

William Carlos Williams

The Red Wheelbarrow

so much depends  
upon

a red wheel  
barrow

glazed with rain  
water

beside the white  
chickens.

([[NOT FINAL TEXT CREDIT:]] From *The Collected Poems: Volume I, 1909–1939*. Copyright © 1938 by New Directions Publishing Corp. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corp.)

Stefanie Wortman 1/24/2016 10:46 AM

**Comment [1]:** Though Williams's poem looks casual, with no capitalization and little punctuation, it is carefully composed in couplets, with three words in the first line and one word in the second. This form enacts the idea of the first stanza, as the weight of an idea or image, balancing on a single, small word like "upon."

Stefanie Wortman 1/24/2016 10:47 AM

**Comment [2]:** The enjambment breaks up compound words like "wheelbarrow" and "rainwater." Williams leads us to see their constituent elements as well as to consider what they make together.

Stefanie Wortman 1/24/2016 10:47 AM

**Comment [3]:** The word "glazed" says something about the weather in this scene, and perhaps more importantly, it introduces a subtle commentary on art. Though the scene Williams depicts seems accidental, rain gives the wheelbarrow a shiny finish such as an artist might apply to a painting or a piece of pottery.