

# An Elementary School Classroom in a Slum Poetic Devices and Elements|Most Important Concept of Poetry

Education / By M.S. Yadav / 9 July 2022

Do you know what poetic devices are? Do you know what the important elements of poetry are? Do poetic devices and elements play any role in understanding poetry? Poetic devices and poetic elements will assist you in comprehending the poetry of An Elementary School Classroom in a Slum. Metaphor, simile, metaphor, symbol, and imagery are poetic devices. There are certain elements like structure and plot, meter, rhyme, subject, speaker, poetic devices, theme, tone and mood, and syntax. Written by an eminent teacher with more than 25 years of experience as a lecturer

## An Elementary School Classroom in a Slum Poetic Devices and Elements

**Metaphor:** “A [metaphor](#) is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase denoting one kind of object or action is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them”

Stephen Spender in his poem, An Elementary School Classroom in a Slum, uses a lot of metaphorical words to explain his point of view on social injustice and class inequalities:

- The rich schoolchildren are compared to **“gusty waves”**, which means they are healthy and energetic as compared to slum children.
- **“future painted with a fog”**: slum children’s future is like a fog where nothing is visible. Their future is dark and bleak.
- **“sealed in with lead sky”**: it means the poet compares the future of slum children with lead sky, which means grey and unclear.
- Another metaphor used by the poet to explain the values of **Shakespeare’s words**, which are valuable today but in the future slum children are of no value.
- **“from fog to endless night”**: Slum students’ future is like fog on an endless night. It means a totally bleak future.
- **“wear skins peeped through by bones”**: exposed bones without flesh as they are very weak. With rat eyes, they live a dark life.
- **“whose language is the sun”**: the future of good schools Children are like the sun and slum schools. Children are like fog in an endless night

## Simile

- The poet explains the pathetic condition of children in a slum area, and they are compared with **“rootless weeds.”** Nothing can flourish without roots, and the future is dim as they are lacking energy in their bodies. They are discriminated against by society.
- **“like bottle bits on stones,” “their future painted with fog”**; **the children’s expressions on their spectacles are dull and difficult to understand.** Their faces are like stones, which means very rough and hard.
- **“windows that shut upon their lives like catacombs”**: schools in slum areas lack windows, and no light comes into classrooms. So, they are like underground graves for them. The poet clearly uses catacombs for the students’ classroom, where there is no light or air.

## Imagery

- **“weight down”**: The poet uses this phrase to show the poverty of the slum children, who are unable to bear the burden of their necks. The tall girl could not bear the weight of her head.
- **“rat’s eyes”**: It refers to weakness in all children and their eyes are not visible. They have become very small.

I assume you’ll be able to grasp the lyrical devices.

**Symbols: The poet uses symbols to compare and contrast the different things in the poem.**

- **“squirrel’s game”**: Used for escapism from reality. The students want ‘squirrel’s game’ to escape from their pathetic conditions.
- **“civilized dome riding all cities”**: The rich people consider them civilised and are least bothered about the inhumane conditions of slums’ students.
- **“open-handed map”**: The map is only useful for rich people. Poor students are unable to use such maps as these are only in books and maps but no progress in their life.
- **“map with slums as big as doom”**: Slums’ students are poverty-stricken.
- **“fog”**: Fog symbolises darkness where nothing is visible. Students’ future is like fog.
- **“ships and sun”**: Ships are for the rich and the sun is the symbol of progress, but in slums’ schools, children live in the dark and are unable to see the sun means no progress in their life.

- **“windows”**: It symbolises the way to move ahead, but in the poem, there are no windows in the school. It means a bleak future. Their future is like fog.
- **“green fields, gold sand”**: Symbols of positivity and progress.
- **“run azure”**: Positive symbol where things are clear like a blue sky
- **“sun”**: Symbol of progress and prosperity.

### Repetition:

**“Break O break open till they break the town,”**

**‘ Far, far’**

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