



# POETRY

C.L. LANEY

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

## CHAPTER 1

What is Poetry? 5

## CHAPTER 2

Parts of a Poem 9

## CHAPTER 3

Rhyme Time 15

## CHAPTER 4

Poetry Through the Ages 21

## CHAPTER 5

Words Change the World 27

## CHAPTER 6

A Musical Connection 35

## CHAPTER 7

Famous Poets 41

## CHAPTER 8

Poetry Today and Tomorrow 47

## GLOSSARY

52

THE WIND AMONG THE REEDS

### THE UNPEASABLE HOST

THE Danaan children lay in cradles of wrought gold,  
and clap their hands together and half close their eyes  
For they will ride the North wind like the ger-eagle flier  
With heavy whitening wings, and  
I kiss my wailing child and press it to my breast,  
And hear the narrow graves calling my child and me.  
Desolate winds that cry over the wandering sea;  
Desolate winds that beat the doors of Heaven, and beat  
The doors of Hell and blow there many a whimpering ghost;  
O heart the winds have shaken, the unappeasable host  
Is comelier than candles at Mother Mary's feet.

### THE SONG OF WANDERING AENGUS

I WENT out to the hazel wood,  
Because a fire was in my head,  
And cut and peeled a hazel wand,  
And hooked a berry to a thread;  
And when white moths were on the wing,  
And moth-like stars were flickering out,  
I dropped the berry in a stream  
And caught a little silver trout.

When I had laid it on the floor  
I went to blow the fire a flame,  
But something rustled on the floor,  
And some one called me by my name:  
It had become a glimmering girl

# WHAT IS POETRY?

Think of a poem. What comes to mind? Some think of fancy words on a page. Others say it's a story that rhymes.

Some poems do tell a story. But they are different from most tales. Stories have full sentences. Grammar rules are followed. A poem doesn't have to stick to these rules.

Poems can have structure. Words make up lines. Sets of lines are grouped. These are called **stanzas**. Poets may use full sentences. But not all do. Some do not even capitalize words. Poems can be written in many forms.

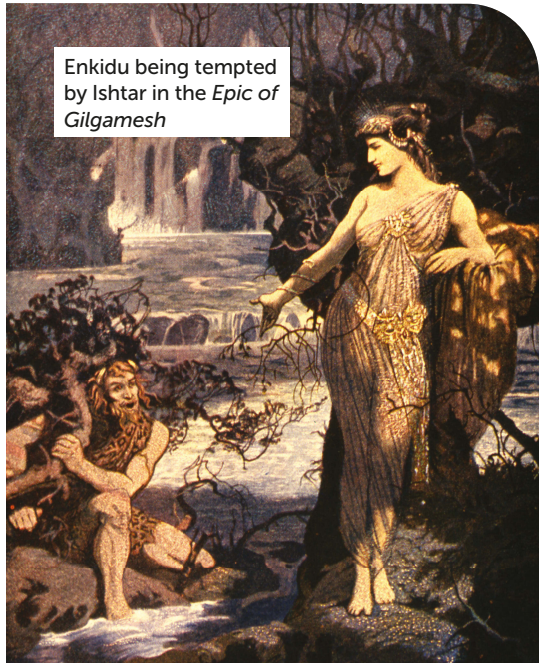
Poetry has a long history. It has been around for ages. Poems were only spoken at first. Words were not yet written. People told stories instead. These were passed on to others. That is how they lived on.

The **Epic** of *Gilgamesh* is the oldest known poem. It is more than 5,000 years old. The poem was told to others. People passed it on.


This poem told of a king. He was powerful. But he upset the gods. The king was punished. His friend was killed by the gods. The king was haunted by death. Living forever became his goal. But he lost. There was a message. No one lives forever.



Gilgamesh



Enkidu being tempted by Ishtar in the Epic of Gilgamesh



Tablet piece of the  
*Epic of Gilgamesh*

⚡  
**Fast Fact**

The original author  
of the *Epic of  
Gilgamesh* is  
unknown.

