

What is a poem?

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No one can say exactly what a poem is.

People talk about a poem being creative, read out loud or written down.

Other people think a poem can be a piece of art and doesn't have to include words.



Other people think a poem has to use words.



Famous poets like Shakespeare wrote poems that rhyme and have rules.

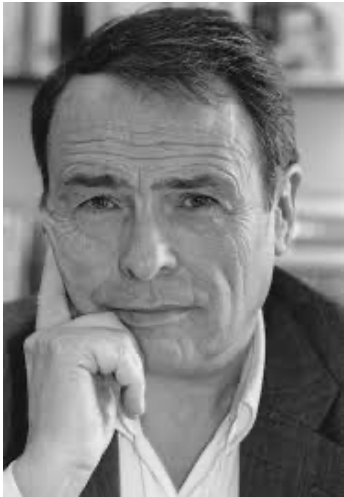
But poetry is very old, and the way Shakespeare wrote poetry isn't the only way.



Many cultures have a history of sharing poetry out loud.



When people learned latin and how to write, poetry became something only wealthy and educated people did.



A guy called Pierre Bourdieu wrote about how poetry and opera became things that are only for rich or educated people.



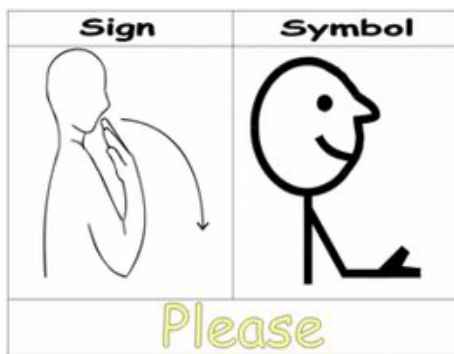
Poetry isn't only for certain people, but we've been made to think it is.



Colonialism is when one country takes over another. Colonialism also made us think other ways of making or sharing poems doesn't count.



Many non-speaking people are encouraged to speak or use words, even when they can communicate clearly using other things.



Learning disabled and autistic people can use symbols, hand gestures, or AAC to communicate.

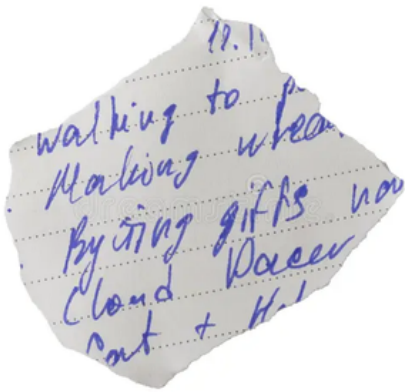


AAC stands for Augmentative and Alternative Communication.

Anyone can be a poet.



Audre Lorde was a great writer and poet. She said that poetry is not a luxury.



She said it can be done between shifts at work, on the bus, on scraps of paper. I like that.

Even though she used words, I think she is right.



Poetry is whatever you want it to be, and it should be accessible to everyone.

References

Distinction by Pierre Bourdieu (1979).

Communication Aids, Easy Read - Ability Net

Poetry is Not a Luxury by Audre Lorde (1985).