

# POET STUDY

A compilation of unique poets and their works

## Biography

- Lived from 1809-1849
- Orphaned at a young age and taken in by a foster family
- Brief military career, before he was expelled
- Married his cousin, who later died of tuberculosis
- Life events heavily influenced his writing
- His cause of death is still unknown

## His Work

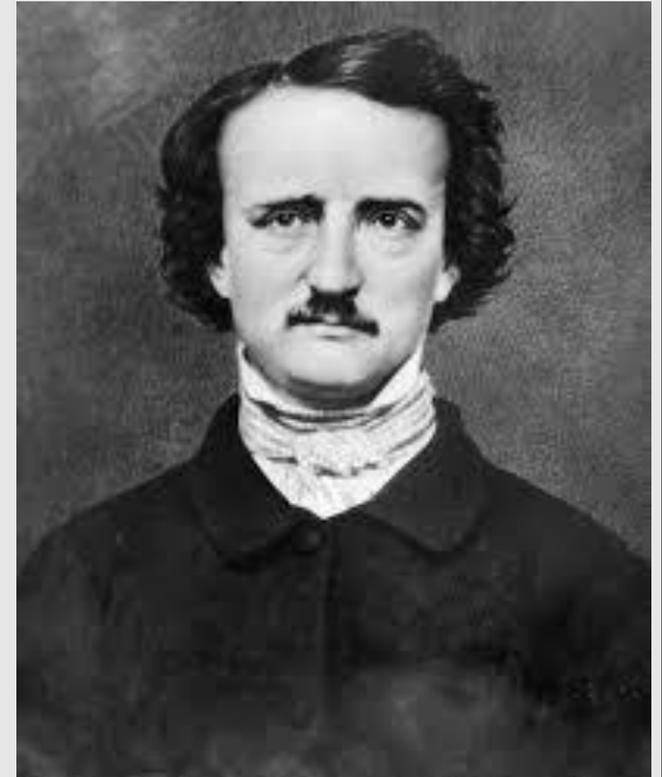
- Poe had a very dark and mysterious way of writing. His events from childhood and later adult years had a profound impact on his writing.
- You can read some of his works by clicking on the links:

["Annabel Lee"](#)

["The Raven"](#)

Watch the video about Poe from Mrs. Hernandez by clicking [here!](#)

# Edgar Allan Poe



## Biography

- Born Marguerite Johnson in St. Louis, Missouri
- An acclaimed poet, storyteller, writer, singer, dancer, actress, composer, educator, playwright, and Civil Rights activist. (Wow!)
- Hollywood's first female black director.
- 1950s - Angelou joined the Harlem Writers Guild and met James Baldwin and other important writers.

# Maya Angelou



**1928-2014**

[Ms. Adams video about Maya Angelou](#)

## Her Work

Poem are about...

- Black beauty,
- The strength of women, and
- The human spirit;
- Vietnam War;
- Social justice
- She has also written a number of books, the most well-known is entitled, *I Know Why the Caged Birds Sings*. This is a story about what she went through as a child.

# ee cummings

## Biography

- Lived from 1894-1962
- Grew up in Cambridge, MA
- Enlisted in the military during the first world war, was later arrested by acquitted of all charges for espionage
- Was very close with his parents, they later influenced a lot of his writing



To watch Mrs. Hernandez's video on Cummings, click [here!](#)

## His Work

- After his parents were in a horrific car crash, Cummings chose to write about things in life that he deemed to be important.
- He is known for his broken syntax and punctuation placement.
- To see examples of his work use these links:
  - ["timeless ..."](#)
  - ["\[2 Little Whos\]"](#)

## Biography

- Born in 1902
- Lived with grandma in Missouri until he was 13
- He moved to live with mom and stepfather in Illinois
- Attended Columbia University in New York.
- Traveled a lot: Mexico (to visit his father), Europe, and Africa
- Heavily influenced by jazz
- Great contributor to the Harlem Renaissance

## His Work

**His work focused on the struggles of a people and their hopes for a better future.**

**Click on each the links to view his incredible and inspiring work!**

**["Harlem"](#)**

**["I, Too"](#)**

**["Night Funeral In Harlem"](#)**

# Langston Hughes



Watch Ms. Hosley's Instructional Video **[here!](#)**

# Emily Dickinson



**1830 - 1886 (55yrs old)**

## Biography

19th Century American Poet

From Amherst, Massachusetts

Known as a recluse--someone who doesn't like to leave home.

