and he's coughed*
> *Shrapnel. We chorussed when he sang aloft,*
> *We whistled while he shaved us with his scythe.*
>
> *Oh, Death was never enemy of ours!*
> *We laughed at him, we leagued with him, old chum.*
> *No soldier's paid to kick against His powers.*
> *We laughed, knowing that better men would come,*
> *And greater wars: when each proud fighter brags*
> *He wars on Death, for lives; not men, for flags.*
>
> *(Owen 1917)*

Owen's poem has an obvious thematic message running through it that speaks of death being ever present on the battlefield. His poem personifies the presence of death in an effort to make sense of the horrendous experience he and his comrades were going through. He asks us to imagine death as an entity. Lines 9-11 deliver a nonchalant rhythm that talks about a buddy relationship between soldiers and *Death*. The statement 'we leagued with him' (Owen 1917, line 10) does give the impression that when soldiers think about death it is 'as if after all we might be on the same side' (Simcox, 2001, para. 3). In other words, *Death* is just another comrade doing his job – meaning *Death* and a soldier of war can both deliver a mortal blow.

My poem 'Red Rain' (Hancock 2022, pp. 35-37) also tells a story of war from a soldier's point of view where it was difficult to find the enemy. This poem has metaphor running through it, but some of these metaphors might not be easily understood. Nonetheless, some verbs and adverbs used, such as: sliding, menaced, oppressing, accelerating, and foreshadowed, set up an evocative flow of rhythmic narrative.

Placing explicit phrases in close succession—such as, *the air smelled of decay // the ground stank of death* (lines 9-10)—makes message and meaning brutally obvious, and implies that where they are is not a nice place to be. However, what probably has sub-textual meaning is *like unwanted relatives // outcasts of the clan* (lines 17-18).

These phrases refer to how Vietnam War soldiers—upon their return to Australia—were treated with disdain by some protesters, because of the intense emotive anti-war standpoint by the public concerning that particular war.

The motivation for this rhyme verse was a Vietnam War documentary that aired on television around the commemoration date of Anzac Day 25th April 2008. The film content was horribly graphic in its detail. It dredged up an uncomfortable feeling for me, because from 24th November 1964 to 5th December 1972 Australia had a National Service scheme to train military personnel who could be deployed to fight in overseas conflicts. During 1972, Vietnam was a warzone hotspot, and I was only two years away from the possibility of being conscripted into military service and sent to Vietnam. Back then in 1972, the subtext of my life was intense apprehension.

Moving away from the topic of war, the song 'Crazy'—written in contemporary 20th Century American vernacular by Willie Nelson (1961)—is a modern take on an old theme. As seen in the opening six lines, it is apparent the message is about self-recriminations for loving an unfaithful person.

> *Crazy*
> *I'm crazy for feelin' so lonely*
> *I'm crazy*
> *Crazy for feelin' so blue*
> *I knew you'd love me as long as you wanted*
> *And then someday you'd leave me for somebody new*
>
> *(Nelson 1961, lines 1-6)*

According to filmmaker Ken Burns—in his 2019 documentary *Country Music*—the song 'Crazy' is the No.1 popular choice for a jukebox song' *(episode 4).* 'Crazy' is evidence to confirm that modern vernacular—written in rhyming structure about themes that resonate with today's society—can increase the reception and relatability of rhyme when mixed with music. This song shot to #2 on the country, #9 on the pop, #2 on the easy listening charts, and remained a hit though the Christmas season (Gomery 2003, Crazy—Patsy Cline 1961, para. 16).

Lyrics in my song 'Prison Bars' (Hancock 2022, pp. 126-127) similarly relate to the theme in 'Crazy', whereby someone is feeling the stress of an absent loved one – only this time it is from the point of view of the person who did the dastardly deed and is now suffering. My song was inspired by a movie plot that had a cheating husband who was finally ejected from the family home by his corporate executive wife. The opening verse—o*nce upon a time // you were my only mission // but now it feels like I'm looking // through the bars of a prison*—stayed in my notepad for nearly a year before I finished the composition.

RHYME VERSE COMPOSITION

Composition of a piece of rhyme verse has a big impact on how it might be received. Under this heading, I explore five essential elements of composition that frame how to create skilful and effective rhyme verse:

(i)   Selection of a Theme

(ii)   Message & Meaning Decision

(iii)   Choose Vernacular Style

(iv)   Determine the Rhyme Scheme

(v)   Structure the Right Syntax

It is important to mention that the treatment of these five composition elements has great influence over the appearance, mood, and positive reception and relatability of rhyme verse.

Selection of a Theme

For rhyme verse to exist it has to be about someone or something, which can be termed as a 'main idea'. Deliberating on the main idea and its suggested standpoint is known as a 'theme'. A theme can have universal ideas and/or commonly recognised events, or portray views and circumstances that are less well-known. Any choice of theme can have a big impact on a piece of rhyme verse and affect whether it will be well received or be relatable. An author should contemplate this in the context of a particular audience before writing rhyme verse. My research mainly focusses on two demographics of people[9] within modern English-speaking culture with a significant purpose of investigating their reception of rhyme verse.

Many ideas can be considered for the basis of a poem or song before choosing who or what to write about, and how a theme is to be conveyed to an audience. It might feature feelings and consequences of a personal experience, or be prompted by an event that pleased, intrigued or offended. The theme selected will form the starting-point for the message it will deliver.

There can be several ways to start the process of selecting what to write about in a piece of rhyme verse. Poet, Roger Stevens, says, 'you see or hear something that triggers a thought' (Stevens 2015, para. 1). Also, Stevens (2015) suggests placing a word or picture 'in the middle of a large piece of paper' (para. 5), which becomes the theme. He then advises 'write down as many associated words as you can, linked to the theme' and 'let each word suggest an idea or thought' that links to 'memories or feelings' (Stevens 2015, para. 7-8).

---

[9] Teachers and senior school students.

This procedure in some ways aligns with my process—created for gathering data for a theme—that I call *WELL of Themes*, which stands for *Write*, *Emulate*, *Look*, *Liberate*. Each of these processes mean:

(a) Write down some random words or names of objects.

(b) Emulate (not plagiarise) the writing of a poet or songwriter that you admire.

(c) Look around and find something or someone the interests you.

(d) Liberate a thought or idea that has been nagging you for some time.

Choosing a theme is a constructive option for creative writing, and for this thesis I have selected theme as my primary approach for finding a rhyme verse topic. For other approaches there are many books and websites on the topic of starting poetry. There are online sites that talk about theme for stories; however, there is little information about finding themes for rhyme. Nevertheless, authors can choose familiar thoughts, sensations, or occasions as a theme for their rhyming poem or song using this concise style of telling a story.

Masterclass.com is a website that puts aspiring writers in touch with notable story tellers, such as: James Patterson, Dan Brown, Margaret Atwood, Neil Gaiman, and Aaron Sorkin. Although the Masterclass staff (2021) talk about theme, they mainly deal with what to do once you have a theme – not specific techniques for how to find one. Nicholas Marsh (1995) talks about identifying themes in a story when he supposes, 'there is a lot in it about love, or it is about hope and despair' (1995, Finding a Theme: What is Theme). A webpage for friends of English teacher Thomas Trevenen (n.d.), and the Jolliffe (2021) webpage, offer several ways to choose a theme.

However, Masterclass (2021), Thomas Trevenen (n.d.), and Jolliffe (2021) do not mention rhyme verse, nor do they greatly align with my process for finding a theme. This leads me to believe my distinctive way of choosing a theme for rhyme verse is an uncommon process that could provide a supplemental educative view for the Creative Writing discipline, because teachers and students can be reluctant to engage with poetry in classrooms. *WELL of Themes* is designed to be a guide to kick-start the gathering of rhyming words and phrases to compose something that has a familiar message and meaning.

Message & Meaning Decision

The Macquarie Concise Dictionary states that a message is:

1. a communication, as of information, advice, direction, or the like, transmitted through a messenger or other agency.
2. an inspired communication of a prophet.
3. the moral or meaning intended to be conveyed by a book, film, play, or the like.

(eds. Delbridge & Bernard 1998, p. 716)

A wrong choice of words and phrases can adversely change the meaning of a rhyming poem or song. Also, if ill-considered content is chosen it could also jeopardise the message intention, which might disrupt positive reception and relatability of the rhyme verse. While there can be relevance of era and place in rhyme verse—to determine message intent—it is important to look at the words and phrases within the confines of the rhyme verse structure to determine how they might affect a modern audience.

Spradley (1979) says, 'meaning, in one form or another, permeates the experience of most human beings in all societies' (p. 95), and he asks, 'how do words and behavior and objects become meaningful?' (p. 95). Spradley also says, 'all cultural meaning is created by using symbols' (1979, p. 95). Furthermore, we should know that words are just a form of symbols, which mean something to somebody who understands the language. Specific words employed—and how they are arranged—help define the kind of meaning we want to convey.

A message can be thought of as a theme, and that message normally has an obvious or underlying meaning attached. Usually, the meaning is conveyed by the employment of descriptive or emotive words and phrases, which appear to reinforce each other in a common thread of reference. *The Macquarie Concise Dictionary* states that a meaning is: '1. that which is intended to be, or actually is, expressed or indicated; signification, import' (eds. Delbridge & Bernard 1998, p. 707).

Ika Willis talks about the meaning of a text and how 'it involves us in big questions about the nature of interpretation, language and meaning, as well as questions about the relationship between texts and contexts' (2018, Introduction, What is Reception?, para. 5). Willis' quote goes to the heart of reception and why certain texts are well received. For reception of rhyme verse, language and message are major factors closely followed by interpretation and meaning. My viewpoint acknowledges that specific words and phrases—which form speech patterns—are the bedrock of vernacular for each population and help facilitate interpretation to comprehend an intended meaning behind the words. I am very particular about the language I use for my rhyme verse, because incorrect words and phrases could misrepresent the context and meaning I want to impart, thereby impeding positive reception and relatability.

However, James P. Spradley focuses on ethnography and he intimates that a researcher needs to be mindful of the language in which the information is being delivered, because it could skew the meaning of the data if the researcher's own language dominates what is being recorded.

This mindfulness of language could also be true for the reception of a message— intended to be in a particular vernacular—if the author of the rhyme verse inserts a different vernacular into their work.

Steven Denning, a member of the Advisory Board of the Drucker Forum, alludes to how context has an influence on meaning. While his understanding is more to do with business than a dissertation on rhyme verse, Denning believes in the importance of meaning and says:

> narrative meaning is about connections…it links individual human actions and events into inter-related aspects of an understandable composite… narrative displays the significance that events have for one another (2020, para 6).

Denning's interpretation of narrative and meaning holds true for my study about what elements are important to the message of a rhyming poem or song that urges people to take notice. The theme of a poem or song is usually enjoyed most when it resonates with a passionate interest or significant experience of the recipient, which could foster positive reception and relatability. This logic is why I mainly aim to compose my rhyme verse on themes that are largely universal.

Although I tend to employ many infrequently used words and phrases, my rhyme is written in current English language that should be assessable to modern English-speaking people, thereby increasing the chance of reception and relatability.

Focussing on interest and experience concerning children, the National Quality Standard (NQS) initiative by the Australian government is aware of the importance when it says in its *Professional Learning Program*:

> making use of children's interests to provide engaging and meaningful learning experiences is important, but it is also our role as educators to introduce new ideas and interests (Interest Based Learning n.d., para. 9).

While these educators are there to establish a qualitative and quantifiable learning process for children, the interest of the child is at the heart of the *Interest Based Learning*. Teenagers and adults usually have clear ideas about what their own interests are, and to a great degree those interests can be forged by experiential learning, which might inform their choice of poetry and song. This choice can set up a pattern of preference that could promote reception of rhyme verse with the aid of a study resource about comprehension and composition of rhyming poems and songs.

Current or outdated

I am certain that if a message needs to be delivered, it should be written in a way that is intelligible for the intended recipient. Consequently, it can be presupposed that language is: 'how you say what you want to say, or the words a writer chooses to clearly and effectively express ideas or to evoke a particular mood' (Center for Academic Excellence 2009, p. 1).

Poets and songwriters need to be vigilant about which demographics they want to reach with their works. Writers should know their reader's values, beliefs, opinions,

knowledge, and interests (Center for Academic Excellence 2009, p. 4). Using vocabulary and terminology suitable for a specific audience is crucial if a writer wants people to connect with their work – to elicit positive reception and relatability. Furthermore, it seems logical that 'if the reader belongs to a specific group, sometimes writers can make assumptions about prior knowledge' (Center for Academic Excellence 2009, p. 3). One form of popular expression is called 'colloquialism', and another is 'jargon'. Although jargon might be current language, if not used in the correct cultural or employment setting, it can be an eradicator of what I call *coherent transference of meaning*.

For example, when writing for a group of people in the computer industry, technical language and jargon related to that field can be used without confusing the reader (Center for Academic Excellence 2009, p. 3). However, it would be illogical to give a book concerning quantum physics to a pastry chef who is not interested in complex scientific theories. It would be like receiving a book of rhyme verse in a foreign language you do not understand. This rationale also applies to rhyme verse audiences when it comes to outdated rhyming poems and songs that are not easy to understand.

Choosing cultural rebellion as a theme to be explored, there are poems and songs that focus on local uprising, or national revolution, or worldwide war. An excerpt from the poignant song 'One Tin Soldier' (1969)—performed by musical band The Original Caste—clearly describes the deeds of military conflict. According to the website Genius Media Group, the message was penned in protest about the Vietnam War (1954-1975). In 1971, the band Coven re-released the song and increased its popularity when it appeared on the *Billboard Hot 100* music charts for 18 weeks with a highest position of 26. The song's chorus employs current English language to deliver its message. It goes as follows:

> *Go ahead and hate your neighbor,*
> *Go ahead and cheat a friend.*
> *Do it in the name of heaven,*
> *You can justify it in the end.*
> *There won't be any trumpets blowing,*
> *Come the judgment day,*
> *On the bloody morning after*
> *One tin soldier rides away.*
>
> *(Potter & Lambert 1969)*

I have the impression that the last line of the chorus is meant to indicate how a soldier—who has gone through the rigours of war—more often than not becomes emotionally distant, and might turn into a hollow and hardened person – tin-like.

This song aired on radio in 1969 when I was a pre-teen. It seemed to have a good-sized fan-base among the youth in my area at the time. Maybe because it was the theme song for a successful independent movie *Billy Jack* (1971), which has a contemporary message of a returned soldier trying to fit back into non-military society.

Given the negative hype in Australia about the Vietnam War at the time, this shows how a rhyme verse song can embed itself into the psyche of a sizeable portion of population, and stimulate peaceful protest to change government attitude about overseas military engagements.

In 'The Tide Comes' (Hancock 2022, pp. 53-54) we see it generically portrays the rise and decline of rebels going through overarching motions of rebellion. It shows how song verses (or poem stanzas) can tell a story in an arrangement of concise rhyming clusters. Or, as Professor Peter Pierce explains it, 'telling a terse story in rhyming words' (Pierce 2017, para. 17). Analysis of this song clearly shows rhyming end word sounds that create the rhythm. To support this, Karen Farnen believes a set pattern of regular rhythms is making it easier to remember (n.d., The Importance of Rhythm). Thus, this rhythmic rhyming pattern should give 'The Tide Comes' memorable reception.