Many years went by. Writing was developed. Then the *Epic of Gilgamesh* was written. There was no paper. Clay **tablets** were used. Then they were lost. Thousands of years passed. The tablets were found. That was how the poem lived on.

Poetry began long ago. But times have changed. Poems have too. Are they still important? Some say yes. Poems may help us see our world in new ways.

O Captain! My Captain!  
by Walt Whitman

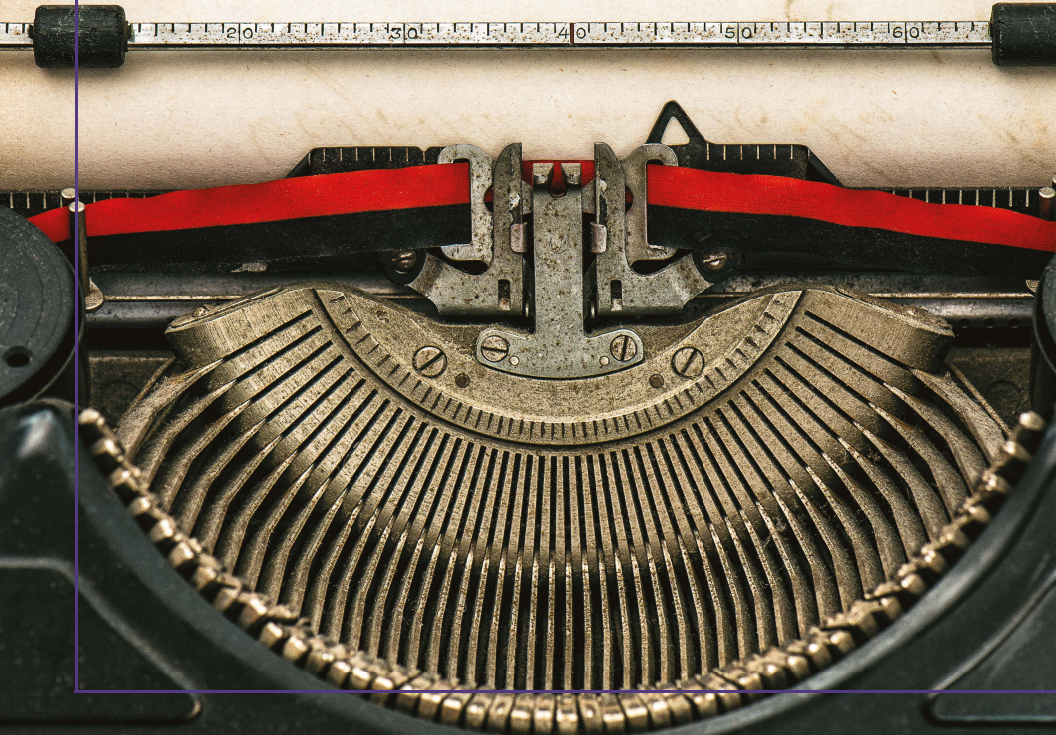
O Captain! my Captain!  
our fearful trip is done,

The ship has weather'd every rack,  
the prize we sought is won,

The port is near, the bells I hear,  
the people all exulting,

While follow eyes the steady keel,  
the vessel grim and daring;

But O heart! heart! heart!



# PARTS OF A POEM

Stories have **elements**. Characters are key. They bring us into the action. The place and time set the mood. The **plot** tells us what happens.

But what about a poem? A poem can tell a story too. Yet it is done differently. Poems are often short. They use special elements.



Taylor Swift performing at the Eras Tour, 2023



Choosing the right words is key. Think of a song. The words say one thing. They might mean another. Singer Taylor Swift wrote these words. “You’re a mansion with a view.” This is a **metaphor**. She is singing about a big house. But the words really describe a boy she likes.



Poems are similar. Words are used to form images. These words make us feel a certain way.

A poem must paint a picture. Think about this line by William Wordsworth. "I wandered lonely as a cloud." This is a **simile**. The person isn't a cloud. He is comparing himself to one. Now think about this line. "I walked alone." It says the same thing. Yet it is different. We don't get a colorful picture.

