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he limit himself to personal experiences, or else his poetry would lose its validity and interest for people. His poems should have universal appeal. Such a poet lives for all times, as Chaucer, Shakespeare or Milton have lived through the ages.

### Why do we read Poetry

Often a student may ask the question: why do we read poetry? Is it so important? Does it have any function in life? Of course, people read poetry for different reasons. In general we read poetry for enjoyment because it a beautiful type of literature. We may read it for the music it contains or the thoughts it communicates and because it makes us see things around us differently, hence enriching our experiences of life, of nature and of human beings. We read poetry that we may become wiser from the richness of another's imagination.

Through poetry we experience the feelings of other human beings; we learn to love and value things more because poetry increases and deepens our reaction towards, many things in life, such as beauty, love, sorrow, death, nature ...etc. Words worth, for instance, deepens in us the love of nature and makes us see meaning even in its smallest aspect: "O there is blessing in this gentle breeze/ A visitant that while it fans my cheek Both seem half-conscious of the joy it brings". For many of us the breeze might come and go without leaving any impression.





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### Types of literature

is expressed in a regularly recurring rhythm. There is rhythm in prose too, but in poetry it is essential. Poetry is composed to be sung, and written to be read aloud. It is like music on paper, printed melody which has rhythm.

Poetry, more than prose, is the language of passion. The appeal of prose is more to the reason, of poetry to the emotions and the imagination. To use Coleridge's words; "Prose = words in their best order. Poetry = the BEST words in the best order"<sup>3</sup> Poetry is written in lines, prose in sentences. The following is a simple example showing difference between poetry and prose. Which one appeals to you more?

All the birds of the air fell a - sighing and a - sobbing  
When they heard of the death of poor Cock Robin.

In prose this would read something like this: "When they heard that Cock Robin had been killed, all the other birds were overcome with grief"

### Poetry and Verse

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### Poetry and Verse

Another distinction to be made is between poetry and verse. In general, anything that is opposed to prose is called verse. It is a general term for all kinds, of poetry or for a single line of a poem. In a more specific sense: "a verse is the short division of any composition into its parts. When we speak of a verse of poetry, we may refer either to one or stanza or to a single line."<sup>5</sup> As such, it would be difficult to distinguish between poetry and verse. The difference, however between poetry and verse lies not in the external form but in the content, in the literary quality. Poetry is a higher, more elevated form than verse. Poetry is 'Verse plus magic'<sup>6</sup>. The following is an example of verse. The lines are simple, easy to remember, but have no lasting appeal; they do not touch you in the heart.

There was a young lady of Lynn  
Who was so uncommonly thin  
That when she essayed  
To drink lemonade,  
She slipped through the straw and fell in.