Many great writers were active people who had strange experiences, traveled widely, and knew a lot of people. Do you think a woman who just stayed home, hardly ever saw anyone, and only published seven poems during her lifetime could be a great poet? Well, Emily Dickinson was. In fact, she is considered one of the greatest poets of the nineteenth century. She is a rather unusual person. She seldom left her house, she never married, and she always dressed in white. But she wrote wonderful poems about nature, love, life, and death. Her poems are short and not hard to read, but they have deep meanings. See if you can figure out the meanings of the poems that follow.

**If I Can Stop One Heart from Breaking**

If I can stop one heart from breaking,
I shall not live in vain;
If I can ease one life the aching,
Or cool one pain,
Or help one fainting robin
Unto his nest again, I shall not live in vain.

**I’m Nobody! Who Are You?**

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!
Hope is the Thing with

Feathers

Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul,
And sings the tune without the words,
And never stops at all.

And sweetest in the gale is heard;
And sore must be the storm
That could abash the little bird.
That kept so many warm.

I’ve heard it in the chilliest land,
And on the strangest sea;
Yet, never, in extremity,
Text Structure: poetry

Introduction

"Poetry is the human soul entire, squeezed like a lemon or a lime, drop by drop, into atomic words."
--Langston Hughes

Usually poets try to do more than just explain an idea or describe a scene. They write without the usual rules for writing sentences and don't care about logical order like in an essay. They often try to emphasize images. They use symbolism to get us to understand what they have to say. In some ways they reconstruct the world to make us see things in a different way, feel in a certain manner. For these reasons, the important point to consider in teaching poetry is the approach applied by the teacher to this subject as it relates to learners. For the student is very much interested in poetry, yet receives too much teaching and focus on the mechanics. the student may become disinterested. Indeed, without the teacher's approach from the creative aspect, restricted only to mechanical teaching, the student could very well become bored and disinterested or lose an unknown or hidden interest. Therefore, I recommend two types of teaching approaches to poetry instruction: the creative, how to write poetry, and the approach of instruction into the mechanics, dynamics and analysis of poetry. Therefore, it is important to discern and consider one’s learner’s interest in poetry before choosing which approach to use or in deciding the proper balance of the two. Students learn to read and write when they have an active interest in what they are reading and writing about. This lesson supports students' exploration of language and writing skills as they read and dissect poetry. Through a weekly poem teaching, students explore meaning, sentence structure, rhyming words, sight words, vocabulary, and print concepts. After studying the three poems of Emily Dickinson, students can choose either to write a group-poem or a poem of Emily Dickinson’s to illustrate and share their understanding.
I. Create Background

Profile of Author

1. In this part, the teacher applies skimming and scanning to reading strategies and helps student catch the general background on Emily Dickinson.
2. Look at the picture and read the brief introduction, and then try to find out the answers to the questions based on the text (lines 1-8) as follows.

1. Do you know who she is?
2. Where and when was she born?
3. What was her life like?
4. What are the main themes in her poetry?
5. Why is she so important in American literature?
II. Establish New Information

Facts alone make a very dull story. Good media writing often uses literary forms usually associated with poetry. As you read or listen to well-written stories, you often hear colorful descriptions that almost sound like literature. News writing is another form of communication that tries to describe an event. Although it is based on "hard facts", that doesn't mean that literary forms (or devices) aren't used to make the information more understandable and real to the reader.

**Teaching Tips:** Based on the level of the students, the teacher is allowed to be flexible in choosing the elements—poetic language devices—listed below (Adapted from Helen Vender's *Step-by-Step Method for Reading a Poem*—see appendix I) in the teaching. Afterwards, the teacher transfers these elements into a graphic organizer (listing or mind map) as an effective assessment in teaching and learning. However, a good approach should start with old experience connected with creating new information.

2.1 *Old Experience in New Learning*

Directions: Figure out the pattern of the rhyme and rhyming words for the poem-- *If I Can Stop One Heart from Breaking.* The rhyme and rhyming words should fall in the last word of each line. Then, use a graphic organizer to get the meaning of the poem.