## STRIKING SIMILES

265

The dawn with silver-sandaled feet crept like a frightened girl.

The day stunned me like light upon some wizard way

The day was sweeter than honey and the honey-comb

The days have trampled me like armed men

The dead past flew away over the fens like a flight of wild swans

The deep like one black maelstrom round her whirls

The deepening east like a scarlet poppy burnt

The desolate rocky hills rolled like a solid wave along the horizon

The dome of heaven is like one drop of dew

The dreams of poets come like music heard at evening from the depth of some enchanted forest

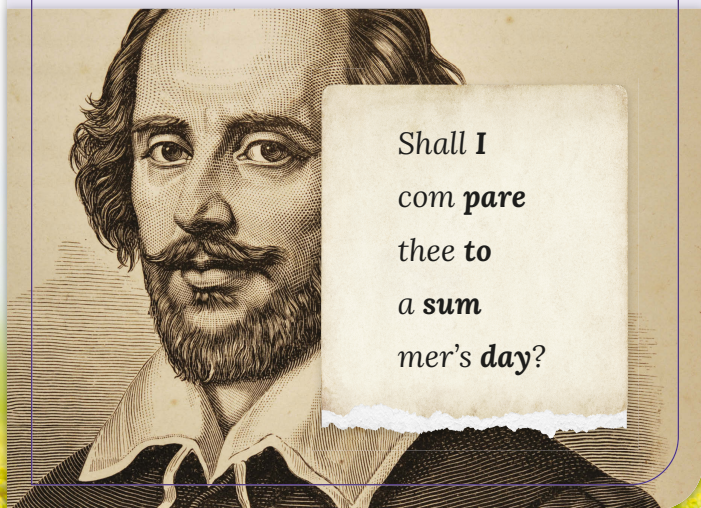
The eagerness faded from his eyes, leaving them cold as a winter sky after sunset

The earth was like a frying-pan, or some such hissing matter

Songs have structure. They have verses. There is often a chorus too. **Rhythm** is key. A poem often has structure. Some use stanzas. They have two or more lines. These lines have meter. This is a pattern. It gives the poem rhythm. The words take on a musical tone.

## Meter in Poetry

Meter breaks down a line of poetry into beats. How these beats sound depends on the type of meter. In iambic pentameter, the first syllable is not emphasized, while the second syllable is. This creates a *bum BUM* beat that sounds like a heartbeat. William Shakespeare used iambic pentameter in "Sonnet 18."



Shall I  
com **pare**  
thee to  
a **sum**  
mer's **day**?

so that her idea of the tale was something like  
this: — "Fury said to

a mouse, That  
he met  
in the  
house,  
'Let us  
both go  
to law:  
I will  
prosecute  
you.—  
Come, I'll  
take no  
denial;  
We must  
have a  
trial:  
For  
really  
this  
morning  
I've  
nothing  
to do.'  
Said the  
mouse to  
the cur,  
'Such a  
trial,  
dear sir,  
With no  
jury or  
judge,  
would be  
wasting  
our breath.'  
'I'll be  
judge,  
I'll be  
jury,'  
Said  
cunning  
old Fury;  
'I'll try  
the whole  
cause,  
and  
condemn  
you  
to  
death.'"

"The Mouse's Tale" from *Alice's  
Adventures in Wonderland* by  
Lewis Carroll, 1865

The elements of poetry  
work together. They make  
a poem flow. We see  
more than words on the  
page. A picture is made  
for us. We see art.



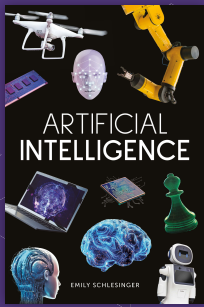
### Fast Fact

Aram Saroyan holds the  
world record for writing  
the shortest poem. It is  
a close-up of a  
four-legged  
letter "m."

