

Other definitions

When people ask the question 'What is poetry?' they usually mean, 'What are the textual *features* that make a piece of writing a poem?' In practice it isn't so easy to say what these features are. Many poems have regular rhyme, or a definite rhythm; but others seem to have no regular features at all. They may look like jumbled collections of words or letters.

Here are some other definitions of poetry. Read through them, keeping *your* definition of poetry in mind. Then do the activities that follow.

Poetry is the best words in the best order.
Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Poetry is the art of rhythmical composition, written or spoken, for exciting pleasure by beautiful, imaginative or elevated thoughts.
Macquarie Dictionary

Poetry is a form of writing in which few lines run right to the edge of the page.
Unknown

Poetry is generally esteemed the highest form of literature.
A.E. Housman

Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings ... recollected in tranquillity.
William Wordsworth

Poetry is what gets lost in translation.
Robert Frost

Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds.
Percy Bysshe Shelley

A form of writing in which the writer is concerned with the organisation of lines as well as the meaning of words.
Encyclopedia Britannica