I think the reception of rhyme verse for songs (and poems) about war and freedom comes from a need to be reminded of the horrors of martial conflict. The article *The Psychology of War* advises that 'human beings, in general, have a strong need for belonging and identity which can easily manifest itself in ethnicism, nationalism, or religious dogmatism' (Taylor 2014, Psychological Explanations, para. 6). Also, under the article's sub-heading *Decline in War*, Taylor explains:

> sport is a good example of what William James meant by a moral equivalent of war — an activity that satisfies similar psychological needs to war, and has a similar invigorating and socially-binding effect, but does not involve the same degree of violence and devastation (2014, para. 4).

War is present in the modern world and is a familiar theme for writing poetry and songs. There can be many reasons why war starts, continues and ends. One reason could be a misinformed message that triggered a misinterpreted meaning. Whether a rhyming poem or song is about an outdated or current conflict, an audience needs to comprehend the content. This means there ought to be an obvious message in easily understood language, or a sub-textual meaning that can be interpreted from suitable and relevant words and phrases employed in the rhyme verse.

Obvious message or sub-textual meaning

Does the meaning of a poem reveal itself from just reading the words? Not always. There can be times while reading poetry or listening to a song, when a particular

verse—or the overall poem/song—stimulates an emotion or prompts a supplementary notion, which is not apparent via the text alone. This is known as 'subtext' – what is sometimes called 'reading-between-the-lines'. It suggests some audiences are not just comprehending the written words and phrases, they are perceiving an additional message that is not obvious if the writing is accepted only at face value. This sub-textual meaning can be a theme that an author wants the audience to know.

Production of a piece of writing begins in the mind of an author who then conveys those ideas and emotions via words. When arranged into phrases and sentences, these words ought to have a thematic message. The intent of a meaning informs how that text should be structured. If the topic is about affection and tranquillity then the lines might be long and flowing with subtlety of thoughts. However, if the topic is about aggression, the lines could be short and staggered with confronting words and phrases. Likewise, a poet or songwriter needs to decide the structure of a piece of rhyme verse and if they want to make the message & meaning obvious or abstruse.

Subtext can have a role to play in songs about human interaction. There is a rhyming lyrics song that is a simple rhyme verse, where the words were written 'to console the young Julian Lennon after the divorce of his parents John and Cynthia' (BBC 2020, para. 3). Paul McCartney's subtext is saying to Julian that he should embrace the new woman in his father's life. The opening lyrics to 'Hey Jude' are as follows:

Hey Jude, don't make it bad
Take a sad song and make it better
Remember to let her into your heart
Then you can start to make it better
Hey Jude, don't be afraid
You were made to go out and get her
The minute you let her under your skin
Then you begin to make it better

> **Note**: these lyrics use a mixture of rhyme styles. There is *internal rhyme*, such as: bad/sad, heart/start, afraid/made, get her/let her, and skin/begin. *Slant rhyme* is used for words: better/remember/let her. Also, there is *end rhyme* using the word 'better', supported by *slant rhyme* 'get her' as a once-off use at line six end.

(Lennon & McCartney 1968)

The obvious use of the phrase 'make it better' as end rhyme for several lines, emphasise that even after a sad song (subtext for a sad situation) things can be all right. The phrase 'you were made to go out and get her' might mean being forced to accept the presence of somebody new, or having a temperament that accepts change.

Furthermore, 'under your skin' could be a sub-textual way of signifying embrace someone to feel better – to personally connect with somebody. This song—with basic lyrics in current English vernacular—is an audience favourite when played at a Paul McCartney concert, meaning it has sustained positive reception for many years.

Focussing on obvious message, *Colluding in the 'torture' of poetry: Shared beliefs and assessment* (Xerri 2013) describes study findings from the research in which eight poetry teachers and fifteen students participated.

Daniel Xerri mentions one teacher's thoughts about poetry, which states, 'a lot of students…believe that the key to a good critical appreciation is discovering what lies beneath the words…to decipher a hidden code, which will tell what the poem is all about' (2013, Teacher: TD, p. 141).

This also suggests that students can be attuned to the idea of subtext in poetry, and that they search for sub-textual meaning underlying the surface message. Equipping students with awareness of poetic form such as rhyme may support their search for meaning based on the interaction of words, sounds, and senses. To understand purpose, importance, and consequence of a message, I suggest working through a process that I call SPIRAL of Meaning (Hancock 2022, pp. 17-18).

Furthermore, the fact that students are seeking meaning in poetry—which could be a rhyming poem—bodes well for the reception of rhyme verse, regardless if that reception is based on negative or positive factors, such as in the case of rap music.[10]

Choose Vernacular Style

What is vernacular? According to *The Macquarie Concise Dictionary*, it is:

1. native or originating in the place of its occurrence or use, as language or words (often as opposed to *literary* or *learned language*);

2. expressed or written in the native language of a place, as literary works.

<div align="right">(eds. Delbridge & Bernard 1998, p. 1302)</div>

Vernacular is an important aspect for the reception and relatability of rhyme verse. I acknowledge that vernacular can encompass a wide spectrum of ideas, events and emotions depending on common interests of people. This can even be true for a population situated in the same geographic area. Consequently, when common interests change there is a chance that vernacular could also change. When and how rapidly a specific vernacular change occurs would need to be addressed in another research project.

Narrative can also be significant. If narrative is written in the right vernacular it could help reinforce the sincerity of the message. The more familiar the voice of the poem or song is for an audience, the greater likelihood that a piece of writing will be positively received. A way of characterising vernacular could be to call it what Spradley (1980) refers to as 'folk domains' (p. 90), or 'folk terms' (pp. 89 & 91).

---

[10] See in this thesis: Positive or Negative Reactions (p. 185)

These are labels Spradley uses for ethnographic analysis to describe 'when all the terms come from the language used by people in the social situation' (p. 90). In other words, this socialising could involve dialects, local expressions (colloquialisms), and possibly jargon, which are in current use by an entire community or used only in a particular part of a population.

Pre-20th Century folk music is a minor subset of today's popular music (rhyme verse) and mainly relates to a national or communal identity. Occasionally, a piece of folk music will transcend generational boundaries and continue to be heard in modern culture, even if the song's vernacular is considered to be non-contemporary. Logically, if rhyme verse employs these community 'folk terms'—and delivers it to the same community—that rhyme verse should have popular reception.

Whether text is antiquated or current vernacular, most rhyme verse attempts to follow a characteristic of rhythm that gives it a progression of words and phrases that flow. Rhythm plays a part in the effectiveness of rhyme verse. Kelly & Rubin offer a definition of what a 'natural' rhythmic pattern in verse might mean when they describe it as, 'a pattern that has parallels in the rhythmic structure of ordinary speech' (1988, Abstract).

Ordinary speech can have the benefit of making information easily understood. Conveying an opinion, decision, or incident in an unfamiliar vernacular could be unwise, because the familiarity of local voice from the region that spawned the comment or concern would be absent. This could hinder positive reception and relatability of the rhyme verse.

Of course, there are many words—even phrases—that are universal in their ability to position themselves in different regions of English-speaking culture. These universal words and phrases can often appear in rhyme verse, especially in songs. Consequently, more common language employed in rhyme verse content tends to increase the possibility of greater reception. To choose the right vernacular, a target audience needs to be identified, so that appropriate words, phrases, terms, and inferences are employed to capture attention and sustain interest. For this purpose, I have identified my intended audience demographics for this thesis.[11]

Dell Hymes proposes that 'survey researchers need to know linguistically about a community, in selecting a language variety, and in conducting interviews, is in effect an application of the community's sociolinguistic description' and it is dependent on 'the interaction of language with social life' (Hymes, cited in Kiesling & Paulston 2005, p. 5). Moreover, 'the ethnographic study of language use aims at describing the knowledge that participants in verbal interaction need and display in order to communicate successfully with one another' (Duranti, cited in Kiesling & Paulston 2005, p. 19).

---

[11] Teachers and senior school students.

178

These viewpoints sound as though they could be a way to describe vernacular, which would support my suggestion that a message is best written in common speech used by the intended recipient for it to be readily deciphered and have positive reception.

Considering that this thesis is about the reception and relatability of rhyme verse for modern English-speaking culture, I suggest that recent rhyme verse presented would need to acknowledge everyday speech and social life when choosing a theme intended for a particular demographic of population. Therefore, to create rhyme verse for a particular country the context of vernacular needs to be understood. For instance, in Australia, consideration should be given to words or phrases that are typically Australian – even if rarely used today. Samples of this are:

- chockers (very full);
- dunno (do not know);
- dog's breakfast (all over the place, or very untidy);
- this arvo (this afternoon);
- tell them their dreaming (they are wrong, or it is not going to happen);
- flat chat (very busy);
- laughing gear (mouth);
- you betcha (it is fact, or possible);
- catcha later (will see you again);
- have a Captain Cook (have a look)

Two more examples of typical Australian vernacular are: 'mark' – meaning to grab a football in the air, and 'screamer' – describing 'a spectacular overhead mark' (ANU 2017). Although I am Australian born and raised, unless I am writing a poem or song about Australian cultural matters, the vernacular I employ is modern English spanning from the last quarter of the 20th Century up until now, which aims for reception and relatability by a wider demographic of audience.

Vernacular does change over time, and Australian vernacular of the 20th and 21st Centuries has in some way been influenced—for instance—by the integration of American English, which dates back 150 years. There was an influx of Americans to the goldfields from the 1850s, and they brought with them a bunch of American colloquialisms (Burridge & Manns, 2018, para. 10). Furthermore, Sidney J. Baker says, 'the American element in our slang is growing fast and outstripping the original Cockney element' (1943, para. 1). Adding to these past arrivals by Americans, we should also factor in the arrival of cinema and television to pinpoint some avenues of American words and phrases entering the Australian vernacular. Nonetheless, words and phrases that recently enter Australian vernacular should be considered as contemporary language for many senior students engaging with rhyming poems and songs.

Focussing on education, Sue Dymoke believes poems should be 'more appropriate to student's contexts, experience or abilities (2012, para. 25)', of which vernacular would be a significant influence. I agree with this assumption in the context of senior school students, and approach the educational perspective of rhyme later in this exegesis.[12]

Determine the Rhyme Scheme

A significant influence on rhyme verse reception is known as 'rhyme scheme'. This scheme shapes the poem or song, informs how it should read or be sung, and gives it the rhythm. The history of writing poetry and songs has provided current English-speaking culture with a variety of rhyme schemes. Explanations for all these schemes can be found in books on how to write rhyme, on government education websites, and poetry teaching online sites. However, for this thesis I am concentrating on only four commonplace schemes called 'perfect rhyme', 'end rhyme,' slant rhyme', and 'internal rhyme'. Concerning composition of rhyme verse, I present some poetic elements and composition terms that reinforce the construction of rhyming poems or songs, but I do not delve too deeply into detail.

Although, concerning these elements and terms, it can be seen that the last seven words of the preceding sentence is employing the literary device of *consonance* – as in repetition of consonants 'd' and 't', and even *assonance* with the 'ooh' vowel sound in *do*, *too* and *into*. There are many books and websites available that outline the various literary terms and rhyme schemes. Therefore, I will not go into meticulous explanations of what they are (see examples on p. 12).

My purpose for this thesis is not to plunge headlong into strict traditional rules of poetry, but to concentrate on revealing practical points and artistic suggestions for composition of rhyme verse, which can be useful for people designated as 'audience' for this thesis. Nevertheless, I have included simple clarifications for some of the general terms—used for poetic elements.[13]

perfect rhyme

This style of rhyming has two or more words that have equal number of *syllables* (one or more vowel sounds) and include the same *assonance* (repeating an alike vowel or vowels). A perfect rhyme contains *homonyms,* which are words that have different meanings, but: (a) have spelling that matches and sound the same; or (b) have mismatched spelling and the same sound. Here are some samples of *homonyms*:

air/heir	bail/bale	bean/been	board/bored	can	cell/sell	current	eight/ate

---

[12] See in this thesis: Delivery Avenues for Rhyme Verse.
[13] See in this thesis: Chapter 2: Five Essential Elements of Rhyme Verse Composition.

express	flaw/floor	flee/flea	flour/flower	for/four	fourth/forth	gaol/jail	grate/great
here/hear	new/knew	pair/pare/pear	pray/prey	present	queue/cue	rain/reign/rein	
lean	lone/loan	main/mane	right/rite/wright/write	ring	row/roe	sea/see	seen/scene
some/sum	son/sun	thyme/time	to/two/too	wail/whale	well	which/witch	whole/hole

Exceptions to this rule are words such as 'wound', where the 'ou' can be pronounced as either *ooh* or *ow*, depending on the required meaning. Moreover, if two or more words do not have equal number of syllables it is not perfect rhyme, for example: *gain* and *complain*, or *row* and *tomorrow*. Also, if the vowel sounds are not phonetically exact, that part of the rhyme verse will be slant rhyme rather than perfect rhyme.

My song 'Ask Too Much' (Hancock 2022, pp. 77-78) has mainly perfect rhyme, which is shown at the end of all five lines in each particular verse. The second verse has words: *room*; *tomb*; *boom*; *gloom*; and *doom*. The third verse has words: *came*; *same*; *game*; *tame;* and *blame.* If all end words throughout the poem were to sound exactly the same the verse could also be a monorhyme[14].

end rhyme

Even though the choice of rhyme style is numerous, more often than not I tend to focus on end rhyme, as per the concise septet (7 lines) poem 'End of the Hall' seen below:

> *My lap is your armchair*
> *My arms are your shawl*
> *My chest is your pillow*
> *My body your wall*
> *My lips are your path*
> *I'm your warm bath*
>   *at the end of the hall*
> (Hancock 2022, p. 118)

This example shows how an uncomplicated end rhyme verse structure can deliver a dramatic message of devotion, so the audience can understand its meaning and possibly have an emotional connection with the content. For this poem, it was my intention to personify objects that symbolise comfort, and use them for the purpose of representing an affectionate relationship, which may or not be a one-sided love affair. It has end rhyme scheme of *abcbddb*, but there is not a consistently even arrangement of rhyming end words.

---

[14] Note: if all end words in all lines of 'Ask Too Much' finished with 'oom' then it becomes a monorhyme.

To compose the rhythm, several lines have the same syllable count, such as: lines 1, 3 & 7; and lines 2, 4 & 5. Line 6 has a standalone count of four syllables, because I wanted to use a contraction of 'I am' to present a less formal remark stressed by only one syllable. If read aloud, the rhythm of sounds (cadence) becomes apparent. In the middle of the poem (line 4) there should be a slight pause between *body* and *your* to maintain integrity of the cadence.

slant rhyme

A 'slant rhyme'—sometimes called 'lazy rhyme', 'half rhyme' or 'near rhyme'—does not have exact syllable sounds in a word that is intended to match another word in a poem or song. Instead, there could be parts of words in a rhyme verse that sound almost alike, such as: *apple, triple* and *dimple*, or *bugle, gurgle* and *tangle*. These examples show that it is the syllables at the end of the words which have the same rhyming sound *ple* and *gle*, but the first syllables do not rhyme *app/tri/dim* and *bu/gur/tan*.