If I can stop one heart from breaking,
I shall not live in vain;
If I can ease one life the aching,
Or cool one pain,
Or help one fainting robin
Unto his nest again, I shall not live in vain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Rhyming words</th>
<th>Rhyme Pattern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
2.2 Graphic Organizer for Theme and Main Idea

1. **Love**: for helping the poor people and animals with joy, that makes our life valuable

2. **Life**: ironically having a say about some people are hypocrites

3. **Hope**: it is around us everywhere all the time, tuning life with melody in difficulties
### 2.3 **Graphic Organizer for Poetic Devices**

Directions: First, the teacher has to give clear instructions about the elements in the Chart, then, model the students how to read the poems by using the graphic organizer. The first poem—*If I Can Stop One Heart from Breaking* is a good example for modeling.

**Teaching Tips:** In this part, the task could be used as a whole class activity, group-work, or pair-work activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poem</th>
<th><em>If I Can Stop One Heart from Breaking</em></th>
<th><em>I’m Nobody! Who Are You?</em></th>
<th><em>Hope is the Thing with Feathers</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>True rhyme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye rhyme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slant rhyme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tense</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language (Three-syllable Words)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Emily Dickinson and Her Poems

Analysis of ED’s Poem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poem</th>
<th>If I Can Stop One Heart from Breaking</th>
<th>I’m Nobody! Who Are You?</th>
<th>Hope Is the Thing with Feathers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Features</td>
<td>Life and Love</td>
<td>life</td>
<td>hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slant rhyme</td>
<td>you, too</td>
<td>you, too</td>
<td>I, seem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye rhyme</td>
<td>strong, looking, rain, snow</td>
<td>strong, bug</td>
<td>strong, warm, hard, bird, sea, me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True rhyme</td>
<td>alone in the rain, I, seem</td>
<td>nobody</td>
<td>somebody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressee</td>
<td>Herself</td>
<td>You (they)</td>
<td>bird.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>I shall not live</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbs</td>
<td>sing, rave, ease, cool, help</td>
<td>tell, advertise.</td>
<td>sing, rap, abash, keep, heard, ask,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tense</td>
<td>present</td>
<td>present</td>
<td>past.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Images</td>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>visual</td>
<td>auditory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone</td>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>(Mournful)</td>
<td>solemn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Three-syllable words</td>
<td>no.</td>
<td>advertise, somebody, admiring</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. Practice and Personalization

3.1 **Sentence Scrambling** and the **Compound-complex Sentence**

Directions: Sentence scrambling and combination by using brainstorming. First, ask the students to read the poem—*Hope is The Thing with Feathers*. Second, ask students how many sentences form each stanza of the poem and how they are made.

Step 1: Modeling learning by using the first stanza as an example

1. Hope is the thing with feathers.
2. Hope perches in the soul.
3. Hope sings the tune without the words.
4. Hope never stops at all.

Step 2: Pick out eight students. Each writes a simple sentence to describe HOPE

**Original copy from the student**

1. Hope is like a cellphone.
2. Hope is powerful.
3. Hope fills with energy.
4. Hope flies as a lively bird in the sky.

Hope is like a cellphone
That is powerful,
And fills with energy,
And flies as a bird in the sky
3.2 Giving it a Try

Directions: Write one-stanza poem

**Original copy from the student**

1. Hope is like a binocular.
2. Hope dances everyday.
3. Hope makes dreams come true.
4. Hope offers a healthy life.

**Revised One**

5. Hope is like a binoculars.
6. Hope dances everyday.
7. Hope makes dreams come true.
8. Hope offers a healthy life.

**Revised Copy**

1. Hope is like a cellphone.
2. Hope is powerful.
3. Hope is filled with energy.
4. Hope carries messages in the sky.

Hope is like a cellphone
That dance in different angles,
And make dreams colorful
And offer an ideal future.

Hope is my binocular
That dances everyday,
And make dreams come true,
And offers a healthy life.

Hope is like a binocular
That is powerful,
And is filled with energy
And carries messages in the air
IV. Application

4.1 Group-poem Writing

Directions: Brainstorm eight topics with one group choosing one topic and creating a poem.

4.2 Shared and Taken

Directions:
1. Go the Web—Everypoet.com. and pick up a poem from the four categories of LOVE, DEATH, NATURE, and LIFE. Analyze the poem by using the above graphic organizers and make comments as well as your reflections. (See Appendix III)
2. Use group work for sharing Emily Dickinson’s poems by using graphic organizers. The presentation should include four main items listed as follows.
3. Keep in mind that each member is responsible for one part of the group work.
4. Poem Presentation Rubric is presented in Appendix II.
Title Slide

• Should include group members, title of poem, author of poem, and mind map.

