

**P**oetry, defined as language divided into lines, is found in most known human cultures. This masterful survey of poetry and its constituent components demonstrates the functions performed by metre, rhyme, alliteration and parallelism, arguing that each line of a poem fits as a whole unit into the limited capacity of human working memory. Using examples from around the world, Fabb surveys the wide varieties of poetry and the ways they are performed, including those in songs and signed literatures. Focusing on language, form and memory, he argues, helps us understand why poetry is a particularly valued way of using language. A fresh exploration of poetry, the book will be welcomed by students and researchers of literature, linguistics and psychology, as well as anyone interested in poetry.