Slant rhyme is a way of destabilizing an audience's anticipation that the end-words in a line of rhyme will be perfect rhyme. The use of slant rhyme scheme could shift attention away from the expected regularity of same sounding words at the end of the rhyme verse lines. And, because of the unexpected slant, it might encourage continued reception of the poem or song.

The employment of slant rhyme can be seen for lines 2 & 4, and 6 & 8 in the opening eight lines of my poem 'Earthwart'.

> *Barbarian and waterfall*
> *in a bottleneck of time*
> *In the company of strangers*
> *I find my own mind*
> *Circumnavigating the globe*
> *due east shuts its gates*
> *Ecological warrior*
> *fights pollution and waste*

(Hancock 2022, p. 70, lines 1-8)

'Earthwart' gives the impression of a cross between a journey of discovery and environmental concerns. Also, to ensure the poem has rhythm, I intentionally gave lines 1, 3, 5 & 7 an eight-syllable count to cement a rhythmic pattern.

internal rhyme (or middle rhyme)

To locate 'internal rhyme' in a poem or song, the reception of the rhyme verse might need robust focus. As the word 'internal' suggests, the rhyme can be in the middle of a line and rhyme with a middle word in another line, or could rhyme with an end word.

'Home' is a poem that has consistent 'internal rhyme', even though it also displays end rhyme. Here are the opening two verses:

> There's a place by the door
> reserved for old worn familiar shoes
> Passing through the entrance instils confidence
>   a sense of belonging ensues
>
> Lanes of ownership often made trip
> on boulevard strip of carpet
> Plaster expanse sky to avoid prying eye
>   no reason to fret

(Hancock 2022, p. 121, lines 1-8)

Although this poem exhibits portions of an internal rhyme scheme with: *door* & *for*, *entrance* & *confidence*, *ownership* & *trip* & *strip*, and *sky* & *eye*, other rhyme schemes are present. There is end rhyme with: *shoes* & *ensues*, and *carpet* & *fret*, and slant rhyme with *entrance* & *confidence*. This poem alludes to the emotional attachment we can have for a private dwelling or even a public building. The words instil the mood, and how the words and phrases are sequenced is known as syntax.

Structure the Right Syntax

To ensure there is popular reception and relatability of rhyme verse, there needs to be grammar considerations such as syntax, which helps present a coherent, fluent, and convincing piece of writing. Typically, human language users have a remarkable ability to analyze sounds and other gestures in a certain very sophisticated way (Koopman et al n.d., p. 37).

Focus on the simple sentence 'Jack chased the green balloon', apply syntactic analysis, and it should be clear that this sentence has correct grammar, which logically and coherently flows. However, the phrase 'balloon green the jack chased' reads as a disorderly thought pattern. Therefore, being alert to the importance of syntax is essential for composition of rhyme verse to achieve positive reception and relatability.

The intent of a message and its meaning informs how that text should be structured. As said under my exegesis heading 'obvious message and sub-textual meaning' (p. 176), if the topic is about affection and tranquillity then the lines might be long and flowing with subtlety of thought. However, if the topic is about aggression or confusion, the lines could be short and staggered with confronting words and phrases.

Imagine trying to understand a piece of writing—by a foreigner new to the language—and it has continual imperfect English on every page. Reception by an audience would probably not get past the first couple of pages. This reinforces the importance of proper syntax to logically present a message or meaning, so that it is clear for the audience.

COGNITIVE EFFECTS of EMPLOYING RHYME

When contemplating how rhyme verse is received, we need to investigate if there are any cognitive effects connected to rhyme that could influence its reception. One effect to explore is the possibility of an increase in the ability to remember. Other effects to look at are positive and negative reactions to rhyme, especially reactions based on the musical style known as rap.[15]

Memory

For a piece of rhyme to have popular reception, the meaning should be clear, and if important – remembered. Recalling information is what we try to instil in our children, and employing rhyme verse can help this process. There is scientific evidence that rhyme can improve memory, which should be viewed as a significant influence for positive reception of rhyme verse.

Concentrating on early childhood learning, rhymes can enhance young children's understanding of words, numbers, and concepts such as colours and directions (Mullen 2017, p. 47, para. 11). Mullen also says, 'narrative techniques and devices found in many rhymes model storytelling strategies' (2017, p. 48, para. 11). This is meaningful because rhyme verse has the potential to tell a story in a concise style of writing.

Kirsten Read believes there is 'a possible link between rhyme, predictability, and retention' (2014, Discussion of experiment 2). The USA National Library of Medicine has studied interest and memory in younger and older adults, and say, 'the results suggest that subjective interest may serve to enhance older adults' memory' (McGillivray et al. 2015, Abstract).

If the term 'subjective interest' is just another expression for reception, this means it has a possibility to enhance how rhyme verse is received by a senior adult audience. Consequently, this confirms my argument that there needs to be relatable content of rhyme verse for it to become popular for a wide range of age groups – including senior school students.

Also, Karen Farnen says, 'traditional poetry usually has regular rhythms that set a pattern, making it easier to remember for recitation...and adds aesthetic and emotional pleasure' (n.d., The Importance of Rhythm). If it is assumed that most song lyrics are just a version of rhyme poetry, then adding another layer of rhythm to rhyming words and phrases—in the form of music—can be significant for the reception of rhyme verse, due to memory benefits and emotional pleasure.

---

[15] See in this thesis: Positive or Negative Reactions (p. 185)

Rhyming can be a valuable technique to help us remember facts and important ideas. Another use of rhyming words 'has to do with *mnemonics*, tools that can be used to improve and assist human memory (Dove n.d., para. 2). Moreover, Walter J. Ong says, 'all expression and all thought…act as a mnemonic device of sorts' (2002, p.36). I suppose there is an element of *mnemonics* in rhyme verse, because of its capacity to deliver a message that is usually in a concise form.

Remembering your favourite song or poem—due to their rhyming pattern—can mean positive reception of rhyme verse. A *mnemonic* that I recall is:

> *Thirty days has September,*
> *April, June, and November;*
> *All the rest have thirty-one,*
> *Save February, with twenty-eight days clear,*
> *And twenty-nine each leap year.*

It is a *mnemonic* used for remembering how many days there are in each particular month on the Gregorian calendar. Psyche Central Staff say, 'rhymes are easier to remember because they can be stored by acoustic encoding in our brains' (Memory and Mnemonic Devices 2018, Rhymes).

With the benefit of recall, the *mnemonic* above is a learning tool that—if silently read, spoken, or sing-song sung—helps remember the number of days in each month for an English-speaking culture calendar. My reception of this particular rhyme verse was first met at primary school and I can attest that it works, because I continue to use it to jog my memory.

Positive or Negative Reactions

Taking into consideration that song lyrics can be a form of rhyme, the psychological study conducted at The University of Nebraska shows that if music is blended with rhyme, it can release emotions in an audience. This university study suggests 'rap music elicits powerful emotions and significant meanings across ethnic and racial groups' (Iwamoto et al 2007, Discussion). Kristen Porterfield tells us that:

> in 2007, the University of Nebraska took a phenomenological approach in discovering the effects of rap music by asking probing questions examining the lifestyle of the listeners involved in the study (2017, p. 7).

Of course, there is no certainty that a particular style of music (or song) will only evoke joy, because scientific research findings indicate that under certain circumstances there could be negative effects. Iwamoto et al (2007) found that:

> some negative and positive predictors have been identified (para. 4)…rap fans are aware of the negative messages (Misunderstood Music genre)...and they buffer the negative messages by concentrating their attention on the positive messages (Misunderstood Music genre).

The study by Iwamoto et al (2007) highlights that rap—which is mainly rhyme verse linked to an oral or instrumental rhythmic beat—does have influence on the reception of rhyme verse, even if it has denigrating messages. Also, Zentner et al say 'evidence suggests that one important reason for music's universal appeal lies in the emotional rewards that it offers to its listeners' (2008, para. 1).

This supports my viewpoint that if music is blended with rhyme verse there is a possibility that the emotion released can be a sense of wellbeing, which must be considered to be positive reception for rhyme verse. Later in this thesis, under the sub-heading Entertainment,[16] I present more findings that reveal when rhyme verse is blended with music it can have vast reception by an audience.

DELIVERY AVENUES for RHYME VERSE

Thinking about reception of rhyme verse, there is a need to discover how the rhyme is being delivered. In other words, how do rhyming poems and songs reach an audience to achieve some form of reception? This part of the exegesis explores three delivery avenues: (i) education; (ii) entertainment; and (iii) advertisement.

Education

For most English-speaking cultures of the 20th & 21st centuries, education became a compulsory government enforced requirement, which ranges from early childhood to senior teenage years. This enforced exposure to learning can be a significant influential factor in the exploration of how rhyme verse has been received in modern English-speaking culture. To explore this reception in an educational context, I have studied how rhyme fits with curriculum, and investigated teacher and student viewpoints concerning poetry and song (acknowledging that rhyme verse can be part of these writing styles).

Curriculum

I have considered senior school students as one significant focus for my study of the reception of rhyme verse, because it seems younger children in English-speaking culture receive ample amount of rhyme via their education classroom and home life. However, there is research that indicates rhyme might not be presented to senior school students due to educator resistance to teach poetry (Weaven & Clark 2015, p. 162). In other words, the overriding resistance to teach poetry has a consequential effect of not teaching the poetic style of rhyme verse. This raises a question mark about the involvement of curricula in this resistance by teachers. Although curriculum designers are not included in the demographic designated as 'audience'[17] for this thesis, they have input into determining what is taught in schools.

---

[16] See in this exegesis: Entertainment: Song Lyrics (p. 203).
[17] Teachers and senior school students.

Traditional literary history tends to avoid judgments of quality and instead relies on a predetermined, sanctioned canon of high literature (Rockhill 1996, p. 46). In a UK survey of Poetry Curriculum in Schools (2006-2007) 'a few poems appeared consistently to be studied…with Wilfred Owen's *Dulce et decorum est* (1918), W H Auden's *Stop All the Clocks* [aka *Funeral Blues*] (1938), and Dylan Thomas' *Do not go gentle into that good night* (1947) among the most popular' (Ofsted 2007, p. 13). Although these poems have substantial degree of celebrity, they are not recent poetry and might not hold the interest or be a top priority for modern senior school students.

I am not suggesting that modern rhyme verse should replace all other poetry taught in a classroom, merely advocating that some form of modern rhyme be introduced into a classroom to complement the use of other style poetry, and to not only have antiquated poetry taught (free verse or rhyme verse).

Rockhill's inference about literary prejudices seems mainly true for academic attitudes towards recent rhyme verse – given the curriculum preference to primarily employ the western canon for literary studies. Of course, interpretation and opinion for a piece of rhyme verse is a subjective episode by an individual or group.

Eggert, Rutschky and Berg (cited in Rockhill 1996) describe 'interaction between text and reader as a microcosm of communication' (p. 72). This thought can be applied to rhyme verse and an audience.

I believe 'subjective episode' defines a supplemental purpose of this project, which is to introduce more recent rhyme verse—similar to that which is presented in *Verbal Tap Dance: a collection of rhyme verse*—to promote the understanding of rhyming poems and song and how they can be composed. Logically, this could mean positive reception and relatability of rhyme verse, especially in an educational environment.

Sue Dymoke (2012) believes 'the shifting status of poetry towards the margins of curricula and the perceived difficulties of poetry teaching remain key concerns' (para. 5), and says that there is a key theme of 'marginalisation of poetry through changing assessment regimes' (Key themes, 3(b)). Also, Dymoke (2012) points out that:

> texts [which] are published print anthologies (albeit with online versions) potentially restrict opportunities for response to newly composed texts or to poems more appropriate to students' contexts, experiences or abilities (para. 25).

My research project acknowledges that there could be a finite currency of relevance for any teaching resource, and that this lack of new poetry product—which can include rhyme verse—could affect the reception and relatability of rhyme in an education environment. Nevertheless, senior school students have the right to gain access to recent rhyme verse in the classroom—as part of their English literature studies—to obtain the benefit of enhanced memory by employing rhyme in the learning process.

In Australia, *Victorian Association for the Teaching of English (VATE)* has a focus on initiating recent education ideas and practices. The intent of VATE's Strategic Plan 2019-2020 is to 'engage with current issues around curriculum relevant to English education' and 'provide opportunities for English educators to reflect on their practice' (VATE, Curriculum and Pedagogy, p.5). This self–questioning concerning good education content and practice is an opportunity to reflect on the need for rhyme verse that has current ideas and events readily relatable to senior school students. It might also help to promote the recall benefits of using rhyme, which has to be seen as positive reception of rhyme verse.

The *Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)* has input into the system of school education via the national curriculum. For instance, *Australian Curriculum (AC)* refers to 'poetry' (ACELT1637 n.d.), but not as rhyme. However, in another webpage, *AC* does refer to 'rhyme' (ACELR010 n.d.). Under *AC* section 'Literature', verse is nominated as a text to be 'analysed through detailed textual study' (Verse n.d., para. 1), but also does not mention rhyme.

The omission of a reference to rhyme in such a major curriculum (*ACARA*) does not present a full spectrum of poetry styles and could cause teachers to overlook rhyming poetry as a learning topic, which might indicate a *popularity suppressant* for the reception of rhyme verse.

Weaven & Clark have explored the matter of poetry—as it relates to education—when they say, 'exposure to the study of poetry is very limited in Australia's secondary school system' (2011, p. 1), and 'far from enjoying a privileged position, poetry has, for some time now, suffered a tendency to be *squeezed out*' (2011, p.2). These two statements by Weaven & Clark highlight a need for more poetry (including recent rhyme verse) in senior school classrooms of Australia.

This presents an opportunity—due to teacher reluctance for teaching poetry—to introduce a different perspective of how to effectively compose rhyme. Also, rhyme verse depicting themes that are relatable to senior school students can boost awareness and appreciation of poetry in the style of rhyme.

Victoria Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) governs the state education system for Victoria, Australia. I explored how rhyme verse fits with this curriculum. On the *'*Search Results' page of the VCAA website, two references concerning rhyme appeared as follows:

    a)   VCELT044 – 'Attend to features of literary texts such as images, **rhyme** and refrains' (Victoria Curriculum Foundation-10); and

b) VCELT114 – 'Know some characteristics and features of literary texts, such as characters, beginning and ending in stories and **rhyme in poetry**...knowing that there are different types of literary texts, for example story, poetry' (Victoria Curriculum Foundation-10).

However, even though the VCAA curriculum mentions an assortment of study material, it does not state that any particular topic must be employed or how it should be taught – that usually becomes the educator's choice. This prompts a query of how much poetry is finding its way into school education environments of Victoria. According to Capes & Nunn (2010), and Creely (2019), poetry is on the decline in classrooms, which, logically, also means so is rhyme verse.

I discovered an ACARA report (2019) titled 'Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Foundation – Year 10 Australian Curriculum'. This report speaks about many factors involving F-10 Curriculum. However, I have particular interest in the Stakeholder Feedback section—specifically 'Theme: Place of general capabilities'—and an entry that says:

> a main challenge for schools was identified as the sheer number of capabilities making it difficult for teachers to explicitly build capacity in seven distinct areas (AISSA, cited in ACARA Report 2019, p. 20).

'Sheer number of capabilities' could be a reason why teachers are not engaging with poetry in the classroom, because they believe it is too hard to teach – as research by Dymoke (2012), Weaven & Clark (2011; 2015; 2018), and Creely (2018; 2019) shows.

