**What is Poetry?**

(for those who ask, “What is poetry anyway, if it doesn’t have rhyme and meter?)

1. Poetry is characterized by a high level of symbolism and association; the concrete is used to represent ideas and emotions
2. Poetry is more image-based than prose writing
3. Poetry is characterized by a terseness or brevity of expression; it leaves gaps between thoughts, room for the imagination; the reader has to figure out the connection between ideas and read between the lines
4. Sound is important in poetry—this is the reason that poems make use of any or all of the following: meter, rhythm, rhyme, alliteration
5. Poetry is formatted in lines; this gives it a distinct look and feel; it also frees it from some of the conventions (punctuation, syntax, and grammar) of regular English.
6. The themes of poetry are typically ones of universal human experience; ideas that most people are able to relate to
7. The purpose of poetry is usually self-expression. Poetry is not for business-like communication; it is more reflective, introspective, philosophical.

I'm Nobody! Who are you?
Are you—Nobody—Too?
Then there's a pair of us!
Don't tell! they'd advertise—you know!

How dreary—to be—Somebody!
How public—like a Frog—
To tell one's name—the livelong June—
To an admiring Bog!

-Emily Dickinson