

# Krzysztof Kamil Baczyński (1921 - 1944), Poland



## “Piosenka” / “Song” (1938)

1. Some words are similar across many languages. Here are some words you will see in the poem. **Can you match them with their English translations?**

*\* Why do you think languages “share” some words like that?*

<p>wędrujemy malachitową <b>pomarańczy</b> arkad sól noc morze fontannami perłowymi winogrona</p>	<p>fountains sea (think: maritime) salt of malachite (green mineral) arcades (in architecture) we wander <b>oranges</b> night wine grapes of pearl</p>	
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2. Sometimes, the author’s biography (life facts) can help you think about the poem. **Look at the information above. How old was Krzysztof when he wrote “Song”?** \_\_\_

**What do you think he was doing at the time? What could his interests be?**

*\* Look at other dates above. Think about history. Can you make other guesses about his life?*

3. Different genres (types of things you read or hear, like stories, plays, poems) have different “rules.” This poem is titled “Song.” **Tick (or write) the “rules” you think are important for words in songs.**

*\* If your “rules” are broken, can a song still be called a song? Why / why not?*

<input type="checkbox"/> funny and happy <input type="checkbox"/> some parts repeat <input type="checkbox"/> words go well with music	<input type="checkbox"/> not everything is true <input type="checkbox"/> some words sound similar <input type="checkbox"/> words are clear & obvious	<input type="checkbox"/> songs can be about feelings <input type="checkbox"/> you can use your imagination <input type="checkbox"/> _____
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4. Read (and listen to) the poem. **Can you find the words you translated in ex. 1? Can you check which of your rules from ex. 3 it follows?**

Krzysztof Kamil Baczyński, "Piosenka" ("Song")

<i>Polish poem:</i>	<i>English translation ideas:</i>
Znów wędrujemy ciepłym krajem, malachitową łąką morza. (Ptaki powrotne umierają wśród pomarańczy na rozdrożach.)  Na fioletowoszarych łąkach niebo rozpina płynność arkad. Pejzaż w powieki miękko wsiąka, zakrzepła sól na nagich wargach.  A wieczorami w prądach zatok noc liże morze słodką grzywą. Jak miękkie gruszki brzmieje lato wiatrem sparzone jak pokrzywą.  Przed fontannami perłowymi noc winogrona gwiazd rozdaje. Znów wędrujemy ciepłą ziemią, znów wędrujemy ciepłym krajem.	[again][we wander][through the warm country] [malachite meadow of the sea] [birds][returning / of return][they die] [among the oranges / orange trees] [on the crossroads]  [On violet-grey meadows] [sky] [spans out] [the fluidity] [of arcades] [Landscape] [in the eyelids] [softly] [it sinks in] [solid / set] [salt] [on naked lips]  [An in the evenings] [in the currents of the bays] [night] [licks] [the sea] [with a sweet mane] [Like soft pears] [ripens] [summer] [by the wind] [stung] [like by a nettle]  [In front of fountains] [of pearl] [night] [wine grapes] [of stars] [it gives away] [Again] [we wander] [through the warm earth] [again] [we wander] [through the warm country]

5. Use your own words / ideas, and the translation ideas above. **What does the poem mean for you? How does it make you feel? What does it make you think of?**

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6. Look at (or listen to) the poem again. Think of how the words and lines are built and how they sound. **Tick the best way to describe the poem below.**

<input type="checkbox"/> The lines sometimes sound longer, sometimes shorter. The words do not rhyme at all.	<input type="checkbox"/> The lines sometimes sound longer, sometimes shorter. The lines rhyme (a - b - a - b)	<input type="checkbox"/> The lines all sound like they are just as long. The lines rhyme (a - b - a - b)
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7. In poems and songs, authors sometimes talk about senses (things you can see, hear, smell, taste, feel). **Read (or listen to) the poem. Complete the table below with the English translation ideas.**

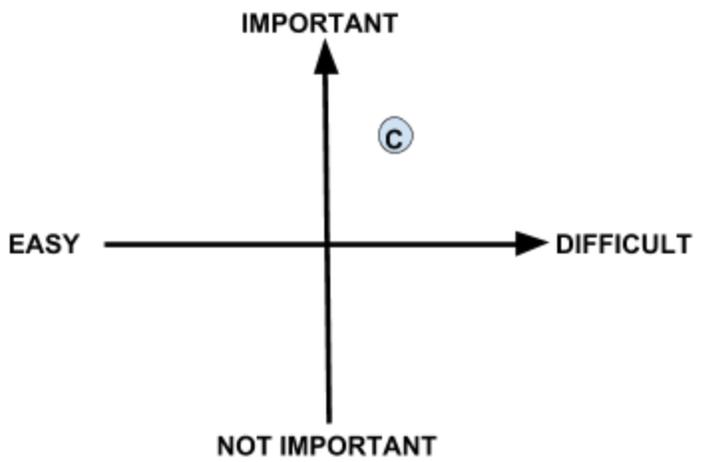
<u><b>You can see it</b></u>  <i>Malachite meadow of the sea</i>	<u><b>You can hear it</b></u>	<u><b>You can taste it</b></u>
<u><b>You can smell it</b></u>	<u><b>You can feel it</b></u>	<u><b>More than one thing / hard to say</b></u>

8. Not everything in a poem needs to be “100% correct” or “100% obvious”. A poem or a song can use words, images, or sounds, to make you think / remember / imagine something. **Can you complete the table with the translation ideas about the poem?**

<u><b>I think it's obvious / literal</b></u>  <i>Again we wander</i>	<u><b>I think it's not obvious / literal</b></u>  <i>The summer ripens</i>	<u><b>I'm not sure</b></u>
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9. You looked at “Song” many times now, and you thought about many ideas connected to it. Think about how you can work on translating the poem. What seems easy, what seems difficult? What is important to you, what isn’t important? Complete the graph.

<p>A) I want to keep the “English-like” words (ex.1)          B) I want the poem to look like a “Song” (ex.3)  <b>C) I want to translate what the words mean (ex.4)</b>          D) I want to say what the poem means to me (ex.5)          E) I want to find the right syllables / length (ex.6)          F) I want some lines to sound similar / rhyme (ex.6)          G) I want to translate the senses (ex.7)          H) I want to translate the different meanings (ex.8)          I) I want the poem to sound more “English”          J) I want the poem to sound more “different”          K) I want the poem to feel like it’s 1938 (ex.2)          L) I want the poem to feel like it’s today          M) I want _____          N) I want _____</p>	
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9b. You can use the ideas above to help you write something brand new, too. Think about writing something similar to “Song” (a poem, a song, a story...), using the “important” ideas for you. Here are some questions you can use to get started:

- What is summer like for you?
- Write about a trip or journey you remember.
- Describe a place / country / landscape you know well.

10. You know what to do now! Write your translation of the poem.

**Piosenka**

Znów wędrujemy ciepłym krajem,  
malachitową łąką morza.

(Ptaki powrotne umierają  
wśród pomarańczy na rozdrożach.)

Na fioletowoszarych łąkach  
niebo rozpina płynność arkad.

Pejzaż w powieki miękko wsiąka,  
zakrzepła sól na nagich wargach.

A wieczorami w prądach zatok  
noc liże morze słodką grzywą.

Jak miękkie gruszki brzmieje lato  
wiatrem sparzone jak pokrzywą.

Przed fontannami perłowymi  
noc winogrona gwiazd rozdaje.

Znów wędrujemy ciepłą ziemią,  
znów wędrujemy ciepłym krajem.