Teachers

There are scholarly literature sources that identify a reluctance by educators to teach poetry, believing they do not have sufficient skills to engage with a topic that makes them feel uneasy. Edwin Creely (2018) corroborates that there is hesitancy of engaging with poetry in classrooms when he says, 'I am aware that writing poetry with the students is a daunting practice for teachers' (p. 68).

Resistance by teachers to employ poetry as a study topic affects the reception of rhyme verse. This is confirmed by Weaven & Clark (2018) when a study participant, Liam, says, 'yeah, it scares a lot of teachers, and a lot of teachers are very uncomfortable' (p. 205). Weaven & Clark further point out that there is 'a widespread situation in the Australian state of Victoria, where English teachers have largely elected not to teach poetry texts in their senior secondary classes' (2015, p. 162).

In 'Don't be afraid: Poetry in the classroom', Gareth Calway launches into the challenge teachers have about poetry when he states, 'English teachers can be rather afraid of

poetry at secondary level where exam specifications are involved…the enjoyment gets replaced with worry and uncertainty' (2008, para. 1).

It appears one of the reasons for decline in teaching poetry in Victorian secondary schools could simply be that teachers do not have sufficient opportunity to discuss curriculum and pedagogy with their colleagues (Weaven & Clark 2015, p. 169). For teachers 'it has been easier to quietly avoid the challenge of teaching poetry than to confront it and collegially work through strategies for teaching it' (Weaven & Clark 2015, p. 169). Once again, this highlights a need for a study resource that contains recent rhyme verse and explains composition of rhyme in modern terms.

The positive side of the poetry teaching equation comes from Ross M. Burkhardt, a veteran teacher-poet who wrote *Using Poetry in the Classroom: Engaging Students in Learning* (2016). The loosely strung rhyme in the fourth verse of the opening poem (The First Day)—at the start of Burkhardt's book—goes like this:

> *The student asks:*
> *"What does he expect of me?*
> *What is this room all about?*
> *Who is this teacher?"*
> *The teacher asks:*
> *"Who are these people?*
> *What are they all about?*
> *What do they expect of me?"*
> <div align="right">*(Burkhardt 2016)*</div>

The poem captures a sense of what it can feel like for a teacher and students when faced with a new classroom of learning. In his teaching career, Burkhardt advocates that his students write and revise their own poetry with the intent of it being published in an anthology. He says 'when students realize their writing [poetry] is going public, they become more invested in grammar and mechanics' (Burkhardt 2016, p. 77).

This highlights the pedagogical benefits of reading and writing poetry, which can also include rhyme verse. It also shows that there is encouraging reception and relatability of poetry by these students and their teacher. Jean—a former student—gives some insight into what writing and reading poetry in school meant to her when she says:

> mainly, I wrote as catharsis; I was going through my "teen angst" period, and writing aided my passage…my writing was a means of communicating all of my fears and frustrations about my life (Burkhardt 2016, p. 261).

Again, this verification of the value of teaching and learning poetry fortifies the concept that poetry can have beneficial significance in the life of a student. It also shows that poetry (and hopefully rhyme verse) can be popular in an education environment. This leads to the intention of my creative writing product—*Verbal Tap Dance: a collection of*

rhyme verse—to explain and demonstrate the composition of rhyme verse and promote its reception and relatability, which includes memory benefits from employing rhyme.

Teachers play an important part in selecting education sources for English studies. These sources could include rhyme verse. However, it is clear from existing research how some educators feel about poetry and their ability to teach it. Consequently, many secondary school teachers choose not to use poetry. According to *Unweaving the Rainbow: Poetry Teaching in the Secondary School I*:

> a major problem surfaced by a substantial number of teachers themselves in the 1982 survey was a sense of inadequacy about their own knowledge and teaching skill where poetry was concerned (Benton 1999, p. 521).

Benton also says, 'far from facilitating pupils' learning and engagement with poetry some teachers felt constrained to adopt strategies which they felt actively hindered it' (1999, p. 521). These quotes from 1999 show that the challenge of teaching poetry is not a recent issue. Moreover, it could mean students are reluctant to engage with poetry—even rhyme verse—if teachers are reluctant to teach it.

Daniel Xerri (2013) offers insight when he says:

> some of the challenges that teachers face when teaching poetry are to some extent related to the fact that poetry seems to possess an inordinate amount of cachet ascribed to it in part by the notion of its difficulty (p. 135).

Edwin Creely believes 'poetry is dying' and says, 'poetry teaching is experiencing somewhat of a decline or at least a lack of emphasis in the classroom and in the curriculum' (2019, p. 116). Thinking about poetry—including rhyme—as part of secondary school teaching, Creely also says:

> poetry does not appear to fit easily into functional notions of literacy and genre writing, since it involves personal, sometimes evocative, expression and experimentation with words, and it comes from a long tradition of variant forms and diverse poetic traditions and practices (2019, p. 117).

This is why I believe a more recent study resource to show how to compose rhyme verse is needed in classrooms for senior school students. Although Creely does not specifically mention rhyme as part of his pedagogical vision for teaching poetry in the classroom, his account does offer some reasons for determining what factors could influence the reception and relatability of rhyme verse – in an education situation at least.

Creely offers another factor by saying, 'genre teaching has also tended to reinforce this idea that poetry is a discrete form with a particular style that only some people

appreciate, and a few people write' (2019, p. 123). This is more evidence of the need for a study resource to deliver practical advice on the thematic composition of rhyme.

In a Weaven & Clark (2013) study, a participant, known as Liam, says, 'we as teachers have a whole range of fears and conceptions about what poetry is and *Oh my God I don't know if I can do it!'* (p. 205). Consequently, if teachers choose to avoid the use of poetry, then students have a missed opportunity to engage with any style of poetry. Weaven & Clark also advise:

> teachers who participated in this study discussed and documented their attitudes towards the teaching of poetry and explored with each other the pedagogical challenges associated with teaching poetry (2013, Abstract).

In *'I guess it scares us' – teachers discuss the teaching of poetry in senior secondary English*, Joseph voices a fear that people would say 'you are not helping the kids, you're setting them up to fail' (Weaven & Clark 2013, p. 207). Terri says, 'for me it's because it's something I don't feel very skilled in' (Weaven & Clark 2013, p. 208).

The Weaven & Clark (2013) study reinforces teacher pessimistic attitude towards poetry in classrooms of secondary education, which must have direct impact on the reception and relatability of rhyme verse.

Sue Dymoke (2012) thinks 'poetry is an unfamiliar text' and says:

> investigating poetry's location, key issues are highlighted about teachers' perceptions of poetry, confidence and the support needed for examination level teaching of a genre that is in danger of becoming increasingly unfamiliar to many students (p. 395).

Dymoke voices a perceived educational burden concerning poetry when she says 'poetry presents specific challenges both for learners and teachers' (2012, p. 396). If poetry 'presents specific challenges', then reception and relatability of rhyme verse in the classroom is at risk. My thesis also explores exposure to rhyme verse for senior school students over the past decade. It investigates research concerning student attitude to poetry education relating to their vocal and reading preferential choices in and out of the classroom.

Students

poetry

The importance of teacher engagement with poetry in the classroom cannot be ignored. Displaying confidence in the employment of poems as a learning resource for English studies advocates the value of poetry. For students, this confidence displayed by their teacher can be a catalyst to stimulate reception of a topic—especially rhyme verse—which might otherwise be perceived as unimportant for their studies. Of course,

although the key focus of this creative project is on rhyme verse, it is worthwhile noting that the term poetry encompasses free-verse and rhyme verse. This means reception of rhyme verse is dependent on author and audience preference for the rhyming style.

Emilie Zoey Baker (2014) states, 'poetry can feed young minds but also seed them to grow something unique' (para. 14). Baker (2014) also says, 'poetry is a stocktake of experience' (para. 15), and that 'poetry helps you bathe in wonder, and it's also a useful tool for dealing with the dark times' (para. 16). Fay Lant, the Senior Programme Manager with the National Literary Trust in UK, believes 'poetry can be a powerful tool with which to engage your students' enthusiasm, creativity and imagination' (2016).

One aim of my study was to explore student thoughts about poetry in the classroom, and their viewpoint concerning rhyme verse outside the classroom. Under the heading 'Teachers' of this exegesis, Jean explained how she felt about the use of poetry—during her time as a student—when she says 'mainly, I wrote as catharsis; I was going through my "teen angst" period' (Burkhardt 2016, p. 261).

In Burkhardt's *Using Poetry in the Classroom: Engaging Students in Learning* (2016), an example of a pedagogical focus on poetry comes from Andrea—one of Burkhardt's ex-students—who had fifteen pages devoted to her revision of a single poem about trees (Burkhardt 2016, pp. 152-166). This example might be an extreme study focus for a poem, but there are many samples of students' poetry in Burkhardt's book, and thoughts by students about the poetry experience during their school days.

However, observations by Manuel & Carter (2015) indicate 'poetry selected by a teacher received only 1.0% of most preferred reading activities' (Table 9, p.124), and that 'reading poetry was almost universally unpopular with the sample of students in the study' (p. 124). Nevertheless, other findings make it clear that some students do engage with rhyme verse outside school classrooms using rap style of rhyme.

In the Weaven & Clark (2013) study, a participant, known as Terri, says:

> we've got a lot of kids who do Rap Battles at lunchtime…I was thinking is that a way of accessing poetry in our school…because a lot of rap is a form of poetry…and commentary on what's going on in the world (p. 209).

This implies that there are students who favour a rhyming form of communication among themselves to express their world view when not limited by the boundaries of formal education. My research considers what themes might interest young people of current English-speaking culture, which could be expressed via rhyme verse.

Mission Australia produced a Youth Survey Report (2019) that aimed 'to identify the values, aspirations and issues of concern to young people' (About the survey, p. 7).

They surveyed 25,126 teenagers 15-19 years old. The same report states 'young people were asked whether they felt they have enough of a say about important issues: with their families, friends, in education settings and in public affairs' (2019, Policy context, p. 9, para. 5). Under the heading 'Young people's voice' (p. 5), the report presents statistical data about teenagers having their say:

(a) all of the time when with my friends (45.2%)

(b) all of the time when with my family (44.2%)

(c) all of the time when at school/TAFE/university (15.0%)

(d) all of the time in public affairs (7.2%)

(e) none of the time in public affairs (52.4%)

(f) none of the time while at school/TAFE/university (55.4%)

Statistics shown above reveal that nearly fifty percent of respondents believe they have a say with friends and family all of the time. Whereas, having a say in an education environment ranks lower: with statistics disclosing about one in six have a say all of the time, and just over fifty percent none of the time. Logically, this means nearly one third (29.6%) of young people surveyed believe they sometimes have a say in an education environment. Concerning public affairs, the above statistics show almost one in fourteen teenage respondents said they have a say all of the time, but over half the respondents said they have no say at all in public affairs.

Concentrating only on schools, TAFE and university, it seems clear that at least 12,000 teenagers in Australia feel they do not have a voice when it comes to decision making for education. Extrapolating these statistics for a nationwide perspective signifies one out of two teenagers feel isolated from the education policies & procedures process. Consequently—for those young people who are students—this becomes a significant reason for them to express their discontent, which can be done via rhyme verse. Thus, a study resource of recent rhyme verse could be the tool they need to guide them in composing their thoughts into rhyming language.

More statistics for each state of Australia can be found in the Youth Survey Report (2019), however the purpose of this thesis is more about qualitative aspects of research than quantitative data. Nevertheless, here are some research statistics.

Further contemplating the reception and relatability of rhyme in the classroom, research by Hennessy & McNamara (2011) identifies 'a number of areas of concern including limited potential for creative and aesthetic engagement in the classroom' (p. 1). According to pupils, the most commonly utilised teacher resources in the poetry class included: the poetry textbook (87.5%), teachers' notes (50%), books of poetry notes (30.5%) and exam papers (22.5%) (Hennessy & McNamara 2011, p. 9).

Moreover, 'the provision of directive resources was noted by many respondents as preferable for the study of poetry' (Hennessy & McNamara 2011, p. 9). However, their 2011 study does not state the degree of reception by students, or whether rhyme verse would be part of the mix.

Hennessy & McNamara also declare that '90% of teachers were identified as using a poetry textbook on a frequent basis, yet only 41.5% of pupils favoured this resource' (2011, p. 10). Once again, the style of poetry in the 'textbook' is not referenced. In the same 2011 study, a student's perspective is revealed that states, 'a lot of the time I don't know what the poet is trying to say and sometimes the explanation we are given doesn't fit with what I think' (student C16, p. 14). This confusion would affect the student's reception and relatability of rhyme poetry with the likelihood of a *popularity suppressant* being the outcome.

Additionally, Hennessy & McNamara (2011) say, 'many students indicated a reticence to engage in the analytical process due to the perceived fixed meaning of poetry' (p.14), and that 'for many pupils poetry has little place in their lives beyond the remit of the examination' (p. 19).

However, Edwin Creely champions 'writing poetry as a form of literary expression, and as a writing craft or artform' (2019, p. 124). On the other hand, Peter Benton says:

> respondents [teachers] variously suggest that children often find the language, imagery, and diction of poetry as "alien"…it belongs to the "posh"…they fear it…expect difficulty…regard it as a waste of time (1984, p. 325).

One student from the Daniel Xerri (2013) study indicated 'I find it difficult to analyse a poem' (student SN, p. 141). Another student in the same study said it is 'a bit hard…it's not one of my favourite subjects' (student SD, p. 140). Findings from the Xerri (2013) study furthers the evidence that poetry—which logically can include rhyme verse—does not have favourable reception and relatability with some students.

I believe the abovementioned assertion by Benton (1984) supposes that poetry is not of particular interest to students, which logically could also mean that there is low reception and relatability for rhyme verse as a style of poem. Nonetheless, if rhyming lyrics are employed in the classroom—to align with student interest for rap—this could encourage senior school students to connect with rhyme verse as part of their formal education, rather than only engaging with rhyme in the schoolyard.

There are many resources to be found online for how to write poetry. A good starting point are the websites 'scootle.edu.au', 'poetryfoundation.com', or 'nla.gov.au'. Also, my creative product can be an educational alternative and employed as a rhyme verse teaching resource alongside old-style rhyming poems and songs.

Researching the engagement with rhyme for Australian children who are also students, a randomly selected copy of OZ Kids in Print magazine (Issue 1, 2020) does contain poetry, but not all of it is rhyme verse (see Appendix 1). The content presents statistical insight concerning use of rhyme.

song

Song has its place in music studies within an education curriculum for senior school students. However, unless a student is enrolled in a music unit the prospect of engaging with song in a classroom is unlikely.

With song being a major source for delivering rhyme, limiting the amount of song being employed for student learning is lessening the potential for reception of rhyme verse. Even so, rhyme does find its way into schoolyards via rap.

Fay Lant recounts the instance of a very bright student from her 'bottom-set Year 9 class' and how he thought 'it was imperative to his social standing that he not appear intelligent or achieve highly in any of his subjects' (2016, para. 1). Furthermore, Lant relates that she:

> noticed him and his brother focusing intently on learning and repeating some lyrics…they had been "spitting bars" – in other words, reciting poetry…my disengaged student was henceforth able to engage in lessons, taking on the role of an expert on rhyme and rhythm (2016, para. 2).

