



# What is Poetry?

An Introduction to Poetry



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## Quick Write:

What does poetry mean to you? How do you define it?



## Homework



## Song Lyrics Activity:

- Bring in lyrics to a song that you believe are poetic
- Bring in 3 stanzas from your song including the refrain
- Make sure the language is appropriate (edit the language if you need to)
- If you cannot print the lyrics, copy them down by hand
- Be prepared to defend why you believe the song can be considered poetry.

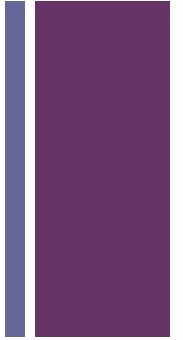
# + Song Lyrics Discussion



- Share your song lyrics with your group
- Discuss:
  - why does the song seem poetic to you?
  - how does the song make you feel?
  - what is the overall message
  - Is there rhyme or repetition in your song?
  - Is there figurative language in your song?
  - Do you think your song could be published as a poem?



## Definition of Poetry: Class Discussion



- Are all songs poems?
- Is a song rapping about cars and clothes a poem?
- Is a poem about stubbing your toe considered art?
- Can you define a poem?

CAN  
GRAFFITI  
BE  
POETRY?

Speak the  
truth, even if  
your voice  
shakes

Every turn of  
the wheel is a  
revolution.



GRAFFITI IS A POEM THE CITY WRITES TO

ITSELF

© Boom



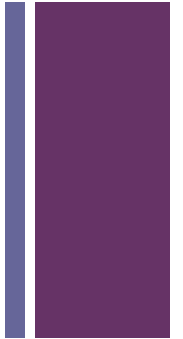
# “This is Just to Say” - William Carlos Williams

I have eaten  
the plums  
that were in  
the icebox

and which  
you were probably  
saving  
for breakfast

Forgive me  
they were delicious  
so sweet  
and so cold

- What are your initial reactions to this poem?





## EXIT TICKET



- Reflect on today's group activity and class discussion. Have you changed your opinion on the definition of poetry? Explain.



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## Quick Write



What do you think is the purpose of poetry?

Poetry is when an  
emotion has found its  
thought and the thought  
has found words.

**Robert Frost**

American poet

(1874-1963)

QuoteHD.com

I would define, in brief,  
the poetry of words as  
the rhythmical creation  
of Beauty.

**Edgar Allan Poe**

A poem is a painting.  
A poem is a painting that is  
not seen.  
A painting is a poem that is  
not heard.

Phoebe Hesketh

Poetry is the one place  
where people can speak  
their original human  
mind. It is the outlet for  
people to say in public  
what is known in private.

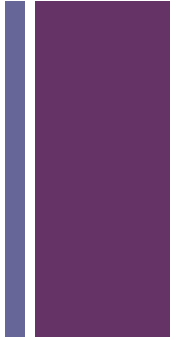
**Allen Ginsberg**

"Poetry is  
an echo,  
asking a  
shadow to  
dance."

*Carl Sandburg*

Poetry is the spontaneous  
overflow of powerful  
feelings: it takes its origin  
from emotion recollected in  
tranquility.

**William Wordsworth**



## Class Discussion: What is the Purpose of Poetry?

- An opportunity for the poet to express him or herself?
- To send a valuable message?
- To make readers feel a particular emotion?
- To capture a moment, an image, or a feeling?

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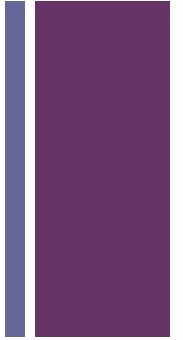
## Kobe's Poem

<http://www.theplayerstribune.com/dear-basketball/>



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# Slam Poetry



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CT\\_veYTFQmc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CT_veYTFQmc)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0qDtHdloK44>



# “Introduction to Poetry”- Billy Collins



I ask them to take a poem  
and hold it up to the light  
like a color slide

or press an ear against its hive.

I say drop a mouse into a poem  
and watch him probe his way out,

or walk inside the poem’s room  
and feel the walls for a light switch.

I want them to waterski  
across the surface of a poem  
waving at the author’s name on the shore.

But all they want to do  
is tie the poem to a chair with rope  
and torture a confession out of it.

They begin beating it with a hose  
to find out what it really means.





# Making Meaning in a Poem



A poem does not have a single meaning! The interpretation is up to YOU!

A poem develops meaning from the way it makes the reader feel and think.

A poem develops meaning from the way it is performed and the way it sounds.

A poem develops meaning from its word choices, use of figurative language, and its structure.