

Figures of Speech Analysis
SOMEBODY’S MOTHER

Category	Figure of Speech	Example from Poem	Explanation / Impact
Based on Sound	Alliteration	<i>“helping hand”</i> <i>“slippery street”</i> <i>“heart happy”</i>	Repetition of initial consonant sounds (/h/, /s/) in adjacent or closely linked words for melodic rhythm.
Based on Sound	Rhyme & Rhythm	<i>“gray / day”</i> <i>“snow / slow”</i> <i>“long / throng”</i>	AABB rhyme scheme across heroic couplets providing a musical flow.
Based on Comparison	Simile	<i>“Came the boys like a flock of sheep”</i>	Explicit comparison of the rushing schoolboys to a flock of sheep using the word “like”.
Based on Comparison	Metaphor	<i>“The woman was old and ragged and gray”</i>	“Gray” is used metaphorically to symbolize extreme old age, vulnerability, and sorrow.
Based on Contrast / Opposition	Antithesis	<i>“Her aged hand on his strong young arm”</i> <i>“trembling feet along... firm and strong”</i>	Juxtaposition of sharply contrasting concepts (age vs. youth, weakness vs. strength) to highlight empathy.
Based on Association / Substitution	Synecdoche	<i>“helping hand”</i> <i>“anxious eye”</i> <i>“trembling feet”</i>	A part of a person is used to represent the whole individual (e.g., “hand” represents the entire person offering help).
Based on Association / Substitution	Transferred Epithet	<i>“anxious eye”</i> <i>“young heart”</i>	An adjective (anxious, young) grammatically modifies a noun (eye, heart) other than the actual entity (the woman, the boy).
Based on Sentence Structure	Inversion (Anastrophe)	<i>“Down the street... Came the boys”</i> <i>“At last came one of the merry troop”</i>	Reversal of standard English word order (Verb before Subject) for metric effect and dramatic emphasis.
Based on Sentence Structure	Polysyndeton	<i>“old and ragged and gray”</i> <i>“aged, and poor and slow”</i>	Repeated use of the conjunction “and” in quick succession to emphasize the weight of her physical burden.
Based on Sentence Structure	Repetition	<i>“Somebody's mother”</i>	Repeated phrase throughout the poem to underline the universal theme of maternal respect and human kindness.
Based on Imagination / Emotion	Hyperbole	<i>“bent with the chill of the Winter's day”</i>	Deliberate exaggeration of the cold's physical impact to heighten pathos.
Based on Imagination / Emotion	Apostrophe	<i>“God be kind to the noble boy...”</i>	Direct address to an absent entity or deity (God) in prayer.