Lant's story shows how positive reception of rhyme had a significant impact on the life of a student. Moreover, Lant says:

> poetry is flexible both in terms of the many forms it can take (including poetry for performance, lyrics and rap) and the infinite possibilities for subject matter…poetry can be used to explore any topic (2016, para. 6).

Therefore, rhyme verse can also explore any topic. My conviction is that recent rhyme verse should be taught in classrooms, which could encourage youthful rappers to convert the content into the rap genre of song that has credence in the schoolyard and the entertainment industry. Although other styles of quality rhyme verse are available, study findings indicate some teachers choose not to teach any poetry. This employment of rhyme as rap has potential to create a *popularity enhancement* for the reception and relatability of rhyme verse, and has the potential for enhanced memory ability.

Also, this reinforces that my creative product provides a contribution of knowledge in the form of original rhyme verse (poetry and song lyrics) about modern ideas, events and emotions. *Verbal Tap Dance: a collection of rhyme verse* is an example of a teaching resource for secondary school literature education that explains the

employment of rhyme and gives advice on its composition. Furthermore, it presents infrequently used sophisticated words and phrases to build on existing knowledge for composing rhyme verse poetry and songs for the discipline of Creative Writing.

Entertainment

Moving away from educational impact on the reception and relatability of rhyme verse, another major influence for delivery of rhyme is entertainment, which includes poetry and songs. There are activities that can expose a young person to rhyming poems and songs. How young and older adults receive entertainment as rhyme verse is considered under this heading.

It is logical to suppose that a certain percentage of rhyme verse has been composed to satisfy an individual need to write down one's own thoughts, and might not be seen by anyone except the author. Nonetheless, the other proportion is probably meant to be seen by more than just one person, which could give it the status of entertainment.

With the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic rampaging through years 2020 & 2021, communities in lockdown have taken to broadcasting their personal idea of entertainment via social media technology. There are instances of rhyme verse being read out on social media to foster a light-hearted spirit among fellow *lockdownees*.

For example, on YouTube—in March 2020—Sam Neill (a famous movie actor) read out five short rhyme verse poems about topics such as love (involving a weather theme), missing someone, coffee, and oranges (Neill 2020). Also, a stage & screen actor, Sir Patrick Stewart decided to recite—on Facebook—Shakespeare sonnets, such as Sonnet 35 recited on 21 April (Stewart 2020).

Although some of these social media performances are older rhyming poetry, they have boosted the reception of rhyme verse by reaching an audience that might not normally engage with rhyming poems. In the space of a week—up to the 10th May 2020—the video of Tomos Roberts (aka Tomfoolery) reciting 'The Great Realisation' a 'fairytale-esque poem [that] details the grim realities of pre-Covid life …has been viewed more than 30 million times' (RNZ Arts 2020. para. 2-3).

Roberts says 'you know this poem was made in my bedroom…and it's been able to move this idea all around the globe' (RNZ Arts 2020, para. 24). The achievement of Roberts to gain reception of his poem by so many people supports my conviction that rhyme verse can be responsible for delivering a message that becomes popular.

Literacy Teaching Toolkit 2020 advocates that 'children feel safe, secure and supported to build secure attachment with one and then more familiar educators' (Conversation and Social Skills, Outcome 1: identity). Converting the term 'familiar educator' to

'familiar person', could this also be true for all ages of people tuning into these online recitations of rhyme verse? As interesting as this question is, it will need to be answered by another research project.

Poetry Slams and Eisteddfods

A Poetry Slam is a competition to find the best performers of pre-made poems. Also, a poetry slam is an expressive way to convey social and education concerns via an entertainment style forum, which can include rhyming current vernacular.

Students are communicating via poetry slam competitions between teams from various secondary schools in Victoria (JMSS 2017). Furthermore, 'OutLoud Teen Poetry Slam is a promoter of poetry in Victoria [Australia] in alliance with the State Library of Victoria' (JMSS 2017).

Weaven & Clark say, 'students also express their ideas and emotions using the rhyming-style art of rap' (2013, p. 209). Considering that 'OutLoud is a competition where students perform in teams of up to four with their own original new work fresh from the pen' (Baker n.d., para 2), this has to mean that recent rhyme verse can have popular reception and relatability among young people, even senior school students.

This competitive activity is endorsed by government (City of Melbourne, State Library of Victoria) and community organisations (Melbourne Writers Festival, Australian Poetry). These competitions are supervised by adults, nonetheless audience reactions to the rhyming lyrics in rap cannot be disregarded. Mentioned on pp. 185-186 of this thesis, a report by University of Nebraska addresses how rap music can elicit powerful emotions, but the report also identified negative predictors concerning some messages in rap. Although negative responses to rap can occur, because students voluntarily engage with rap this means rhyme verse as rap has popular reception and relatability, which can indicate education systems need to consider using rhyme verse more often.

Moreover, Capes & Nunn expand the concept that poetry needs to become better represented when they say, 'if we want poetry to be heard and read in other places too, our society needs to bring it [poetry] back to schools' (2010, para. 1). Nevertheless, Emilie Zoey Baker says that for *Victorian teen team slam*:

> there's been over 60 schools involved and we hold two heats at the Wheeler Centre for Books, Writing and Ideas…four teams make it through to the finals held at the Melbourne International Writers Festival (n.d., para. 2).

This is favourable evidence for the popular reception of poetry among young people. The performance that won the OutLoud Eco!Slam competition in 2018 was about belonging to a cultural background foreign to Australia, and being treated as an ethnic minority rather than an Australian. The poem was performed by two teenage

students—employing rhyme poetry—to deliver an effective message about a sociological issue. This winning entry reinforces that rhyme verse does have reception and relatability clout when great content is delivered. Moreover, the abovementioned statistics offer insight into how rhyme verse can gain popular reception and relatability among young people, especially if they are willing to compose their own work and perform it in front of a sizeable audience.

To revive the widespread presence of rhyme verse in schools, there needs to be a *popularity enhancer*, which focuses on rhyming poems written in current vernacular about ideas, events, and emotions that are readily relatable to the learning level of a student audience. For this thesis, it would be senior school students.

The *popularity enhancer* could be a collection of recent rhyme verse in a guidebook that explains composition of rhyme. However, if rhyme is not taught in an appealing way it could become a *popularity suppressant* and jeopardise the opportunity for increasing the reception of any rhyme style verse.

Although my research shows evidence that there are students who might not want to engage with poetry in the classroom, Poetry Eisteddfods are a performance avenue that shows there can be enjoyable reception of rhyme verse for young people. Usually, there are preselected poetry (set poems) to be read out by contestants, and it seems that young people entering an Eisteddfod are less likely to be permitted to recite their own work. Nevertheless, poetry is being recited by young people.

An example of this is a Queensland based competition (Speech and Drama Set Poems 2019) that has different age-group entries to perform set pieces. All set poems performed in this competition are written in modern English vernacular and are about current ideas and events. Participant statistics are as follows:

Gender	Age	Style of Poem	Individual Ages	Poems
Boys	0-12 years	Rhyming poems (end rhyme)	6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12	7
Boys	13-18 years	Non-rhyming poems (free verse)	13, 14/15, 16/18	3
Girls	0-11 years	Rhyming poems (end rhyme)	6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11,	6
Girls	12-18 years	Non-rhyming poems (free verse)	12, 13, 14/15, 16/18	4

Analysis of the statistics above shows all but one of the fourteen pre-teen participants preferred to engage with end rhyme poems, whereas the six teenage participants have a proclivity for reciting free verse poems. This equates to just over two-thirds of the participants preferring end rhyme poetry. In this situation rhyme verse had better reception than free verse.

Celebrity Poets

There is a long tradition of celebrity poets throughout English-speaking cultural history. Celebrities could be: advocates of religion who have a devoted following; working minstrels who have a regular audience; privileged people who read poetry to friends and family; or people who have a penchant for writing about their ideas and circumstances for the purpose of delivering them to an audience. Poetry composers or people who recite poems might not think of themselves as entertainers; however, if they read or sing their rhyme verse to others then—whether it is to a few people or a big crowd—it is presumably a form of entertainment.

Even though I do not consider myself as a celebrity poet, I have read my poems aloud at open-mic poetry nights on many occasions. So, for this heading, I present samples of my recent rhyme poetry to illustrate similarity of thematic content with less recent rhyme verses of other poets. Also, I provide some insight into the composition of my poems and contemplate what might have prompted creation of some other poets' work. Principally, with a project purpose of examining whether rhyme verse still has a place in English culture, I have mainly concentrated on poetic work of the past to get a sense of how poetry was historically created and met – rather than focussing exclusively on the style of contemporary rhyming poems.

William Shakespeare's famous play 'Romeo & Juliet' (1597) is not a recent piece of work. It can be seen that there are many elements of rhyme in the plot, which displays rigours of a romantic relationship that transgresses family traditional beliefs. For example, Act II, Scene III, is entirely made up of rhyming couplets that track a conversation between Friar Laurence and Romeo.

Richards-Gustafson says, 'Shakespeare used rhyming couplets to signify an important action or the end of a scene' (2020, para. 3). I agree that Shakespeare's astute use of rhyme is a shrewd alert for the audience, to accentuate when something significant needs to be known.

Although Shakespeare's work has a big presence in English culture education, comprehending the rhyming parts of Romeo & Juliet can be more challenging than understanding contemporary rhyme verse written in modern vernacular. This emphasises that the addition of recent rhyme verse in the classroom can be a balancing educative resource for literature learning.

Nonetheless, the theme of Romeo and Juliet is about human relationships that can resonate with most people, and because of Shakespeare's renown, his plays—and rhyme verse—have a great amount of reception. We can see rhyming couplets being employed in Scene III, which reveals Romeo is no longer besotted with Rosaline. He confesses his unwavering love for Juliet and beseeches Friar Laurence to marry them.

Then plainly know my heart's dear love is set
On the fair daughter of rich Capulet;
As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine;
And all combin'd, save what thou must combine
By holy marriage: when and where and how
We met we woo'd and made exchange of vow,
I'll tell thee as we pass; but this I pray,
That thou consent to marry us today.

(Shakespeare 1597, cited in Craig (ed) 1995, p. 774, ll. 54-60)

To retain the essence of Shakespeare's intent, and seize the attention of more people in modern English-speaking culture, the rhyme needs to be modified using today's vernacular. Then it could be possible for a 21st Century audience to more easily understand the work and have an affinity with the content's meaning – once the play is transformed into current English.

Although I am not a celebrity poet, in my recent short poem, 'Gauntlet of Love', I have tried to capture the essence of 'Romeo and Juliet'—in a contemporary way—still using rhyming couplets.

It's the age-old tale of opposites in love
who face the prejudice of family gauntlet shove
Two people who have to endure cruel tradition darts
because unwavering love has run away with their hearts

(Hancock 2022, p. 64)

Throughout history we find reception of poetry is promoted by poetry exponents who mostly write about events and feelings of their time. Stepping back into history to the Romantic Period of English poetry (1789-1830), William Blake wrote a rhyming poem 'Auguries of Innocence' (published 1806) that tells of 'allowing the imagination to work upon the created world and reveal the latent wonder within it' (Watson 1992, p. 133).

To see a world in a grain of sand
And a heaven in a wild flower
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour

(Blake (ll. 1-4), cited in Watson 1992, p. 133).

The simplicity of the rhyming pattern and the vernacular of 'Auguries of Innocence'—which was written in the first decade of the 19th Century—can be easily read and clearly understood today. It shows that there were times when popular poets of two centuries ago could write simple rhyme and express something poignant. In this case,

Blake's poem has illusory musings of environment and time, which could resonate with many people of the 21st Century who wonder about our existence.

Something I recently wrote, 'Live Forever', has similar thematic elements that are in Blake's poem—especially his lines: *hold infinity in the palm of your hand // and eternity in an hour*—because my rhyme verse contemplates human life and the passage of time.

> *Do you really want to live forever?*
>
> *What would you do if you could?*
>
> *Would it be something joyful and clever*
>
>   *or ridiculous in a crazy mood?*
>
> *Will you still remember your history*
>
>   *as family and friends fall away?*
>
> *Will you get bored with all the stories?*
>
> *What will happen when there is no more to say?*

(Hancock 2022, p. 90)

This poem has a combination of end rhyme and slant rhyme: there is no particular reason why, it just happened. It is a verse comprised of questions, and I have used the premise of longevity to show the essence of human inquisitiveness in regards to the mystification of life. If you look at the end words for each line, they convey important influences for humans.

'Live Forever' shows that not all rhyme verse imparts feel-good ideas and events, sometimes the content can be sombre. Nevertheless, it has the simplicity of current vernacular, and has a meaning that should be easily understood by people of modern English-speaking culture. Also, it employs the universally familiar theme of how humans can ponder their existence—which might be relatable to many people—and possibly give it a better chance for popular reception.

I am not a fan of the assignment of basic words and phrases and overly simple sentiment, such as what is seen in most greeting-card style rhyming poetry. I prefer rhyme that is clever, witty, comedic, and sometimes ironic. Pam Ayres MBE—English poet, comedian, and songwriter—helped promote the reception of rhyme verse with her wry, yet poignant, end rhyming poems about common everyday activities and thoughts. In 1975, the themes of her poetry resonated with many people of modern English-speaking culture, and her poetry has since been read and heard all over the world.

There is a poem by Ayres, written in rhyming couplets, which gives a light-hearted look at what a person wishes to be done with their body after death. The vernacular of the

poem 'Woodland Burial' is very modern and the message is easily understood. Here are the first six lines:

> *Don't lay me in some gloomy churchyard shaded by a wall,*
> *Where the dust of ancient bones has spread a dryness over all,*
> *Lay me in some leafy loam where, sheltered from the cold,*
> *Little seeds investigate and tender leaves unfold.*
> *There kindly and affectionately, plant a native tree,*
> *To grow resplendent before God and hold some part of me.*

> *(Ayres 2006, Lines 1-6)*

Although this Ayres poem was composed employing the old tradition of end rhyming couplets, it is written in everyday contemporary English vernacular, which helped boost the reception of her rhyme verse.

Song Lyrics

Lyrics can have different styles of rhyme structure and rhythmic patterns to suit the genre of song. Commonly, most songs are composed using rhyme, which follows a musical beat that reflects a category of music, such as: Rock & Roll, Rhythm & Blues, Pop, Country, Electronic, Folk, and Rap. All of these song styles mentioned—more often than not—have rhyming lyrics at the heart of the music genre.

The content of *Verbal Tap Dance: a collection of rhyme verse* displays different types of rhyme schemes, length, and line structure, but the songs tend to follow only a few styles of arrangements. Regardless of rhyme style, mixing rhyme and music enables people to recall most of the words in a song – if not all of them.

It is safe to say rhyme can be more popular in song lyric form than when it is used for a rhyming poem, which leads to the question 'why is the reception of rhyme more popular as a song than written as a poem?' Marjorie Perloff (2016) says:

> people who are not as familiar with contemporary poetry do understandably make a distinction that on the one hand poems are "literary" and on the other songs are "popular", that is, written in a language regular people can understand (para. 4).

