

Genres of Literature

- ◎ **Poetry:** Verbal utterances that are composed according to metrical schemes.
- ◎ **Non-fiction:** Writing that is about real life, rather than imaginary people and events.
- ◎ **Drama:** Work that is meant to be performed on stage (theater) by actors in the form of a play.
- ◎ **Fiction:** Writing that comes from the author's imagination and is usually written in narrative form.

Poetry

- **Poetry** is an imaginative awareness of experience expressed through meaning, sound, and rhythmic language so as to evoke an emotional response.
- **Poetry** has been known to employ meter and rhyme, but this is by no means necessary.
- **Poetry** is an ancient form that has gone through numerous and drastic reinvention over time.

Poetry defined by Famous Poets

- **William Wordsworth** defined poetry as “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.”
- **Emily Dickinson** said, “If I read a book and it makes my body so cold no fire ever can warm me, I know that is poetry.”
- **Dylan Thomas** defined poetry this way:
“Poetry is what makes me laugh or cry or yawn,
what makes my toenails twinkle, what makes me
want to do this or that or nothing.”

Old English Literature (600 -1100 A.D)

- ◎ **Old English Literature (600 -1100 A.D.)** also known as **Anglo-Saxon** - the earliest form of English.
- ◎ Old English poems are usually long narrative **epics** giving accounts of great deeds of warriors and heroes.
- ◎ ***Beowulf***: greatest and first Old English poem (epic) written in the 7th century by an unknown author.
- ◎ ***Laws*** and ***Anglo-Saxon Chronicle***: oldest Anglo-Saxon prose.

Middle English Literature (1100 - 1500)

- **Middle English**: Language used from 1100 1500 A.D.
- *The Canterbury Tales* (17,000 lines): poem written by **Geoffrey Chaucer** (father of English poetry) which can be classified as religious.
- *Troilus and Cryseyde*: Chaucer's other important poem.
- Unknown author: *Sir Gwain and the Green Knight* (1360)

Middle English Literature (1100 - 1500)

- ◎ **Prose** – mainly religious e.g. *The Ancren Riwle* (13th century) about the proper conduct of women
- ◎ First English plays (Drama):
 - **Miracle/Mystery plays**: stories from the bible
 - **Morality Plays**: characters are not people, but personified as virtues (Truth, Honor, Greed, Revenge).
 - **Interlude**: a funny play by two or three actors.

Elizabethan Poetry and Prose (1558 -1603)

- ◎ **Golden age** in English History (height of the English Renaissance - Age of Shakespeare)
- ◎ **English Renaissance: cultural and artistic movement** in England - early 16th - early 17th century.

Elizabethan Poetry and Prose (1558 -1603)

◎ Greatest Elizabethan Poets:

- **Sir Thomas Wyatt**: first to bring the **sonnet** form to England. (Petrarch – 14th century Italian poet)
- **Earl of Surrey**: first to write poems in **blank verse**.

◎ **Sonnet**: 14 – line lyric poem of fixed form and rhyme pattern. (Italian and Shakespearean)

◎ **Blank Verse**: verse without rhyme, usually in lines of five iambic feet.

Elizabethan Poetry, Prose, and Drama (1558-1603)

- Edmund Spenser: first proper Elizabethan poet, *The Shepherd's Calendar* (pastoral poem)
- Combined Shakespearean and Italian sonnet forms (Spenserian sonnet)
- **Lyrical poetry**: gives expression and more focus to the poet's thoughts and feelings (prominent towards the end of the Elizabethan age)

Elizabethan Poetry, Prose, and Drama (1558-1603)

- ◎ Best lyrics in Elizabethan works: Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* (1601) and Christopher Marlowe's *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love* (1599)
- ◎ **Jacobean era** (1603-25): Lyrical works lost its force and metaphysical poetry began.
- ◎ **John Donne**: greatest **metaphysical** poet (Jacobean era)
- ◎ **Metaphysical poetry**: poems that are less beautiful and musical, containing more tricks of style and images.

Elizabethan Poetry, Prose, Drama and Novel (1558-1603)

- ◎ **John Donne**: greatest works: *Holy Sonnets*
Poems: realistic and sensual style, liveliness of language and creativity of **metaphor**.
- ◎ **Metaphor**: a method of describing something by saying it is like something else without using “like” and “as”. E.g. *This man is a snake*.

Elizabethan Poetry, Prose, Drama and Novel (1558-1603)

- ◎ **Ben Jonson** (1572-1637): known as “Rare Ben Jonson” wrote **poetry, prose, and drama**
- ◎ Best lyrics: *To Celia*.
- ◎ Satirical plays: *Volpone* (1606) and *The Alchemist* (1610).
- ◎ **Prose**: *Timber* or *Discoveries* (1640)
- ◎ Known as father of **English Literary Criticism** - criticized **Shakespeare, Spenser, and Donne**.

Elizabethan Poetry, Prose, Drama and Novel (1558-1603)

- ◎ New kind of **Novel**: **John Lyly's *Euphues*** (1578-80)
- ◎ ***Euphues***: known for its style – alliteration and **similes**.
- ◎ **Simile**: A method of describing something by comparing it to something else using “like” or “as”.
E.g. **She looks like a red rose.**
- ◎ John Lyly's ***Euphues***: impact on style. The term 'euphuism' was added to the language referring to Lyly's style.

Elizabethan Poetry, Prose, Drama and Novel (1558-1603)

- ◎ Other Elizabethan **Novelists**: **Robert Greene** and **Thomas Nash**.
- ◎ **Thomas Nash**: **Picaresque** novels (Spain): novels based on adventures (in different places) of men who are wicked but lovable
- ◎ **Elizabethan novels**: little value – started false beginning, and died out.