



Meet the Poets!



A Selection of Famous Poets & Poetry to Explore...



Maya Angelou

(1929 - 2014) African-American poet / writer / essayist / dramatist / civil rights activist. Often an inspirational poet/writer.

Poetry Collections:

The Complete Collected Poems
Phenomenal Woman: Four Poems Celebrating Women



Popular Poems:

Caged Bird
On the Pulse of Morning
Still I Rise
Touched by an Angel

See also her **autobiographies**, including:
I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings



Matsuo Basho

(1644 - 1694) Japanese poet. Among the greatest / most influential haiku poets. He also wrote in other poetic forms.

Poetry Collections:

Basho: The Complete Haiku
The Essential Haiku: Versions...



Popular poems:

Don't Imitate Me
Even in Kyoto
The Old Pond (his famous "frog poem")

See also his famous **travel diary** written in the "haibun" form (prose + haiku):
The Narrow Road to the North

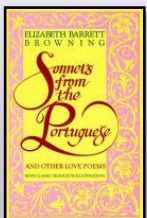


Elizabeth Barrett Browning

(1806-1861) English (Victorian) poet / translator / scholar (able to read Greek, Latin, Hebrew). Wife of poet **Robert Browning**.

Poetry Collections:

Complete Collected Poems
*** *Sonnets from the Portuguese***



Popular poems:

Aurora Leigh (a novel in verse)
The Cry of the Children
A Musical Instrument
*** Sonnet 43** ("How Do I Love Thee?")

Also explore her / Robert's **letters** (online at: www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/author/781)

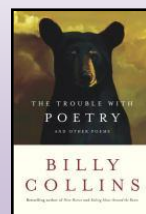


Billy Collins

(1941-) American poet. U.S. Poet Laureate (2001-2003) and NYS Laureate (2004-2006). Easy to read, also fun, profound, moving.

Poetry Collections:

Aimless Love
Sailing Alone Around the Room
The Trouble with Poetry



Popular poems:

Forgetfulness
Introduction to Poetry
Today

See also his "poem-a-day" anthology:
Poetry 180: A Turning Back to poetry

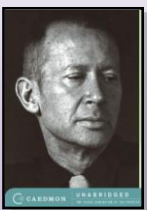


E. E. Cummings

(1894-1962) American poet / dramatist / artist. Famous for inventive placement and use of words / punctuation in poems.

Poetry Collections:

Complete Poems
Essential E. E. Cummings (audio CD)



Famous poems:

anyone lived in a pretty how town
somewhere i have never travelled
spring is like a perhaps hand

See also his autobiographical work:
The Enormous Room

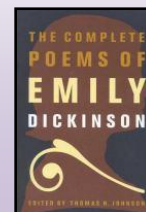


Emily Dickinson

(1830-1886). American poet celebrated today for her many brief and witty poems. While reclusive in later years, her letters reveal a lively and fascinating personality.

Poetry Collection:

Complete Poems



Famous poems:

After Great Pain, A Formal Feeling Comes
I'm Nobody! Who Are You?
Hope Is the Thing with Feathers
The Poets Light But Lamps

Also explore her various collections of **letters**.

continued...



T. S. Eliot

(1888 - 1965). American/British poet / critic / dramatist / essayist. One of the most influential poets / critics of the 20th Century.

Poetry collections:

Collected Poems (1909 – 1962)
Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats

Famous poems:

Four Quartets
The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock
The Waste Land

Also explore his **essay** collections: **The Sacred Wood**, **The Use of Poetry...**



Robert Frost

(1874 - 1963). American poet. Popular for using plain diction, nature/rural themes, and realism. Won the **Pulitzer Prize** *four times*.

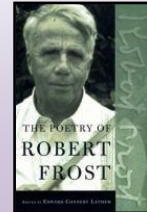
Poetry Collection:

The Poetry of Robert Frost

Famous poems:

Acquainted with the Night
Fire and Ice
Mending Wall
The Road Not Taken
Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Also explore his **plays** and **letters**.



Langston Hughes

(1902 - 1967). African-American poet. One of the most influential writers in the **Harlem Renaissance** literary period.

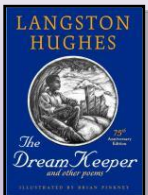
Poetry collection:

Collected Poems of Langston Hughes

Famous poems:

Democracy
Dreams
Harlem (his famous "dream deferred" poem)
I Too Sing America

Also explore his **plays**, **essays**, **novels**, **short stories**, and **children's books**.



Edna St. Vincent Millay

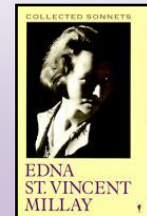
(1892 - 1940). American poet / dramatist. Won the **Pulitzer Prize** for her poetry.

Poetry collections:

Collected Sonnets
Renascence, and Other Poems

Famous poems:

Apostrophe to Man
Conscientious Objector
Dirge Without Music
Love Is Not All
Renascence
The Spring and the Fall



Pablo Neruda

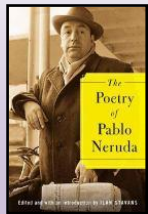
(1904 - 1973) Chilean poet. Winner of the **Nobel Prize for Literature**. Neruda wrote mostly in Spanish, but many translations of his numerous poetry collections exist.

Poetry collections / translations:

The Essential Neruda - includes:
Veinte poemas de amor y una canción desesperada (Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair)

Odas elementales (Elemental Odes)

The Poetry of Pablo Neruda - includes:
Cien sonetos de amor (100 Love Sonnets)



Rumi (Jalal al-Din Rumi)

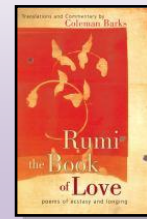
(1207-1273) Persian poet and mystic. One of the oldest and popular poets in the world (for the *past several centuries*), Rumi is celebrated for his ecstatic verses meditating on **life**, **love**, **joy**, and more. His poetry has been translated into English.

Poetry collections / translations:

The Essential Rumi

The Illuminated Rumi

Rumi: The Book of Love – Poems of Ecstasy and Longing



William Shakespeare

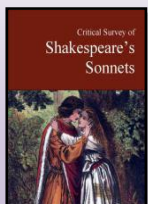
(1564 - 1616) English dramatist / poet. He wrote plays mostly in "**blank verse**" (unrhymed lines with five beats) and some of the most beautiful **sonnets** of all time.

Famous poems:

Sonnets (He wrote over 150 sonnets!)
Venus and Adonis

See also his **plays**: **Hamlet**, **King Lear**, **Macbeth**, **A Midsummer Night's Dream**, **Othello**, **Romeo and Juliet**, **The Tempest...**

Also explore **video or audio performances** as well as **criticism** of his **plays** and **poems**.



Walt Whitman

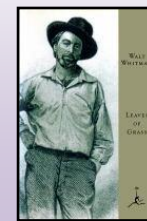
(1819 - 1892). American poet. Lyrical to epic and beyond, Whitman's verse changed poetry forever, ushering in new era of truly liberated, inspired, and *inspiring* expression.

Poetry collections:

Complete Poems
Leaves of Grass

Famous poems:

O Captain! My Captain!
Song of Myself
Song of the Open Road
When I Heard the Learned Astronomer



For more poets and poetic possibilities to explore, please visit our **Reference Department** or see these websites:

www.thrall.org/poetry

www.thrall.org/literature

www.thrall.org/litcrit