Poem Slide

• Should include complete text of the poem: chosen, highlighting, important words, literary terms, and graphics. You may break the poem down by stanza so there may be multiple poem slides.

Literary Term Focus

• Should provide literary terms used in poem, definition, and example.

Dickinson’s Legacy

• What was her contribution to American literature?
• How is this poem an example of her legacy?
Appendix I

1. Speaker. Who is the speaker? What person (first, second, third) is ED speaking in? To whom is the poem addressed?

2. What are the verbs? What is their tense? Their mood (indicative, subjunctive, interrogative)? In what ways does their structure vary from what you expect? Are any of them archaic or unusual?

3. Dickinson is noted for her use of special kinds of rhyme. Where does she use the following, and for what effect?

   a. slant rhyme: a kind of consonance (relation between words in which the final consonants in the stressed syllables agree but the vowels that precede them differ: add/read, up/step, peer/pare, while/hill).

   b. eye rhyme: rhyme that appears correct from the spelling but is not so from the pronunciation, such as watch/match, love/move, through/enough.

   c. true rhyme: identity of terminal sound between accented syllables, usually occupying corresponding positions in two or more lines of verse. The correspondence of sound is based on the vowels and succeeding consonants of the accented syllables, which must, for a true rhyme, be preceded by different consonants. Thus "fan" and "ran" constitute a true rhyme because the vowel and succeeding consonant sounds ("an") are the same but the preceding consonant sounds are different.

4. What elements are repeated? Inverted? Why? What instances of repetition does she use? What is the effect of the repetition?

5. What figures of speech does the poem contain? metaphor? metonymy? synecdoche? personification? extended metaphor? What kind of figure does she use as a comparison (vehicle)? Where has she used this before and with what kinds of meaning or resonance?


8. Language. Note any words that are used in an archaic, special, or unusual way, especially
words of three syllables or more. (These are less common in Dickinson's work than one- and two-syllable words.) Look them up in the dictionary, being careful to note obsolete or secondary meanings as well as primary ones.
Appendix II

Poem Presentation Rubric

The project is graded during the presentation stage with the exception of the portion of the group participation that took place during class time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accuracy</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Name of Presenter: ________)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear explanation of images,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>literary elements, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct research of lines.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handout is correct.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thoroughness</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Name of Presenter: ________)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>All lines are appropriate and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>clearly labeled.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All lines explained.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handout is complete and neat.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creativity</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Name of Presenter: ________)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation shows thought and</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>originality.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Handout shows thought and</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>creativity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Group Participation in class</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>All members of the group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>contributed to the research,</td>
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<tr>
<td>planning, and writing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>**Group Participation during</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presentation**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All members of the group</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>participated in the presentation.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix III

Poems by Emily Dickinson

Table of Contents

(Website: Everypoet.com)

This is my letter to the world,  
that never wrote to me, --
The simple news that Nature told,  
with tender majesty.

Her message is committed  
To hands I cannot see;  
For love of her, sweet countrymen,  
Judge tenderly of me!