Conversely, a huge endorsement that attests rhyming lyrics can also be literature happened in 2016 when the renowned songwriter Bob Dylan was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature 'for having created new poetic expressions within the great American song tradition' (The Nobel Prize in Literature 2016). Looking at the second verse of possibly his most famous song 'Blowin' in the Wind', to me the message and meaning seems obvious.

> *Yes, and how many years must a mountain exist*
> *Before it is washed to the sea?*

203

And how many years can some people exist
Before they're allowed to be free?
Yes, and how many times can a man turn his head
And pretend that he just doesn't see?

(Dylan 1962)

Scanning down the verse, I suggest that its message implies: nothing is permanent, humans can be cruel to each other, and some people choose to ignore wrong-doing. Furthermore, I believe the subtext is wanting people to be kinder to each other, and speak out against injustice. Dylan has sold over 125 million records, which greatly demonstrates popular reception of rhyme verse as song.

The above statement by Perloff (2016)—and Bob Dylan receiving a Nobel Prize in Literature (2016)—reinforces my conviction that rhyme verse written in current English vernacular has a better chance for positive reception and relatability than antiquated 'literary' rhyme. Even though this heading is about song lyrics, we need to remember lyrics are a form of poetry and more often than not are composed as rhyming content. This could argue that many rhyming poems can be adapted to be song lyrics. One example of a poem being converted to a song is Australian singer/songwriter Paul Kelly's 'The River Song' off his *Nature* (2018) album.

Rap

Rap originated in the African American communities of New York City…where rhythmic and rhyming speech is chanted (rapped) to musical accompaniment (Britannica 2020, Rap Music). Spoken word poetry as an art form uses the vernaculars, cultural icons, and experiences of the marginalized to provide a counter-narrative to Eurocentric portrayals of these communities in mainstream media and pop culture (Davis 2018, p. 118). In other words, rap has the presence to relay—in the form of rhyme verse—ideas and concerns for a demographic minority of any population.

This contemporary method of expression—to voice emotions and societal concerns—is alive in Australia and has the means to deliver a message created by young people via the rap rhythmic style of communication. Creely declares that 'poetry is everywhere – in songs, rap, commercials' (2018, p. 67). Nevertheless, determining the extent of 'everywhere' would need a comprehensive quantitative study to define – not something that this qualitative creative product project planned to do.

A Weaven & Clark (2013) study shows a teacher, Terri, as saying, 'we've got a lot of kids who do Rap Battles at lunchtime' (p. 209). Under 'Positive or Negative Reactions' heading of this thesis (pp. 185-186), Iwamoto et al (2007) convey the appeal and emotional impact of rap for some students. Nonetheless, students do engage with the rhyming style of rap.

A report in *The Bulletin* (Baum 2018) tells us how a year nine student, Sarah Milton, was shortlisted for the *Australian Taxation Office's Tax Super and You* competition for performing rap about Superannuation. Milton went on to win second prize. This supposes that there is greater room for reception of rhyme verse in Australian English-speaking culture, which could include senior school students.

Furthermore, in a *Sydney Morning Herald* article, the editor of *The Cambridge History of Australian Literature*, Professor Peter Pierce, points out that 'since Alexander Pope rhyme has been the main armament of poetic satire, telling a terse story in rhyming words' (Pierce 2017, para. 17). This statement about satire using rhyme could be stitched into the psyche of many rap artists when they convey their thoughts on local, national, or world concerns, and it supports the likelihood of gaining reception and relatability of rhyme verse.

Sport Support Songs

team songs

What is a Team Song? For Australian rules football it is a rousing way for supporters to give voice to their devotion for a football club, which could be an individual motive, or based on familial tradition of allegiance to a particular team.

These football rules have their origins in Melbourne, Victoria of the 1850s. Some of those early clubs decided to create a team song that they thought epitomised the essence of their culture and could bond their followers with a sense of belonging.

For this belonging we need look no further than the efforts of the Australian Football League (AFL) club Richmond Tigers. Their winning of the 2017 Grand Final released an outpouring of team support and a hearty performance by the crowd singing the song 'We're from Tigerland'. To the Richmond faithful, it's the greatest theme song in the world — and when it's sung with passion, as it was at the MCG last weekend [23rd September 2017], it's hard to disagree (Brown 2017).

The Richmond Tigers team song—employing rhyming content—has words that indicate a tenacious impulse to win. Here are the first seven lines:

> *Oh we're from Tigerland*
>
> *A fighting fury*
>
> *We're from Tigerland*
>
> *In any weather you will see us with a grin*
>
> *Risking head and shin*
>
> *If we're behind then never mind*
>
> *We'll fight and fight and win*
>
> <div align="center">(Malcomson 1962)</div>

Although the tune was borrowed from a song written fifty years earlier—'Row Row Row' by James Vincent Monaco (1912)—the abovementioned example of rhyme reception demonstrates the popularity of contemporary rhyme verse being used to display exuberant appreciation for the performance of a sports club.

inspirational songs for a sport

In 1987, Mike Brady penned the song 'One Day in September', which became a staple of raising the spirits for Aussie rules football fans during Grand Final entertainment at the game. The song lyrics below hammer home the impact rhyme verse can have on a sport loving population.

> *Cause there's one day in September*
>
> *we want to remember*
>
> *there isn't any doubting*
>
> *we'll be in the shouting*
>
> *football's such a part of this whole town*
>
> *and we know that you won't let us down*

> *(Brady, 1987)*

Most Australians know the appeal AFL has on social interaction at the game, in a club room, at a backyard barbecue, or just watching rival teams on the television. It is this interaction that gives rhyme verse—in the form of a song—extreme positive reception and relatability.

Advertisement

In various periods throughout the 20th & 21st centuries, rhyme—that can be in the form of poetry or song—has played a part in advertisement. However, rhyme poetry in advertisement does not have the same reception it once had even though it has been effective. Nonetheless, Jim Borden, an Associate Professor of Accounting, says:

> rhymes increase processing fluency, which means that they help make the message go down easier, easier to process…when that happens, people are not only more likely to remember it, but more likely to believe it…in other words, rhymes can be quite persuasive…this may explain why companies around the world use rhyme to advertise their products (2019).

Next, I have selected and explored three aspects of advertisement that can generate strong influence for the reception of rhyme verse.

Jingles

There can be presupposition that in the late 20th Century until now, the term 'jingle' mainly means 'a simple, repetitious, catchy rhyme set to music, used especially for advertising' (eds. Delbridge & Bernard 1998, p. 609:10). It might also be argued that a

jingle is a form of *mnemonic* – given the usual brevity of its message and that its purpose is to help people recall information about a commercial product or service.

Many people in English-speaking culture have heard 'jingles' as the melodious rhyme that backs up the person giving a sales pitch. It could be an impassioned rendition of a classical tune for an airline company, an emotive interpretation of a well-known ballad for a tourism destination, or part of a song performed by a popular music group to represent a supermarket chain of stores.

By the 1940s and 1950s the airwaves were filled with rhyming jingles…and successful radio jingles were carried over to print—and, later, television—advertising (Friedman 2013).

Furthermore, Nancy Friedman says the 'combination—memorability, pleasure, and familiarity—makes rhyme a happy fit for advertisers, whose goal, of course, is to instill desire' (2013).

Probably the two most iconic food product jingles for Australia are: 'Aeroplane Jelly Song' (Lenertz & Woods 1930), and 'Happy Little Vegemites' (1954) by Alan Weekes, which perhaps has 'become Australia's second, unofficial national anthem' (Vegemite Story n.d.). The history of vegemite shows how rhyme as a jingle can gain popular reception, as the commentary below indicates:

> in 2009 Kraft introduced a new version of Vegemite with the name *iSnack2.0*. This name was universally derided and it was withdrawn. The furore that erupted during this exercise demonstrates the attachment that Australians have towards an iconic product, which arguably is partially due to the popularity of this jingle (Doyle n.d.).

Here is a community announcement jingle, which did not seek to sell a specific product or provide an actual service. Its sole purpose is to 'remind us of three easy ways of protecting against skin cancer' (Cancer Council 1981). Adams and Stitt were behind the successful 'Slip! Slop! Slap!' sun-smart campaign produced for the Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria [Australia], featuring the memorable animated character Sid the seagull (VRROOM 2007-10, para. 7).

> *Slip, Slop, Slap!*
> *It sounds like a breeze when you say it like that*
> *Slip, Slop, Slap!*
> *In the sun we always say "Slip Slop Slap!"*
> *Slip, Slop, Slap!*
> *Slip on a shirt, slop on sunscreen and slap on a hat, Slip, Slop, Slap!*
> *You can stop skin cancer - say: "Slip, Slop, Slap!"*
>
> *(Adams & Stitt 1981)*

Fast-forward to the 21ˢᵗ Century, and there is an obvious jingle that still gets played at the end of each year, which most English-speaking culture people would know. Of course, some might not admit that it is advertising, nevertheless it has been used to promote the season of Christmas for a long time. The rhyming song is 'Jingle Bells' (1857) advocating a ride in a one-horse open sleigh. However, 'it didn't start out that way… it was written by James Lord Pierpont to be sung on Thanksgiving — not Christmas' (Strauss 2013), and I have not located any reference that states the term 'jingle' for advertisement was inspired by the song 'Jingle Bells'.

Anthems

Playing or singing an anthem can be construed as a way of advertising something, whether it be for a sovereign nation, a particular cause, a societal pursuit, or a sports club. An anthem is meant to imbue a sense of belonging and/or a call to action. Usually, it is a musical composition using stylised rhyme that can be very popular among associated people, and depending on the reason for the anthem it can sometimes have widespread appeal.

End rhyme, mixed with music, can be at the heart of successful advertisement for a sport. The famous inspirational song 'Up There Cazaly' by Mike Brady became a crowd favourite anthem for Australian rules football. It still gets played as an anthem style song that rallies the supporters to get behind this national game.

Moreover, it works because people remember the words – a testimony to popular reception and relatability of rhyme verse. The power of the chorus is shown below:

> *Up there Cazaly, in there and fight*
> *Out there and at 'em, show 'em your might*
> *Up there Cazaly, don't let 'em in*
> *Fly like an angel, you're out there to win*

(Brady, 1979)

Sport Promotion

In the essay 'The Moral Equivalent of War' (1906) philosopher & psychologist William James says, 'the martial type of character can be bred without war' (para. 28), and he mentions that 'patriotic pride and ambition in their military form are, after all, only specifications of a more general competitive passion' (para. 25).

'Sport and the Decline of War' (2014) by Steve Taylor follows these thoughts with 'there is an obvious contender for a "moral equivalent of war": sport' (para. 4), and that 'sport satisfies most of the same psychological needs as warfare, and has similar psychological and social effects' (para. 5).

All these statements allude to psychological parallels between war and sport. Knowing these human psychological needs, it might also mean that engaging in non-military activity could be a safer way of unleashing competitive urges, thereby reducing incidents of severe injury and fatality. However, what war and sport have in common is the need to express unity between a group of people coming together to achieve a goal. The offshoot of this can be rhyme verse—in the form of a rousing song—to promote a sporting activity.

Taylor also says, 'human beings, in general, have a strong need for belonging and identity' (2014, Psychology of War: Psychological Explanations, para. 6). If this observation by Taylor is linked to the widespread enthusiastic attitude directed at sporting activities—over the past one hundred years or so—it could indicate that sport has substantial popularity, because it feeds a human search for belonging and identity. Add rhyming team songs into the mix and there is an effective way to vocalise passionate support for a sporting club. Consequently, popular reception of the rhyme verse in that team song forges popular relatability of the team.

The team song of the Australian rules football club 'Richmond Tigers'—mentioned under the heading 'Sport Support Songs' (p. 205)—could arguably have been included under the heading 'Advertisement'.

The reason is that even though a team song can have entertainment value—when performed by team players and sung by fans—it can also have the feel of an advertisement jingle, which is promoting the appeal of the club.

In 2009, I had the idea of writing a team song for an overseas football club. What I wrote shows how end rhyme verse can be a catalyst for boosting support for a sporting team. It has all the rousing elements of a daring-do physical sport, which—when sung loudly as a group—can bring people together. Unfortunately, acceptance of the song did not happen. Therefore, I have altered the name of the team to 'The Hummingbirds' (p. 20), which I believe adds meaning behind the obvious message of rivalry for a football club. I am hoping the name gives the impression of a player's ability to hover in the air and take spectacular possession of the football – known in Australian vernacular as 'taking a *speckie*'.

When composing a team song, it is important to consider how the structure of song lyrics will fit with a melody, because blending words with a well-known tune helps reception and relatability of the rhyme verse. For 'The Hummingbirds' I chose the music of a world-famous song – 'Jingle Bells'.

Looking at the phrases *keep on guard // tackle hard* in 'The Hummingbirds' (p. 20, lines 7 & 8), they might give the impression of hand-to-hand combat when fighting a battle. It is not a far-fetched notion, because, after all, the sport of football is known to be a

physical soft-option alternative to engaging in armed conflict. Nonetheless, 'The Hummingbirds' intends to be a rhyme verse example, set to music, which in this case epitomises the need for simplicity of words and phrases in a team song to attract reception from a wide range of people.

Another popular sport in Australia is cricket. During the 1970s, a faster-paced alternative to the traditional game was introduced to national and international sport – it is World Series Cricket (1977). It had a slow start concerning popularity.

To attract attention to the game, a rhyme verse anthem 'C'mon Aussie C'mon C'mon' (Johnston & Morris 1978) was composed in the vernacular of that time. The song lyrics present a roll-call of participating sportsmen to boost recognition of the Australian cricket team.[18] To grow the sport's fanbase, a few years later the song was resurrected with different team player names.

Moreover, the promotional song was reintroduced in 2009 to entice crowds back to the game. Julian Lee says, 'the latest version tells the story of three fans doing everything possible to get to the cricket this summer' (2009, para. 3). Mike McKenna said, 'it's about getting bums on seats' (Lee 2009, para. 4).

This reinforces that positive reception and relatability of rhyme verse can be a powerful tool for advertisement, including the promotion of sport. To further emphasise this, a 2004 updated lyrics version of 'C'mon Aussie C'mon C'mon' hit No.2 on the 2004 Australian ARIA Singles Chart.

This section shows that rhyme verse has been connected to advertisement for many years in the interest of selling goods or services, but it also has a big presence in modern English-speaking culture for promoting sport.

.

---

[18] See words of the song 'C'mon Aussie C'mon C'mon' under Chapter 2: Five Essential Elements of Rhyme Verse: Theme (p. 16)

CONCLUSION

It is clear that rhyme verse has a substantial presence in the history of English-speaking culture, and that its style has changed to suit the preference of each generation of people in particular societies. This project explored a specific line of enquiry about reception and relatability of rhyme verse for modern English-speaking culture. Moreover, investigating the presence of rhyme in an historical context shows that poems and songs in English history are an ever-changing medium, but this style of writing was—and still is—employed to deliver ideas, emotions and concerns. It was prudent to perform an historical overview to get an understanding of the significance of rhyme throughout English language history.

The western canon was instrumental for showing how rhyme was written in the past. Also, investigating the period between late 1700s and 1900s revealed that the outdated vernacular might not be accessible to modern audiences. Likewise, findings that suggest many modern schools prefer to endorse employment of antiquated poetry from the western canon, reinforces a need for recent rhyme poetry (or rhyming songs) to improve reception and relatability of rhyme verse in modern English-speaking culture.

