**What IS Lyrical Writing?**  
  
Prose or poetry that is presented to the reader in an expressive, song-like way, using rhythmic structures, words that convey emotion, atmosphere/tone, and

metaphorical language  to paint a rich, evocative picture while remaining beneath the story as scaffold rather than center stage.

What it is NOT 🡪 Purple Prose: Text that is so extravagant, ornate, or flowery as to break the flow of story and draw excessive attention to itself.

**Lyrical Picture Books include:**

**Rhythmic Structures**  
  
*Hello Lighthouse* by Sophie Blackall is full of Bubbling, babbling text that sings.

**Repetition and Purposeful Sentence Structure**

*The Blue Songbird* by Vern Kousky has this repeating phrase:

*“Excuse me, Mr. Long Necked Bird,*

*in your travels have you heard*

*of a very special thing—*

*a song that only I can sing?”*

*“Hello, Mr. Wise Old Bird.*

*In your long life you must have heard*

*of a very special thing—*

*a song that only I can sing?”*

*“Please don’t eat me, Mr. Scary Bird.*

*I just wondered if you’ve ever heard*

*of a very special thing—*

*a song that only I can sing?”*

*The Promise* by Nicola Davies and ill. By Laura Carlin uses varying sentence lengths for emphasis: *Nothing grew. Everything was broken. No one ever smiled.*

**Words That Convey Emotion**

In *The Day You Begin* by Jacqueline Woodson and Rafael López, we feel the ache of a child of color who has no vacation stories to tell when she heads to school in the fall:  
 *And as you stand in front of that room, you can only remember how the heat waved as it lifted off the curb, and your days spent at home caring for your little sister.*

*Also, check out:  
Cloth Lullaby* by Amy Novesky, ill. By Isabelle Arsenault

*Be Brave Little One* by Marianne Richmond (She began as a self-published author.)

**A Dream-Like Lilting Atmosphere or Tone**

On the Night You Were Born by Nancy Tillman:   
  
*On the night you were born*

*the moon smiled with such wonder*

*that the stars peeked in to see you*

*and the night wind whispered,*

*“Life will never be the same.”*

*The Promise* by Nicola Davies, ill. by Laura Carlin

*The gritty wind still scratched the parched, cracked streets.*

*The people scowled and scuttled to their homes like cockroaches.*

**Figurative Language**

Simile in *Cloth Lullaby* by Amy Novesky, ill. By Isabelle Arsenault

*Her family lived in a big house on the water*

*that wove like a wool thread through everything.*

Onomotopoeia in *Honeybee* by Kirsten Hall, ill. by Isabelle Arsenault

**Simplicity**

*Step Gently Out* by Helen Frost and Rick Lieder (also elegant and poetic)

*Be still and watch a single blade of grass.*

*Balanced lightly on a leaf.*

*Bathed in golden light.*

*Florette* by Anna Walker

*Then she noticed a small green sprout peeking through a gap.*

*This house, once* by Deborah Freedman

*This door was once a colossal oak tree*

*about three hugs around and as high as the blue.*

**Layering**

*Eeny, Meeny, Miney Mole* by Jane Yolen, ill. by Kathryn Brown

Appears to be about a mole exploring but is really about belief, optimism, and courage