

Emily Dickinson's Life Outline

Introduction: Emily Dickinson is widely thought of as one of the most genius and talented American Poets of all time. This talent is so obvious in her writings, whose recurring themes are love, life and death. The emotions that she experienced through struggles and relationships were obvious in her poems. There are many poets after her that she was an inspiration, but because her style was so unconventional, it's hard to pinpoint any writers who inspired her.

I. Emily's Writing

A. Wrote 1,775 poems but only 7 were published (anonymously) before her death.

B. Considered unconventional due to her sometimes unclear rhyme scheme, irregular capitalization and use of dashes.

1. Irregularity of grammar and punctuation could be a possible representation of the irregular emotions that she experienced. Many people think that she was somewhat "off."

C. 1,768 poems were found in her dresser drawer by her sister, Lavinia, following her death.

1. There were instructions to have the poems destroyed

2. These orders were obviously ignored and close family and friends strung together her poems to be published.

3. The Poems of Emily Dickinson wasn't published until 1955.

a. This was years after her death, which occurred in 1886.

D. Wentworth Higginson was sent by Emily four original poems during her life.

1. He noticed how talented she was in writing.

2. He did believe that she was a bit too unconventional with her use of punctuation, rhyme, irregularities in her rhythm and unnecessary capitalization.

a. When sending feedback he chose to overlook this because he was pleased with her talent.

b. These poems were sent in 1862.

c. Higginson was one of the very few people that Emily shared her poetry with during her lifetime.

II. The Life of Dickinson.

A. Emily was born in 1830 in Amherst, Massachusetts.

1. Her father was a lawyer.

3. She had a pretty typical childhood.

a. She found joy in almost everything.

i. Cooking

ii. Playing

iii. Making friends

iv. Winter Sports