I. LIFE.

1. SUCCESS. Success is counted sweetest

2. Our share of night to bear,

3. ROUGE ET NOIR. Soul, wilt thou toss again?

4. ROUGE GAGNE. T' is so much joy! T” is so much joy!

5. Glee! The great storm is over!

6. If I can stop one heart from breaking,

7. ALMOST! Within my reach!

8. A wounded deer leaps highest,

9. The heart asks pleasure first,

10. IN A LIBRARY. A precious, mouldering pleasure is

11. Much madness is divinest sense

12. I asked no other thing,

13. EXCLUSION. The soul selects her own society,

14. THE SECRET. Some things that fly there be,

15. THE LONELY HOUSE. I know some lonely houses off the road
16. To fight aloud is very brave,

17. DAWN. When night is almost done,

18. THE BOOK OF MARTYRS. Read, sweet, how others strove,

19. THE MYSTERY OF PAIN. Pain has an element of blank;

20. I taste a liquor never brewed,

21. A BOOK. He ate and drank the precious words,

22. I had no time to hate, because

23. UNRETURNING. T’ was such a little, little boat

24. Whether my bark went down at sea,

25. Belshazzar had a letter,

26. The brain within its groove

II. LOVE.

1. MINE. Mine by the right of the white election!

2. BEQUEST. You left me, sweet, two legacies,

3. Alter? When the hills do

4. SUSPENSE. Elysium is as far as to

5. SURRENDER. Doubt me, my dim companion!

6. IF you were coming in the fall,

7. WITH A FLOWER. I hide myself within my flower,

8. PROOF. That I did always love,

9. Have you got a brook in your little heart,

10. TRANSPLANTED. As if some little Arctic flower,

11. THE OUTLET. My river runs to thee:

12. IN VAIN. I CANNOT live with you,

13. RENUNCIATION. There came a day at summer’s full

14. LOVE'S BAPTISM. I’m ceded, I’ve stopped being theirs;

15. RESURRECTION. T’ was a long parting, but the time
16. APOCALYPSE. I’m wife; I’ve finished that,

17. THE WIFE. She rose to his requirement, dropped

18. APOTHEOSIS. Come slowly, Eden!

III. NATURE.

1. New feet within my garden go,

2. MAY-FLOWER. Pink, small, and punctual,

3. WHY? THE murmur of a bee

4. Perhaps you’d like to buy a flower?

5. The pedigree of honey

6. A SERVICE OF SONG. Some keep the Sabbath going to church;

7. The bee is not afraid of me,

8. Some rainbow coming from the fair!

9. The grass so little has to do,

10. A little road not made of man,

11. A drop fell on the apple tree,

12. A something in a summer's day,

13. THE SEA OF SUNSET. This is the land the sunset washes,

14. There is a flower that bees prefer,

15. THE BEE. Like trains of cars on tracks of plush

16. Presentiment is that long shadow on the lawn

17. As children bid the guest good-night,

18. Angels in the early morning

19. So bashful when I spied her,

20. TWO WORLDS. It makes no difference abroad,

21. The mountain sat upon the plain

22. I’ll tell you how the sun rose,

23. The butterfly’s assumption-gown,
24. Of all the sounds despatched abroad,

25. DEATH AND LIFE. Apparently with no surprise

26. T’WAS later when the summer went

27. INDIAN SUMMER. These are the days when birds come back,

28. AUTUMN. The morns are meeker than they were,

29. The sky is low, the clouds are mean,

30. THE HEMLOCK. I think the hemlock likes to stand

31. There’s a certain slant of light,

IV. TIME AND ETERNITY.

1. One dignity delays for all,

2. TOO LATE. Delayed till she had ceased to know,

3. Astra castra. Departed to the judgment,

4. Safe in their alabaster chambers,

5. On this long storm the rainbow rose,

6. FROM THE CHRYSALIS. My cocoon tightens, colors tease,

7. SETTING SAIL. Exultation is the going

8. Look back on time with kindly eyes,

9. A train went through a burial gate,

10. I died for beauty, but was scarce

11. TROUBLE ABOUT MANY THINGS  How many times these low feet staggered,

12. REAL. I like a look of agony,

13. THE FUNERAL. That short, potential stir

14. I went to thank her,

15. I’ve seen a dying eye

16. REFUGE. The clouds their backs together laid,

17. I never saw a moor,
18. **PLAYMATES.** God permits industrious angels

19. To know just how he suffered would be dear;

20. The last night that she lived,

21. **THE FIRST LESSON.** Not in this world to see his face

22. The bustle in a house

23. I reason, earth is short,

24. Afraid? Of whom am I afraid?

25. **DYING.** The sun kept setting, setting still;

26. Two swimmers wrestled on the spar

27. **THE CHARIOT.** Because I could not stop for Death,

28. She went as quiet as the dew

29. Except to heaven, she is nought;

30. Death is a dialogue between

31. It was too late for man,

32. **ALONG THE POTOMAC.** When I was small, a woman died.

33. The daisy follows soft the sun,

34. **EMANCIPATION.** No rack can torture me,

35. **LOST.** I lost a world the other day.

36. If I shouldn't be alive

37. Sleep is supposed to be,

38. I shall know why, when time is over,

38. I never lost as much but twice,