Normal childhood including community school.

At 15, she attended a women's college for one year, but then did not return. She stayed with her family the rest of her life.

Rumored to have worn only white. Not quite true, but was not into fashion (which meant fancy, dyed fabrics) like other women in her time.

She was a secret poet. She wrote over 1700 poems that weren't discovered (or published) until after her death.

**[Watch Ms. Davenport's Instructional Video Here.](#)**

Poem Examples: ["A Narrow Fellow in the Grass"](#) ["I'm Nobody"](#)

## Her Work

**Dickinson changed poetry!** Since she was writing just for herself...

- **She did not stick to conventions.**

Slant and eye rhymes were unusual then. She used them all the time.

She used unusual spelling, capitalization, and punctuation, too.

- **She didn't name her poems.**

They were numbered after her death. People use their first lines as titles.

- **Her poems featured:**

First-person POV

Sense of humor

Lots of nature

Lots of questions about death and the afterlife

Unusual metaphors, personification and zoomorphism (giving animal qualities to things that aren't animals.)

- **She almost always wrote in the same meter -**

Alternating 8 and 6 syllable lines, unstressed/ stressed pattern (iambic).

Test her meter! You can sing most of her poems to "[The Yellow Rose of Texas.](#)"

- **She paved the way** for unconventional poets in the next century like T.S. Eliot and e.e. cummings.

## Biography

- Born in Fresno, California
- Family Mexican-American
- Raised in a Spanish-speaking neighborhood
- He writes poems, novels, short stories and plays.
- The "spark" for many of his stories and poems comes from his real-life experiences.
- His writing transcends (rises above) ethnic boundaries and allegiances.

# Gary Soto



**Born in 1952**

## His Work

His writings depict a portrait of Mexican American life:

- He recreates the world of the barrio, the urban, Spanish-speaking neighborhood within the pages of his books.
- He focuses on everyday experiences while evoking (bringing to mind) the harsh forces that often shape life for Chicanos, including racism, poverty, and crime.

[Ms. Adams video about Gary Soto.](#)  
(Start at min. 4:21)

## Biography

- One of the most acclaimed American poets.
- Born in California, but spent most of his life in New England. (Specifically, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts.)
- Aspired to be a poet as a teenager.
- Had lots of jobs (teacher, farmer, factory worker) but always wanted to write poetry (and *only* poetry).
- Won four Pulitzer Prizes, a Congressional Gold Medal, and he was nominated for the Nobel prize in Literature 31 times!
- Wrote and performed a poem for John F. Kennedy's inauguration.

# Robert Frost



1874 - 1963 (88 yrs old)

[Davenport's Mini-Lesson on Frost](#)

## His Work

- He felt like writing a poem was "discovering." As he wrote them, he didn't know how his poems would end.
- Known for beautiful imagery.
- His poems feature nature, but also have deeper symbolism and feelings that appeal to people at a visceral level.
- An early admirer, Edward Garnett notes that Frost was able to "invest a simple scene with deep emotional power."
- He wrote a variety of lyric forms but did not like free verse.

Poems: "[Nothing Gold Can Stay](#)" "[The Road Not Taken](#)"



Tupac  
Shakur

## Biography

- Born 1971 to parents who were Black Panthers
- Raised in inner-city New York before moving to Baltimore, MD
- Attended Baltimore School for the Arts
- Began writing poems as a teenager
- Later became a famous actor and rapper

## His Work

Tupac was known for his urban style which addressed issues faced by youth growing up in the inner-city.

["In the Event of My Demise"](#)

["Can You See the Pride in the Panther"](#)

["And 2Morrow"](#)

Watch Ms. Hosley's Instructional Video [here!](#)