Using both scholarly and non-scholarly sources to examine the reception of rhyme verse gave a wider sense of how relatable rhyme is to educators and the public of English-speaking culture, and identified that there is a lot of negative responses for the employment of poetry (which also means rhyme). Focussing on the demographic collective of teachers and senior school students provided insight into the viewpoint towards how poetry and song (rhyming or otherwise) are received in the context of an education culture. Also, by factoring in curriculum aspects and thoughts by poetry or song enthusiasts into the exegesis, it gave wider awareness—from an academic standpoint and public perception angle—concerning rhyme verse.

Furthermore, research discovered how non-academic people think about poetry and its lack of reception in modern English-speaking culture. Nonetheless—more often than not—there is positive or popular reception of rhyme if it is blended with music to form the content of a song.

My creative product—*Verbal Tap Dance: a collection of rhyme verse*—served as an interrelated study resource for the exegesis component of this thesis by providing samples of recent rhyme verse. Also, it presented practical ideas and essential elements that inform the composition of rhyme. Explaining the purpose of the five essential elements of rhyme verse (Theme, Message & Meaning, Vernacular, Rhyme Schemes, and Syntax) demonstrated that each has an important role in the context of rhyme composition.

However, above all, the element of Message & Meaning is crucial for making a theme understood, and subsequently helping to comprehend the main idea. Also, vernacular seems to have a significant purpose of giving the rhyme verse a familiar voice for a particular audience to increase possibility of positive reception and relatability.

The five *contraview themes* outline relatable influences on human experience, and highlight the impact these themes might have on the reception and relatability of rhyme verse for an audience by emphasizing the dynamics of emotion and perspective. 'Optimism or Pessimism' seems to stand out as an overarching human emotion that might trigger a mood. This by no means humbles the importance of all the other human experiences in Chapter 3 of the creative product.

The exegesis investigation into audience reception of poetry was bolstered by its use of concepts and texts from the creative product. Three useful pieces of content were samples of recent rhyme verse, composition explanation and advice, and examples of possible themes. Furthermore, research demonstrates that for rhyme verse to have popular reception there has to be an avenue to deliver it, with three likely delivery avenues being education, entertainment, and advertisement.

For an education environment, it was found that there are teachers who avoid employing poetry as a study topic, and that students also can be reluctant to engage with poetry. In other words, the reception of rhyme verse in classrooms seems not to be a high priority. However, students are known to use rhyme outside the classroom via the musical form of rap. The reluctance to engage with poetry in a classroom could be addressed by the introduction of a recent rhyme verse guidebook.

Focussing on entertainment, it is clear that rhyme verse in the style of song has more credence for reception and relatability than in the form of poetry. Moreover, research discovered that advertisement has extensively employed rhyme poetry and song in the past, but in recent times the use of rhyme is not as prevalent as it once was.

There is scientific evidence for cognitive effects of employing rhyme. These include improved recall ability (memory), and the possibility of feeling positive or negative reactions from exposure to rhyme, especially from the musical style of rap. Scientific documentation was found that advises there can be a wellbeing affect from rhyme mixed with music, in other words – song.

It appears there is a better chance of gaining reception and relatability of rhyme verse for modern English-speaking culture if that style of rhyme is presented as a song rather than poetry.

From a methodology point of view, adopting and integrating two methodology concepts of study—from two different sources—helped to inform an innovative and pragmatic research approach for this creative writing project. This new methodological process delivered a wider perspective study of the reception of rhyme verse by combining 'research synthesis' (Onwuegbuzie, Leech, and Collins 2010), and 'utilizing rhetoric as much as logic in seeking to persuade by analogy, rather than coherent argument' (Holub 1984).

Finally, it should be seen that *Verbal Tap Dance: a collection of rhyme verse* can be a contribution to the Creative Writing discipline, because of its approach to recent rhyme verse that employs infrequently used words and phrases in uncommon ways while still paying attention to relatable themes, vernacular, and proper syntax.

REFERENCES

ACARA Report 2019, *Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Foundation – Year 10 Australian Curriculum*, ACARA (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority), viewed 22 July 2020, <https://www.acara.edu.au/docs/default-source/curriculum/monitoring-the-effectiveness-of-the-foundation---year-10-australian-curriculum-report-2019.pdf>.

ACELR010 n.d., *Australian Curriculum: F-10 Curriculum*: *Senior secondary English subjects*, Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), viewed 3 June 2019, <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Search/?q=ACELR010>.

ACELT1637 n.d., *Australian Curriculum: F-10 Curriculum*, Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), viewed 3 June 2019, <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Search/?q=acelt1637>.

Adams, Philip & Stitt, Alexander 1981, *Slip Slop Slap,* Cancer Council 2019, viewed 11 June 2020, <https://www.cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/sun-protection/campaigns-and-events/slip-slop-slap-seek-slide.html>.

ANU 2017, *Meanings and origins of Australian words and idioms: S*, ANU College of Arts & Social Sciences, viewed 25 May 2021, <https://slll.cass.anu.edu.au/centres/andc/meanings-origins/s>.

Ayres, Pam 2018, *Woodland Burial (2006),* Pam Ayres, viewed 28 May 2020, <https://pamayres.com/poems/>.

Baker, Emilie Zoey n.d., viewed 17 October 2019, <http://www.emiliezoeybaker.com/teaching-and-schools>.

Baker, Emilie Zoey 2014, *Why it's absolutely, utterly essential to teach poetry to teenagers*, Emily Zoey Baker blog, weblog post, 16 June 2014, viewed 17 October 2019, <http://www.emiliezoeybaker.com/blog/2014/06/17/i-remember-the-exact-moment-i-wanted-to-become-a-poet>.

Baker, Sidney J. 1943, 'The Influence of American Slang on Australia', *American Speech*, vol. 18, no. 4, Dec 1943, pp. 253-256, viewed 5 July 2021, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/486636?seq=1>.

Baum, Marcel 2018, 'How schoolyard rap gained national wrap', *The Bulletin*, viewed 11 June 2020, <https://www.themorningbulletin.com.au/news/charters-towers-year-nine-student-raps-her-way-to-/3580526/>.

BBC 2020, *The Beatles' handwritten Hey Jude lyrics sell for £731,000*, BBC News, viewed 17 June 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-merseyside-52255022>.

Benton, Peter 1984, 'Teaching Poetry: The Rhetoric and the Reality', *Oxford Review of Education*, vol. 10, no. 3 (1984), pp. 319-327, viewed 4 February 2021, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1050435?seq=2#metadata_info_tab_contents>.

Benton, Peter 1999, 'Unweaving the Rainbow: poetry teaching in the secondary school I', *Oxford Review of Education*, vol. 25, no. 4, (Dec., 1999), pp. 521-531, viewed 22 May 2019, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/030549899103964>.

Billboard Charts Legend 2021, Billboard Hot 100, viewed 31 May 2021, <https://www.billboard.com/p/billboard-charts-legend>.

Borden, Jim 2019, *Beware of Ads That Rhyme: They'll Get You Every Time*; Borden's Blather, viewed 13 June 2020, <https://jborden.com/2019/10/22/beware-of-ads-that-rhyme-theyll-get-you-every-time/>.

Brady, Mike 1979, *Up There Cazaly*, Lyrics Mode, 2018, viewed 27 May 2020, <https://www.lyricsmode.com/lyrics/m/mike_brady/up_there_cazaly.html>.

Brady, Mike 1987, *One Day in September*, Flashlyrics, n.d., viewed 27 May 2020, <https://www.flashlyrics.com/lyrics/mike-brady/one-day-in-september-77>.

Britannica 2020, *Rap Music*, Encyclopaedia Britannica, viewed 11 June 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/art/rap>.

Brown, Simon Leo 2017, *AFL grand final: The song behind Richmond Tigers theme Oh We're From Tigerland*, ABC News, 28 September 2017, viewed 27 May 2020, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-09-28/afl-grand-final-the-song-behind-richmond-club-theme/8988832>.

Burkhardt, Ross M. 2016, *Using Poetry in the Classroom: Engaging Students in Learning*, Rowman & Littlefield Education, Maryland, USA.

Burridge, Kate & Manns, Howard 2018, *Get your hand off it, mate, Australian slang is not dying*, Monash University: Arts, viewed 12 August 2021, <https://www.monash.edu/arts/languages-literatures-cultures-linguistics/news-and-events/articles/2018/get-yer-hand-off-it,-mate,-australian-slang-is-not-dying>.

Byron, Lord 1812, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, W. B. Conkey Company (1900), viewed 20 May 2021, <https://ir.vanderbilt.edu/bitstream/handle/1803/1792/Childe%20Harolds%20Pilgrimage%2C%20Byron.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

Calway, Gareth 2008, *Don't be afraid: Poetry in the classroom*, NATE Classroom, viewed 25 October 2019, <https://www.thefreelibrary.com/Don%27t+be+afraid%3a+poetry+in+the+classroom.-a0182273934>.

Capes, A & Nunn, G. 2010, *The Death of Poetry in Australian Classrooms*, Cordite Poetry Review, paras. 1-2, 8-9, viewed 23 September 2019, <http://cordite.org.au/features/ashley-capes-graham-nunn-death-of-poetry-in-australian-classrooms/>.

Center for Academic Excellence 2009, *Language Tone and Audience*, Saint Joseph College, viewed 1 May 2020, <http://ww2.usj.edu/PDF/cae/toneaudience.pdf>.

Craig, W. J. (ed) 1995, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, The Book Company, Sydney.

Creed, Howard 1960, 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner: A Rereading', *The English Journal*, vol. 49, no, 4, April 1960, pp. 215-222+228, viewed 3 May 2021, < https://www.jstor.org/stable/808826?seq=1>.

Creely, Edwin 2018,'What's poetry got to do with it? The importance of poetry for enhancing literacy and fostering student engagement', *The Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, vol. 26, no. 3, October 2018, pp. 64-70, viewed 9 November 2019, <https://www.alea.edu.au/documents/item/1930>.

Creely, Edwin 2019, 'Poetry is dying': Creating a (re)new(ed) pedagogical vision for teaching poetry', *The Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, vol. 42, no. 2, Jun 2019, pp. 116-127, viewed 1 June 2019, <https://search.informit.com.au/fullText;dn=391316734210045;res=IELIND>.

Davis, Camea 2018, 'Writing the Self: Slam Poetry, Youth Identity and Critical Poetic Enquiry', *Art/Research International*, vol.3, issue 1, pp. 114-131, viewed 4 February 2021, <file:///C:/Users/prhan/Downloads/29251-Article%20Text-77921-1-10-20180224.pdf>.

Delbridge, A. & Bernard, J R L (eds.) 1998, 'Literature', *The Macquarie Concise Dictionary,* 3rd edn, Revised and Updated, Macquarie University, NSW.

Denning, Steve 2020, *What is a Story? What is Narrative Meaning?*, Steve Denning, viewed 2 June 2020, <http://www.stevedenning.com/Business-Narrative/definitions-of-story-and-narrative.aspx>.

Dove, Laurie L n.d., *Why do rhymes help people remember things?,* How Stuff Works, viewed 29 May 2020, <https://science.howstuffworks.com/life/inside-the-mind/human-brain/why-do-rhymes-help-people-remember-things.htm>.

Doyle, Maryann n.d., *Happy Little Vegemites*, Australian Screen, viewed 12 June 2020, <https://aso.gov.au/titles/ads/happy-little-vegemites/notes/>.

Dymoke, Sue 2012, *Changing English – Studies in Culture and Education, Poetry is an Unfamiliar Text: Locating Poetry in Secondary English Classrooms in New Zealand and England during a Period of Curriculum Change*, Routledge ~ Taylor & Francis Group, viewed 2 June 2019, <https://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/hgh96Ug6Reka2YYkiRFa/full>.

Farnen, Karen n.d., *Why Are Rhythm & Rhyme Important in Poems?: The Importance of Rhythm*, Seattle PI, viewed 24 May 2021, <https://education.seattlepi.com/rhythm-rhyme-important-poems-6546.html>.

Friedman, Nancy 2013, *Ads That Rhyme: Past Their Prime?,* Visual Thesaurus, viewed 10 June 2020, <https://www.visualthesaurus.com/cm/candlepwr/ads-that-rhyme-past-their-prime/>.

Gomery, Douglas 2003, *Crazy—Patsy Cline 1961*, Library of Congress, viewed 9 June 2020, <https://www.loc.gov/static/programs/national-recording-preservation-board/documents/CRAZY%20-revised.pdf>.

Hancock, Peter R. 2022, 'Verbal Tap Dance: a collection of rhyme verse' (unpublished), for MRes thesis, Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia.

Hennessy & McNamara 2011, 'Packaging poetry? Pupils' perspectives of their learning experience within the post-primary poetry classroom', *English in Education 2011*, vol. 45, no. 3, viewed 24 October 2019, <file:///D:/Peter/VU/VU%20Masters%20of%20Research%20in%20Creative%20Writing%202019/CONFIRMATION%20of%20CANDIDATURE/Packaging%20poetry%20Pupils%20perspective%20of%20their%20learning%20experience%20within%20post%20primary%20poetry%20classroom%20By%20Hennessy%20and%20McNamara%202011.pdf>.

Holub, Robert C. 1984, *Reception Theory*, viewed 16 September 2020, <https://books.google.com.au/books?hl=en&lr=&id=3GII2jAUB40C&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=reception+theory+robert+holub&ots=rJBETyEHyG&sig=QwnaaYZP8YZZu3WEjO0ztl6WOWo#v=onepage&q=reception%20theory%20robert%20holub&f=false>.

Iwamoto, Derek K. & Creswell, John & Caldwell, Leon 2007, *Feeling the Beat: The Meaning of Rap Music for Ethnically Diverse Midwestern College Students: A Phenomenological Study*, Victoria University, Australia, viewed 3

February 2021, <https://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=73a27149-0d07-4e5b-8674-0e3401e30a85%40sessionmgr4008&bdata=JkF1dGhUeXBlPXNoaWImc2l0ZT1lZHMtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#AN=26160570&db=afh>.

Interest Based Learning, NQS Professional Learning Program n.d., viewed 9 June 2020, <http://www.luketouhill.com.au/downloads/1791000/NQS_PLP_E-Newsletter_No37.pdf>.

James, William 1906, *The Moral Equivalent of War*, University of Kentucky, viewed 13 February 2021, <https://www.uky.edu/~eushe2/Pajares/moral.html >.

Jauss, Hans Robert 1982, *Toward an Aesthetic Reception*, University of Minnesota, viewed 5 August 2020, <sers.clas.ufl.edu/burt/LoserLit/HansRobertJaussLiteraryHistoryasaChallengetoLiteraryTheory.pdf>.

JMSS 2017, *OutLoud Teen Poetry Slam Winners*, John Monash Science School, viewed 16 October 2019, <http://www.jmss.vic.edu.au/jmss/21437/outloud-teen-poetry-slam-winners>.

Johnston, Allan & Morris, Alan 1978, *C'mon Aussie C'mon*, Lyrics On Demand, 2020, viewed 28 May 2020, <https://www.lyricsondemand.com/m/mojolyrics/cmonaussiecmonlyrics.html>.

Jolliffe, Grace M 2021, *Examples of Themes*, Practical Creative Writing, viewed 1 June 2021, <https://www.practicalcreativewriting.com/what-is-a-theme/examples-of-themes/>.

