

The Stolen Child Literary Devices

Writer: William Butler Yeats | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

[W.B. Yeats](#) utilizes several literary devices in "[The Stolen Child](#)" to create a rich and captivating poem. Some of the notable literary devices used in the poem include:

Imagery: Yeats uses vivid and evocative imagery to describe the natural world and the faeries' realm. The images of clear waters, moonlight, and dancing faeries help create a fantastical and enchanting atmosphere.

Repetition: The poem uses repetition to emphasize certain ideas and images, such as the repeated use of "Come away" in the faeries' invitation, which reinforces their seductive call.

Alliteration: Alliteration, the repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words, is used for both musical and thematic effects. For example, "wandering water," "deep woods," and "old willow" create a melodic quality in the poem.

Metaphor: The entire poem can be seen as a metaphor for the desire to escape the harsh realities of life. The faeries' world conveys an idealized alternative, and the child's journey with them is symbolic of the desire for a return to a more innocent and carefree state.

Personification: The faeries are personified as beings with the power to enchant and lure the child away. They are given human qualities and emotions, such as singing, dancing, and inviting the child.

Symbolism: The faeries and their world symbolize the allure of the natural world and the desire for a simpler, more magical existence. They also illustrate the temptation to escape from the complexities of the human world.

Irony: The poem contains an element of irony, as the faeries' offer of an idyllic life is both enticing and, ultimately, a form of theft. The child is "stolen" away from their human life, and this act of "theft" is presented as something desirable.