**If** by Rudyard Kipling

Structure: Regular rhyme scheme (ABAB).  
Iambic pentameter creates a pulse through the poem; the message sounds measured and weighty.  
  
Tone: Deeply contemplative.

**Prayer before Birth** by Louis MacNeice

Structure: Free verse. Stanzas increase in size, like growing feotus in womb.  
Poem is written in the form of a prayer, spoken by an unborn child.  
Each stanza is one sentence long - the sentence is a request to God.  
Each stanza begins with "I am not yet born" - followed by a plea to God. They all end with "me". A very rhythmic quality results.

Tone: Voice of unborn child is full of anguish and fear about the world. Becomes increasingly desperate.

**Half Past Two** by U. A. Fanthorpe

Structure: Narrative poem written in third person and free verse.  
“Once upon a schooltime” – evokes fairy-tales, rich imagination of child. Juxtaposes this with school.

Poem explores contrast between the two worlds with child's world affirmed.

**Piano** by D. H. Lawrence

Rhyming couplets - a simple rhyme scheme reflecting a key theme; childhood.  
Line length is irregular - creates a sense of flooding memories.  
Each stanza moves from present to past - the two are contrasted.  
However, lines about the past are written in the present tense - as if Lawrence has been transported back and is a boy again.

**Hide and Seek** by Vernon Scannell

Structure: One unbroken stanza of free verse. Appropriate given that this is a boy's breathless attempt to win a hide and seek game.

Tone: Shifts dramatically. Triumphant at first but as time passes excitement ebbs away and he becomes fearful.

**Sonnet 116** by Shakespeare

Structure: Shakesperian sonnet – three quatrains and concluding rhyming couplet  
Iambic pentameter.  
Each quatrain defines love with final rhyming couplet underlining poet’s certainty.  
  
Tone: About love, but reflective not passionate. Asks ‘what is love?’

**La Belle Dame sans Merci** by John Keats

Structure: Written in the ballad form which gives it a strong iambic rhythm and strong rhyme.  
A passerby asks a sickly knight what’s ailing him and the knight then tells his story.

Tone: Forboding tone – ‘sans merci’ means without mercy. A bleak tale; a colourless world is depicted.

**Poem at 39** by Alice Walker

Structure: Written in free verse; sounds like a train of thought.

Tone: Reflective, wistful. Complicated memories about father - Walker wishes he could see woman she became.

**War Photographer** by Carol Ann Duffy

Structure and form: Four stanzas of equal length, ending in rhyming couplet.  
Very neat – reflecting poet trying to make sense of chaos of war in dark room.

Tone: Bitter.

**The Tyger** by William Blake

Structure: Trochaic tetramter creates a pounding rhythm.  
Six quatrains, all asking questions in rhyming couplets.

Tone: awe, wonder, amazement, fear.

**My Last Duchess** by Robert Browning

Structure: Dramatic monologue - the Duke is addressing a visiting Count on subject of late wife. In so doing, reveals more about himself than her.  
Written in iambic pentameter and rhyming couplets - rigid form creates sense of control, just as Duke is controlling.

Tone: Arrogant, domineering, self-centred and irrational speaker. A chilling poem.

**Remember** by Christina Rosetti

Structure: An Italian sonnet - written in iambic pentameter and consisting of an opening octave and a sestet. The opening octave introduces the main idea which is then explored from a different angle in the final sestet.

Tone: Rossetti is facing death and insisting in octave that she is remembered. "Remember me" repeated.  
"Yet" marks a shift in tone and opens the sestet. Poet now empathizes with lover and demands he must forget if remembering her makes him sad.