Alliteration and Assonance

Alliteration is when a writer repeats the consonant sounds at the beginnings of words. For example, in “My puppy punched me in the eye,” the words “puppy punched” are alliterative because they both begin with “p.”

Assonance is when a writer repeats the vowel sounds in the stressed syllables of words. For example, in the line “My rabbit whacked my ear,” the words “rabbit whacked” are an example of assonance because they both contain a “short a” sound on the stressed syllable.

Alliteration and assonance do not have to have the same letters; just the same sounds. So for example, “falling phone” is alliterative, and “flying high” is assonant, because they repeat the same sounds even though they don’t repeat the same letters.

Exercise:
1. Read the following poem.
2. **Underline** the alliterative words in each line.
3. **Circle** the assonant words in each line.

Hint: Sometimes words can be both alliterative and assonant.

**My Puppy Punched Me In the Eye**

My puppy punched me in the eye.
My rabbit whacked my ear.
My ferret gave a frightful cry
and roundhouse kicked my rear.

My lizard flipped me upside down.
My kitten kicked my head.
My hamster slammed me to the ground
and left me nearly dead.

So my advice? Avoid regrets;
no matter what you do,
don’t ever let your family pets
take lessons in kung fu.

— Kenn Nesbitt