

Poetry Trivia: Questions, Answers, and Facts  
Printable Trivia Pack

Poetry trivia explores one of literature's oldest and most enduring art forms, from epic and sonnet traditions to modern free verse. Expect questions that touch on famous poets, landmark works, literary devices, and the cultural history that has shaped how poetry is written, performed, and remembered.

HARD POETRY TRIVIA

1. In what language does Chaucer open "The Canterbury Tales" with the famous phrase "Whan that Aprille..."?

Answer: Middle English

2. What is the manuscript designation of the sole surviving copy of "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight"?

Answer: Cotton Nero A.x

3. What year saw the first publication of "Lyrical Ballads"?

Answer: 1798

4. Which two poets jointly authored "Lyrical Ballads"?

Answer: William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge

5. How many lines are in a Spenserian stanza?

Answer: Nine lines

6. Which rhyme pattern identifies terza rima?

Answer: aba bcb cdc

7. Ottava rima is defined by what stanza length?

Answer: An eight-line stanza

8. The Homeric epics are composed in which meter?

Answer: Dactylic hexameter

9. What is the primary verse mode of the Old English poem "Beowulf"?

Answer: Alliterative verse

10. Milton kicks off "Paradise Lost" by invoking whom or what?

Answer: The Heav'nly Muse

11. Into what two parts does the Petrarchan sonnet typically divide?

Answer: An octave and a sestet

12. Which rhyme scheme is standard for the Shakespearean sonnet?

Answer: abab cdcd efef gg

13. A heroic couplet is written in what meter-and-rhyme combination?

Answer: Rhymed iambic pentameter

14. If someone in a poetry seminar says just "Decorum Est," which Wilfred Owen poem are they shortening?

Answer: Dulce et Decorum Est

#### FUNNY POETRY TRIVIA

1. Which poet gave literature one very unimpressed bovine by writing the comic poem "The Cow"?

Answer: Ogden Nash

2. Who wrote the short poem "R^sum^," proving that brevity can still bite?

Answer: Dorothy Parker

3. Who wrote the comic poem "The Orange," making citrus unexpectedly literary?

Answer: Wendy Cope

4. In a household standoff for the ages, who wrote "Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out"?

Answer: Shel Silverstein

5. "Jabberwocky" appears in which Lewis Carroll book?

Answer: Through the Looking-Glass

6. Which poet wrote "This Is Just to Say," the famously apologetic plum-related poem?

Answer: William Carlos Williams

7. Roald Dahl turned his imagination toward poetic creatures in which collection?

Answer: Dirty Beasts

8. Who wrote the cautionary poem with the wonderfully alarming title "Jim, Who Ran Away from His Nurse, and Was Eaten by a Lion"?

Answer: Hilaire Belloc

9. Who wrote the gloriously nonsensical poem "On the Ning Nang Nong"?

Answer: Spike Milligan

10. Which poet wrote the verse novel "Don Juan"?

Answer: Lord Byron

11. Which British comic poet is known for humorous verse and a distinctive performance style?

Answer: Pam Ayres

12. Dr. Seuss wrote which poem title that sounds like motivational advice with a rhyme budget?

Answer: You Were You

13. Whose classroom comedy includes the poem "Our Teacher's a Football Fanatic"?

Answer: Kenn Nesbitt

#### FUN POETRY TRIVIA

1. Which poet is most famously linked with haiku?

Answer: Matsuo Basho

2. Who took an editorial red pencil to T. S. Eliot's poem "The Waste Land"?

Answer: Ezra Pound

3. Which poet wrote the sequence called "The Bridge"?

Answer: Hart Crane

4. What poem opens Hart Crane's "The Bridge"?

Answer: To Brooklyn Bridge

5. By day, Wallace Stevens worked in what profession?

Answer: insurance executive

6. Which poet often styled his name in lowercase as "e. e. cummings"?

Answer: E. E. Cummings

7. Which Shel Silverstein collection invited readers to wander to "the sidewalk's end"?

Answer: Where the Sidewalk Ends

8. Who served as the first U.S. Children's Poet Laureate?

Answer: Jack Prelutsky

9. Who wrote the gloriously nonsense-filled poem "Jabberwocky"?

Answer: Lewis Carroll

10. Who sent "The Owl and the Pussy-cat" sailing away together?

Answer: Edward Lear

11. If a stanza is a tercet, how many lines does it have?

Answer: three lines

12. A villanelle is built to a very specific length. How many lines does it have?

Answer: 19 lines

13. Which poetic form uses six six-line stanzas followed by a three-line envoy?

Answer: sestina

#### POETRY FAMILY TRIVIA

1. Who read "The Hill We Climb" at the 2021 U.S. presidential inauguration?

Answer: Amanda Gorman

2. In what year did Rabindranath Tagore win the Nobel Prize in Literature?

Answer: 1913

3. Gwendolyn Brooks won the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in what year?

Answer: 1950

4. Seamus Heaney was born in which part of the world?

Answer: Northern Ireland

5. Robert Burns was born in which Scottish town?

Answer: Alloway

6. Which Welsh city was the birthplace of Dylan Thomas?

Answer: Swansea

7. Fernando Pessoa wrote primarily in which language?

Answer: Portuguese

8. True or false: Elizabeth Bishop won the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1956.?

Answer: True

9. Percy Bysshe Shelley was married to which author?

Answer: Mary Shelley

10. Who wrote "Paradise Lost"?

Answer: John Milton

11. Wilfred Owen served in which war?

Answer: World War I

12. Anna Akhmatova was a poet from which country?

Answer: Russia

#### EASY POETRY TRIVIA

1. How many lines does a traditional sonnet have?

Answer: 14 lines

2. A quatrain contains how many lines?

Answer: Four lines

3. Haiku developed in which country?

Answer: Japan

4. Who wrote the poem "The Raven"?

Answer: Edgar Allan Poe

5. "Ode to a Nightingale" was written by which poet?

Answer: John Keats

6. Allen Ginsberg is strongly associated with what literary movement?

Answer: The Beat Generation

7. Langston Hughes was a major voice of which cultural movement?

Answer: The Harlem Renaissance

8. Who is the author of "The Divine Comedy"?

Answer: Dante Alighieri

9. In iambic pentameter, how many iambs are in each line?

Answer: Five iambs

10. What kind of poem is an epic?

Answer: A long narrative poem centered on heroic actions

11. Who wrote "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud"?

Answer: William Wordsworth

12. Which poet wrote "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"?

Answer: Robert Frost

13. Emily Dickinson lived much of her life in what Massachusetts town?

Answer: Amherst, Massachusetts

Source: <https://triviagong.com/themes/poetry>