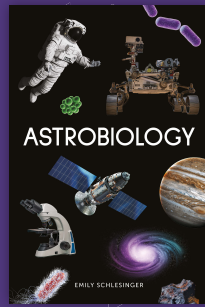


**BLUE DELTA BOOKS®**

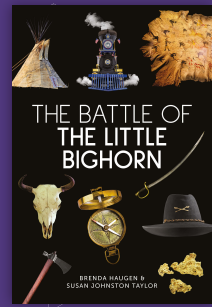
NONFICTION



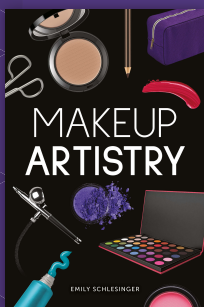
9781638892007



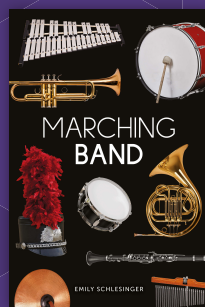
9781638892496



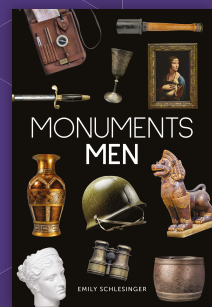
9781638891963



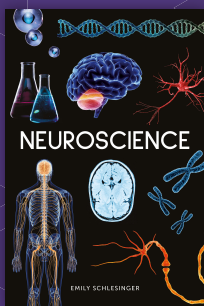
9781638892489



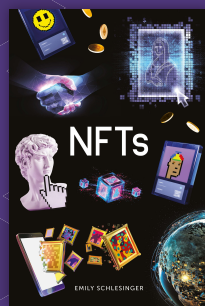
9781638891949



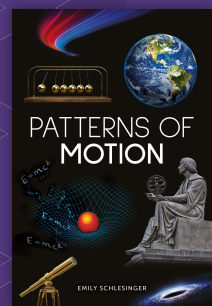
9781638892502



9781638892564



9781638891970



9781638892540



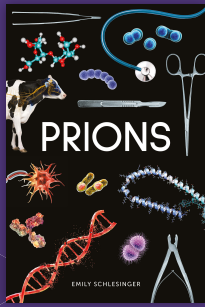
9781638892526



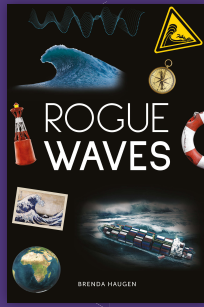
9781638892557



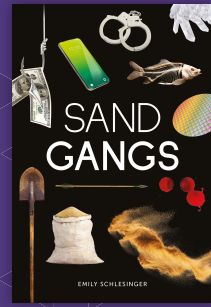
9781638891987



9781638891994



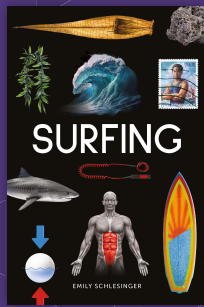
9781638892625



9781638892533



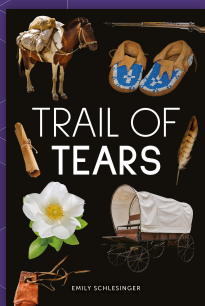
9781638891925



9781638891932



9781638891956



9781638892519

## MORE TITLES COMING SOON

[sdlback.com/blue-delta-nonfiction](http://sdlback.com/blue-delta-nonfiction)

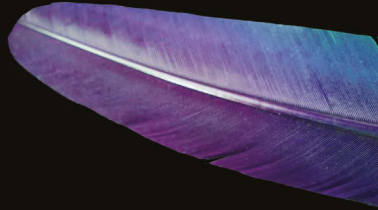
ARTS

# POETRY

Poetry is an art form that began thousands of years ago. From short, playful limericks to long, dramatic epics, poetry has helped shape language and culture around the world.



BLUE DELTA BOOKS®



LEXILE HL190L

ISBN: 978-1-63889-198-7



9 781638 891987