



Englynion: Welsh Poetry Forms

(Ok, Shorties Crew, the first two of these are easier than the last two. Try one of them out [or more]. Since these are limited to 4-line stanzas your poem cannot be more than two stanzas long to keep it under our 9-line maximum. Count only the lines of text in a poem, no blank lines, or title. A single stanza poem is quite OK.)

1.) Englyn crych (the seeking englyn)

This is a variation of four lines to a stanza. Each line has 7 syllables, and the rhyme scheme requires lines 1, 2, and 4 to end rhyme. While the last syllable of line 3 must rhyme with a 2nd, 3rd or 4th syllable in line 4.

Here's my single stanza attempt in English. Not Pulitzer-Prize winning. But a decent attempt.

Summer light in the garden
lingered upon your book. Then
closing it, you laughed, arose,
struck a pose and found your pen.

2.) Englyn proest cadwynog (the chain half-rhyme englyn)

In this variation there are four lines of 7 syllables again. However, while the 1st and 3rd lines use exact end rhyme, the 2nd and 4th lines end on slant rhymes using assonance (the same vowel sound as the full rhyme syllables). In my attempt below, the “i” sound in *light* and *night* is chimed (assonated) against the “i” sounds in *ire* and *eyes*.

We are the children of light,
progeny of a star's ire.
Even in the dark of night
I've seen the fire in your eyes.

3.) Englyn unodl crwca (the crooked one rhyme englyn)

In this four-line variation, lines 1 and 2 are 7 syllables long. Line 3 has 10 syllables, and line 4 has 6. Lines 1, 2, and 4 have the same end rhyme. In line 3 that same rhyme must be used near the end, after which there is a caesura (a pause, often a dash). Then the last syllable of line 3 is echoed or slant rhymed somewhere in the first part of line 4. So, it looks like this:

x x x x x A
x x x x x A
x x x x x A - x x b
x b x x x A

Here is a poem by [Judi Van Gorder](#) illustrating the form.

4.) Englyn proest cyfnewidiog (the reciprocal half-rhyme englyn)

This variation has a simple layout: four-line stanzas, each line with 7 syllables. Each line has the same slant rhyme either with vowels (assonance), or by ending with the same consonant. (Sometimes called a half-rhyme.)

And there is at least one special line called a cynghanedd which combines stressed syllables with alliteration (repeats of beginning letter, or assonance and consonance) with internal and end rhyme to create harmony. Also, a line of cynghanedd is divided by an invisible break or caesura, creating two, or more, parts in a line. (A natural pause where a reader might take a breath.) While there are four main types of cynghanedd, there are countless variations. Don't let all this worry you!

English doesn't have the same system of stresses and accents as Welsh. So, as long as we get close by creating harmony that's good.

Here's my brave attempt. I've ended each 7-syllable line with the same "t" consonant. I've included one cynghanedd: *each life a lively comet*. There is the assonated internal rhyme with *life* and *lively*. As well as alliteration. And there is a place where one might breathe/pause after the phrase *each life*. That line could easily be written as: *each life—a lively comet* to bring emphasis to it. But we want it to be subtle.

I'm told we are God's stardust
A sprinkle of Heaven's light
Each life a lively comet
Luminous in the moment

Resources

At Poetry Magnum Opus: <https://www.poetrymagnumopus.com/topic/984-4-englyn-unodl-crw-or-crooked-short-one-rhyme-englyn/>

At Wikipedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Englyn>

At Wordwool: <https://wordwool.com/englyn-poem-type/>

At Aberystwyth University: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/news/archive/2025/01/title-278344-en.html>