Kelly, Michael H & Rubin, David C 1988, 'Natural rhythmic patterns in English verse: Evidence from child counting-out rhymes', *Journal of Memory and Language*, vol. 27, issue 6, December 1988, pp. 718-740, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/0749596X88900174>.

Kiesling, Scott F & Paulston, Christina Bratt (eds.) 2005, *Intercultural Discourse and Communication: The Essential Readings,* pp. 19-32, Blackwell Publishing, viewed 3 February 2021, <https://pdf-drive.com/pdf/28Linguistics20The20Essential20Readings2920Scott20F.20Kiesling2C20Christina20Bratt20Paulston20-20Intercultural20Discourse20and20Communication20The20Essential20Readings-Wiley-Blackwell2028200429.pdf#page=22>.

Koopman, Hilda & Sportiche, Dominique & Stabler, Edward n.d., *An introduction to Syntactic Analysis and Theory: Syntactic Analysis Introduced*, p. 37, UCLA, viewed 14 January 2021, <https://linguistics.ucla.edu/people/stabler/isat.pdf>

Lant, Fay 2016, *Rhyme and Reason – How Poetry can be Used to Engage your Reluctant Writers,* Teachwire, viewed 15 April 2019, <https://www.teachwire.net/news/rhyme-and-reason-how-poetry-can-be-used-to-engage-your-reluctant-writers>.

Laker, Laurie J. 2014, *Our Fathers Felt These Things before – The Wartime Poetry of Wilfred Owen and Keith Douglas*, viewed 7 August 2021, <https://www.academia.edu/15088046/Our_Fathers_Felt_These_Things_Before_The_Wartime_Poetry_of_Wilfred_Owen_and_Keith_Douglas >.

Lee, Julian 2009, 'C'mon Aussie: cricket anthem reprised to get bums on seats', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, viewed 20 October 2020, <https://www.smh.com.au/business/cmon-aussie-cricket-anthem-reprised-to-get-bums-on-seats-20091126-jum2.html>.

Lenertz, Albert & Woods, Les 1930, *Aeroplane Jelly Song*, Aeroplane Jelly, viewed 12 June 2020, <https://www.aeroplanejelly.com.au/history>.

Lin, Guijaun 2009, 'Higher Education Research Methodology-Literature Method', *International Education Studies*, vol. 2, no. 4, pp. 179-181, viewed 25 May 2021, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1065734.pdf>.

Literacy Teaching Toolkit 2020, *Conversation and Social Skills*, *Outcome 1: identity*, Victoria State Government: Education and Training, viewed 8 June 2020, <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/learning/ecliteracy/interactingwithothers/Pages/conversationandsocialskills.aspx>.

Malcomson, Jack 1962, *AFL grand final: The song behind Richmond Tigers theme Oh We're From Tigerland*, ABC News, 28 September 2017, viewed 27 May 2020, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-09-28/afl-grand-final-the-song-behind-richmond-club-theme/8988832>.

Manuel, Jacqueline & Carter, Don 2015, 'Current and historical perspectives on Australian teenagers' reading practices and preferences', *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, vol. 38, no. 2, 2015, viewed 27 May 2019, <https://www.alea.edu.au/documents/item/1175>.

Markovitz, Benjamin 2011, 'Rereading: Childe Harold by Lord Byron', *The Guardian*, para. 9, viewed 16 February 2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2011/aug/12/byron-childe-harold-benjamin-markovits>.

Marsh, Nicholas 1995, *How to Begin Studying English Literature*, Springerlink, viewed 1 June 2021, <https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-349-13799-2_1>.

Masterclass staff 2021, *How to Develop a Theme for Your Story*, Masterclass, viewed 1 June 2021, <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-develop-a-theme-for-your-story#quiz-0>.

McGillivray, Shannon & Murayama, Kou & Castel, Alan D 2015, *Thirst for Knowledge: The Effects of Curiosity and Interest on Memory in Younger and Older Adults*, National Library of Medicine, USA, viewed 10 June 2020, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26479013/>.

Memory and Mnemonic Devices 2018, Psyche Central, viewed 16 July 2020, <https://psychcentral.com/lib/memory-and-mnemonic-devices/>.

Mullen, Ginger 2017, 'More Than Words: Using Nursery Rhymes and Songs to Support Domains of Child Development', *Journal of Childhood Studies*, viewed 6 June 2020, <file:///C:/Users/prhan/Downloads/17841-Article%20Text-16574-1-10-20170927.pdf>.

Neill, Sam 2020, *Two Short Poems by Sam Neill (2020)*, YouTube, viewed 10 June 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zcuVWtFqwNE>.

Nelson, Willie 1961, *Crazy*, AZLyrics, viewed 1 May 2020, <https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/patsycline /crazy.html>.

Ofsted 2007, *Poetry in Schools: A survey of Practice 2006-2007*, United Kingdom Government, viewed 23 October 2019, <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/7075/8/Poetry_in_schools_(PDF_format)_Redacted.pdf>.

Ong, Walter J. 2002, *Orality and Literacy*, Routledge, London.

One Tin Soldier 1971, Billboard Hot 100, viewed 3 June 2020, <https://www.billboard.com/music/coven>.

Onwuegbuzie, A J, Leech, N L, & Collins, K M 2010, 'Innovative Data Collection Strategies in Qualitative Research', *The Qualitative Report*,15(3), 696-726, viewed 20 October 2019, <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol15/iss3/12>.

Onwuegbuzie, A J, Leech, N L, & Collins, K M 2012, 'Qualitative Analysis Techniques for the Review of the Literature', *The Qualitative Report,*17(28), pp. 1-28, viewed 21 October 2019, <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol17/iss28/2>.

OutLoud Eco!Slam 2018, *2018 winner performance*, Red Room Company, viewed 22 October 2019, <https://redroomcompany.org/projects/outloud-ecoslam-2018/>.

Owen, Wilfred 1917, *The Next War*, All Poetry, viewed 2 June 2020, <https://allpoetry.com/The-Next-War>.

Perloff, Marjorie 2012, *The Difference Between Poetry and Song Lyrics'*, Boston Review, viewed 14 June 2020, <http://bostonreview.net/forum/poetry-brink/difference-between-poetry-and-song-lyrics>.

Pierce, Peter 2017, 'Contemporary Australian Poetry review: A fine anthology of quality and quantity', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 January 2017, viewed 13 October 2019, <https://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/books/contemporary-australian-poetry-review-a-fine-anthology-of-quality-and-quantity-20170126-gtz9b8.html>.

Poetry Foundation 2020a, *Alfred Lord Tennyson*, Poetry Foundation, viewed 7 June 2020, <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/alfred-tennyson>.

Poetry Foundation 2020b, *Claribel*, Poetry Foundation, viewed 7 June 2020, <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45320/claribel>.

Porterfield, Kristen 2017, *Critical Approach to Rap Music*, PhD thesis, Liberty University, viewed 17 July 2020, <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1786&context=honors>.

Potter, B & Lambert, D 1969, *One Tin Soldier,* Genius Media Group*,* viewed 2 June 2020, <https://genius.com/The-original-caste-one-tin-soldier-lyrics>.

Read, Kirsten 2014, *Clues cue the smooze: rhyme, pausing, and prediction help children learn new words from storybooks*, US National Library of Medicine: Frontiers in Psychology, viewed 4 June 2020, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3930864/>.

Richards-Gustafson 2020, *Examples of a rhyme scheme in Romeo and Juliet*, Seattle PI, viewed 8 June 2020, <https://education.seattlepi.com/examples-rhyme-scheme-romeo-juliet-5212.html>.

RNZ Arts 2020, *Covid-19: Millions find message of hope in Kiwi's viral poem 2020*, Radio New Zealand, viewed 21 July 2020, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/sunday/audio/2018745874/covid-19-millions-find-message-of-hope-in-kiwi-s-viral-poem>.

Rockhill, Paul Hunter 1996, *The Reception Theory of Hans Robert Jauss:* Theory and Application, viewed 16 September 2020, <file:///C:/Users/prhan/Desktop/The%20Reception%20Theory%20of%20Hans%20Robert%20Jauss_%20Theory%20and%20Application%201996.pdf>.

Simcox, Kenneth 2001, *The Next War*, The Wilfred Owen Association, viewed 18 September 2021, <http://www.wilfredowen.org.uk/poetry/the-next-war >.

Speech & Drama Set Poems 2019, Wynnum Manly Eisteddfod, Brisbane, viewed 8 June 2020, <https://wmeisteddfod.com.au/app/uploads/2018/01/WME-Speech-Drama-Set-Poems-2019.pdf>.

Spradley, James P 1979, *The Ethnographic Interview*, Holt Rinehart and Winston, New York.

Spradley, James P 1980, *Participant Observation*, Holt Rinehart and Winston, New York.

Stevens, Roger 2015, 'Poetry secrets: how to write a poem on a theme', *The Guardian*, viewed 18 May 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/childrens-books-site/2015/oct/07/poetry-secrets-how-to-write-a-poem-on-a-theme>.

Stewart, Patrick, 2020, *Sonnet 35*, BBC America, viewed 11 June 2020, <https://www.bbcamerica.com/anglophenia/2020/04/10-great-actors-reading-beautifully-soothing-and-stirring-poems>.

Strauss, Valerie 2013, 'Jingle Bells – written for Thanksgiving', *The Washington Post*, viewed 18 March 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2013/12/24/jingle-bells-written-for-thanksgiving/>.

Taylor, Steve 2014, *The Psychology of War: Why do humans find it so difficult to live in peace?*, Psychology Today, viewed 7 June 2020, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/out-the-darkness/201403/the-psychology-war>.

The Nobel Prize in Literature 2016, *Bob Dylan: Facts*, Nobel Media AB2020, viewed 24 June 2020, <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/2016/dylan/facts/>.

The Norton Anthology of Poetry 1983, 3rd edn., pp. 567-581, W. W. Norton & Co., London.

Thompson, Martyn P 1993, 'Reception Theory and the Interpretation of Historical Meaning', vol. 32, no. 3 (Oct., 1993), pp. 248-272, *History and Theory* (*Wesleyan University),* viewed 19 January 2021, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2505525?seq=1>, <https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/61619392/MPTThompsonReceptionTheory20191227-42673-1jfew6.pdf?1577469894=&response-content-disposition=inline%3B+filename%3DReception_Theory_and_the_Interpretation.pdf&Expires=1611025603&Signature=QcR6NAuGxbKjP9MbUqsP-J~D9rN0mnQUfckVQO40U0DliYBd~ujLPTB4xpx4HGNvauYNNkmPpujBQYUEMgYXbMlpuC0PQa1nbGNZLbLqywhOlQwbuA8jOTmquP3Dm-rRlV8jXI4Y-ik~HSGEah9F9-wwit6SduY7L2zt-3q6qu5ej~OLJazpETGVkx1T0r4T59P6r7fQa-rsdTL49xgUayxsJuTh9S2RBdSoXU~sjC~VlnyALravo5sj3xWQRWuEKxB9zj2WN4r4F3v3i4Yzzs~fRWrvqJ-afh5Up~PeFr8af8j-06BBVABuQbogh9MhUFrTKAN2sRJVRsjc5YSEOA__&Key-Pair-Id=APKAJLOHF5GGSLRBV4ZA>.

Trevenen, Thomas n.d., *Finding a Theme*, Towards the Examined Life, viewed 1 June 2021, <https://sites.google.com/site/towardtheexaminedlife/Home/finding-a-theme>.

VATE, *Strategic Plan 2019-2020*, Victorian Association for the Teaching of English, viewed 2 September 2019, <https://www.vate.org.au/sites/default/files/about/VATE%20Strategic%20Plan_W_FA.pdf>.

VCELT044 & VCELT114, *Victorian Curriculum Foundation-10 n.d.*, *Search Results*, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA), viewed 3 June 2019, <https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Search?q=rhyme+poetry>.

Vegemite Story n.d., Vegemite: The Song of Australia, viewed 12 June 2020, <https://vegemite.com.au/heritage/the-vegemite-story/>.

Verse n.d., *Australian Curriculum: F-10 Curriculum*: *Senior secondary English subjects: Literature*, Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), viewed 3 June 2019, <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/senior-secondary-curriculum/english/literature/?unit=Unit+1&searchTerm=Unit+1+Content+Descriptions+Literature#dimension-content>.

VRROOM 20007-10, *Slip Slop Slap (Adams & Stitt 1981)*, National Archives of Australia, viewed 11 June 2020, <http://vrroom.naa.gov.au/print/?ID=25340>.

Walk, Kerry 1998, *How to write a comparative analysis*, Harvard College Writing Center, viewed 25 May 2021, <https://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/how-write-comparative-analysis>.

Watson, J.R. 1992, *English Poetry of the Romantic Period 1789-1830*, 2nd edn., Longman, New York.

Weaven, M & Clark, T 2011, *Evolution and contingency: Poetry, curriculum and culture in Victoria, Australia,* Taylor & Francis Online, pp. 75-84, viewed 30 May 2019, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1358684X.2011.543513>, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1358684X.2011.543513>.

Weaven, M & Clark, T 2013, *I guess it scares us – Teachers discuss the teaching of poetry in Senior Secondary English,* Taylor & Francis Online, viewed 11 October 2019, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1111/eie.12016>.

Weaven, M & Clark, T 2015, 'Discretionary space: English teachers discuss curriculum agency', *Australian Journal of language and Literacy,* vol. 38, no. 3, October 2015, pp. 162-170, viewed 17 October 2019, <https://search.informit.com.au/fullText;dn=482132261721656;res=IELIND>.

Willis, Ika 2018, *Reception*, viewed 17 September 2020, <https://books.google.com.au/books?hl=en&lr=&id=c-ArDwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PT8&dq=willis+reception+theory&ots=Xh-4Ui8f3H&sig=lDW0yWTTnAaKo_NUYaJEJrLOMFE#v=onepage&q=willis%20reception%20theory&f=false>.

Xerri, Daniel 2013, 'Colluding in the 'torture' of poetry: Shared Beliefs and Assessment', *English in Education*, vol. 47, no.2, pp. 134-146, viewed 28 May 2019, <https://www.danielxerri.com/uploads/4/5/3/0/4530212/xerri_2013.pdf>. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/17548845.2013.11912485?needAccess=true>.

Youth Survey Report 2019, Mission Australia, viewed 5 February 2020, <file:///C:/Users/prhan/Desktop/Mission%20Australia%20Youth%20Survey%20Report%202019.pdf>.

Zentner, Marcel & Grandjean, Didier & Scherer, Klaus R 2008, *Emotions evoked by the sound of music: characterization, classification, and measurement*, National Library of Medicine, viewed 15 October 2020, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18729581/>.

Appendix 1

OZ Kids in Print magazine (Issue 1, 2020)

https://ozkids.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/ozkids_2020_01.pdf

This publication is but one example that relates to access of, and engagement with, poetry by Australian youth. It is a good example of writing in vernacular of a demographic audience – in this instance children.

However, out of 44 pages, only one third of the writing was poetry (12 pages, 18 poems), and that only eight of those poems are rhyme verse – with four of those written by year 7-12 students.

Studying this random sample publication indicates that popularity of rhyme verse at senior school student level is in the low percentile range.