

ONOMATOPOEIA

There are many words in English that actually suggest the sound of the action they are referring to.

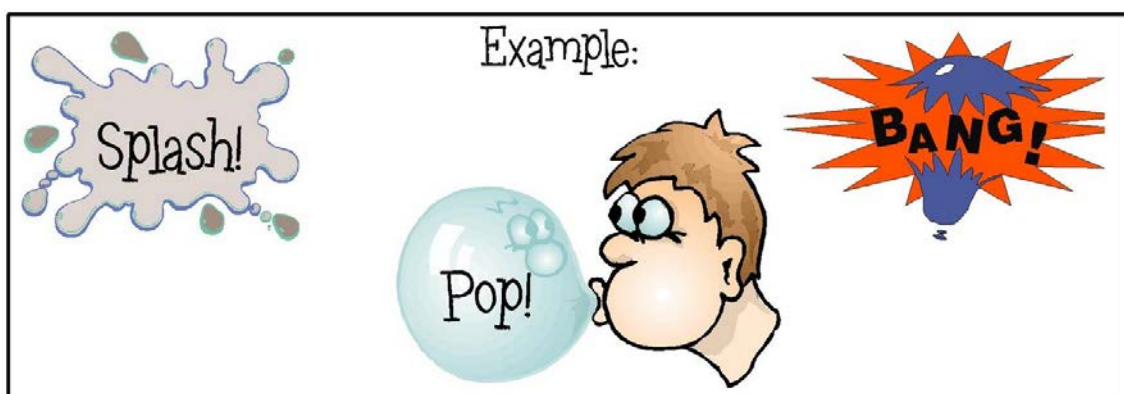
Here are just a few:

- Purr
- Growl
- Moo
- Squelch
- Drip
- Flop
- Slurp



The formal name for these sound words is **ONOMATOPOEIA**. They are words that imitate the sound they represent.

Poets use onomatopoeia or these sound words more than most people. There are many reasons for this: onomatopoeia can help to create a sense of place and setting, can convey a certain tone, can make the writing more vivid, and so on.



Read the following poem. Most of the lines contain onomatopoeia:

COMPANY MANNERS

By Eve Merriam

Hands off the tablecloth

don't spit the pips

don't rumble belly

don't finger the lettuce

don't grab the grub

don't dribble the dressing

don't slurp the soup

don't comp the celery

don't crumble the crackers

don't gobble the cobbler

don't mash the mushrooms

don't guzzle the fizz

don't mush the potatoes

swallow don't wig

don't stab the steak

don't smack your lips

don't slap the saltshaker

pat with a napkin

don't pill the bread

daintily dab

don't swill the sauce

quietly quaff

don't ooze the mayonnaise

fastidious sip

don't slop the slaw

and gracefully sample

don't splatter the ketchup

a nibbling tidbit.

don't gulp the olives

Task 1: Look closely at the poem and underline the words that are remind you of the sounds heard at the table when people are eating.

THE WASHING MACHINE.

It goes fwunkety,
 then slunkety,
as the washing goes around.

The water spluncheses,
 and it sluncheses
as the washing goes around.

As you pick it out it splocheses,
 and it flocheses,
as the washing goes around.

But at the end it schlopperies,
 and then flopperies,
as the washing stops going around.

Task 2: The poet has made up eight sound-words of his own. There are two in each stanza – find them and write them down on your white board.

Task 3: Now think of the sound words that would represent the following objects and actions.

1. Someone walking on broken glass
2. A vacuum-cleaner sucking up the dirt
3. A fisherman throwing out his rod.
4. Sausages cooking in a pan.
5. Chalk on a blackboard.
6. A fire burning briskly.
7. A kettle boiling.
8. A thirsty cat drinking milk.
9. Someone eating crisps with their mouth open.
10. Hitting a tennis ball.
11. Someone walking through thick mud.
12. A rocket taking off.



Task 4: Now try writing your own *I like...* poem. Look at the poem below for ideas.

NOISE

By Jessie Pope

I like noise.

The whoop of a boy, the thud of a hoof,

The rattle of rain on a galvanised roof,

The hubbub of traffic, the roar of a train,

The throb of machinery numbing the brain,

The switching of wires in an overhead tram,

The rush of the wind, a door on the slam,

The boom of the thunder, the crash of the waves,

The din of a river that races and raves,

The crack of a rifle, the clang of a pail,

The strident tattoo of a swift-slapping sail –

From any old sound that the silence destroys

Arises a gamut of soul-stirring joys.

I like noise.

Ideas for an “/ Like...” poem:

I like sounds.

The whistle of the wind

The _____ of _____

The _____ of _____

The _____ of _____

The _____ of _____

I like sounds.

I like sport/music/school/holidays/ etc.

