Lyric Poetry Definition and Examples:

Lyric is non-narrative, short poem that reveals the speaker’s personal feeling, emotion, mode, state of mind, expression, thought, attitude, perception etc. in a first person narrative. Lyric poetry does not tell any story, rather it is very personal and solely focused on the speaker’s personal feeling and ideas. Lyric poetry does not address wider public. The speaker in a lyric poem always uses first person. For example, I, My love etc. So, in Lyric poetry, the speaker directly addresses the readers, invoking his own personal feeling and expressions.

The word ‘Lyric’ comes from the Greek word ‘Lyre’, a stringed musical instrument. Initially, Lyric poem was meant to be sung and poets were used to singing Lyric in a Lyre. Originally, Lyric poet tends to be musical and suits to music very well and musicality is one of the characteristics of Lyric. However, over the time, the meaning of Lyric has been changed and it does no longer mean music. Rather, Lyric poetry is now largely meant for reading.

Explanation of the speaker’s intense emotion, thought and feeling is the main purpose of Lyric poetry. That is why, some critics say that ‘you do not hear Lyric poem; rather, you overhear Lyric poem’. Among the different kinds of Lyric poetry, 14-line Sonnet is most popular. Some other forms of Lyric poetry are Ode, Elegy etc. For the last 500 years, Lyric has been the most popular form of poetry in the world.

• Lyric Poetry: highly musical verse that expresses the speaker's feelings and observations. In ancient times poems were sung with accompaniment from a lyre. Modern lyric poems, although usually not sung, still posses musical qualities--rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, and onomatopoeia.

The Eagle
BY Alfred Lord Tennyson
He clasps the crag with crooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands, 
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls, 
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

The Bells
BY Edgar Allen Poe

HEAR the sledges with the bells, 
Silver bells!
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!
While the stars, that oversprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle
   With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
   From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

Hear the mellow wedding bells,
Golden bells!
What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!
Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight!
From the molten-golden notes,
And all in tune,
What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
On the moon!
Oh, from out the sounding cells,
What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!
   How it swells!
   How it dwells
On the Future! how it tells
Of the rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing
   Of the bells, bells, bells,
   Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells!

Hear the loud alarum bells,
   Brazen bells!
What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells!
In the startled ear of night
How they scream out their affright!
   Too much horrified to speak,
   They can only shriek, shriek,
   Out of tune,
In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire,
Leaping higher, higher, higher,
With a desperate desire,
Now—now to sit or never,
By the side of the pale-faced moon.
Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
What a tale their terror tells
   Of Despair!

   How they clang, and clash, and roar!
   What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air!
Yet the ear it fully knows,
   By the twanging
And the clanging,
How the danger ebbs and flows;—
   Yet the ear distinctly tells,
In the jangling
And the wrangling,
   How the danger sinks and swells,—
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger
   Of the bells,
Of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
   In the clamor and the clangor of the bells!

Hear the tolling of the bells,
Iron bells!
What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!
   In the silence of the night
How we shiver with affright
At the melancholy menace of their tone!
For every sound that floats
From the rust within their throats
Is a groan.
And the people—ah, the people,
They that dwell up in the steeple,
All alone,
And who tolling, tolling, tolling,
In that muffled monotone,
   Feel a glory in so rolling
On the human heart a stone—
They are neither man nor woman,
They are Ghouls:
And their king it is who tolls;

And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
And a resolute endeavor
   Rolls
   A pæan from the bells;
And his merry bosom swells
   With the pæan of the bells,
And he dances, and he yells:
   Keeping time, time, time,
   In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the pæan of the bells,
Of the bells:
   Keeping time, time, time,
   In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the throbbing of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells—
   To the sobbing of the bells;
Keeping time, time, time,
   As he knells, knells, knells,
   In a happy Runic rhyme,
To the rolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells:
   To the tolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
   Bells, bells, bells—
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

I wandered lonely as a cloud
   BY William Wordsworth

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
   A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
   And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
   Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
   Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
   In such a jocund company:
I gazed---and gazed---but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

I felt a Funeral in my Brain
BY Emily Dickinson

I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,
And Mourners to and fro
Kept treading - treading - till it seemed
That Sense was breaking through -
And when they all were seated,
A Service, like a
Drum -Kept beating - beating - till I thought
My Mind was going numb -
And then I heard them lift a Box
And creak across my Soul
With those same Boots of Lead, again,
Then Space - began to toll,
As all the Heavens were a Bell,
And Being, but an Ear,
And I, and Silence, some strange
Race Wrecked, solitary, here -
And then a Plank in Reason, broke,
And I dropped down, and down -
And hit a World, at every plunge,
And Finished knowing - then -