

# Free comparing and contrasting frost and dickenson essay example

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While Emily Dickinson and Robert Frost were writing poems at the same time period of American poetry, they represent very different styles, sometimes write about different subjects, but also sometimes explore the very same questions with their poetry. Most notable, both poets consider the passage of time, aging and death as themes worthy of being explored in verse.

One of the most notable differences between the poetry of Frost and the poetry of Dickinson is the length that both poets use to convey their themes and message. With some exceptions, Frost tends towards mid-size poems of 4-6 stanzas each with 4-5 lines. In contrast Dickinson generally tends towards shorter poems. Many of her poems are only a stanza or two with 2-5 lines in each of the stanzas

One theme that concerns both Frost and Dickinson has to do with the passage of time. One of Emily Dickinson's most famous poems is a good example of this. Her poem "Because I could not stop for Death" is a coy way in which she explores the inevitability of the end of a human life. Within the poem death is personified and takes on a personality of his own. In the poem the speaker has an ironic voice and addresses time. The theme is that the speaker did not have any time for death because of a fast-paced and hurried life. Death—kind fellow that he is—took time out of his schedule to stop for the speaker of the poem, "Because I could not stop for Death – He kindly stopped for me" (Dickson, n. p.). In the poem are many images which gives the reader the notion that death is quite inconvenient and is going to cause the loss of all the activities that the speaker enjoy, "We passed the School where Children strove / At Recess – in the Ring – We passed the Fields of

Grazing Grain / We passed the Setting Sun.”

Robert Frost is also concerned in his poetry with the passage of time and the inevitability of death. In his poem “ the Subverted Flower” he deals with the same themes found within Emily Dickenson’s poem “ Because I could not stop for Death.” Because the theme is similar, comparing these poems provides a good window into the notable differences between these two poets.

Frost in his poetry is well known for his use of nature as fueling the imagery of his poem. This is present in “ The Subverted Flower” The flower in the poem, the “ Subverted flower” is a simple for death, the death being what is subverting the flower. This overturns the conventions of what flowers are generally used to symbolize—life and beauty. Because a flower only last for part of the growing season, it provides a good symbol for death that comes inevitably with time. In Frost it is the speaker who subverts the flower and symbolizes death, ““ And he lashed his open palm / With the tender-headed flower” (Frost, 3-4). This is different than how Dickenson represents death, since she personifies him. The speaker violently deracinates the flower.

Another of Dickinson’s poem, which focuses on time and eternity, is her poem titled simple VIII (Dickinson did not name many of her poem.” In this poem the speaker tells the reader to “ Look back on time with kindly eyes / He doubtless did his best.” (Dickenson, n. p.)/ Just as death is personified in Dickinson’s poem “ Because I could not stop for Death” time in this poem is personified. This is something that Dickinson does much more than Frost— personifying the abstract concepts that she was writing about in her poetry. Both Dickenson and Frost focus on nature. Frost is more famous for writing

about nature, as this was the signature of his poetry. He presents nature as vivid images that inspire wonder in the speaker and the reader of the poem. Two poems in particular offer a window into their treatment of celestial objects: Frost's "Stars" and Dickinson's "Ah, Moon - and Star!" Both of these poems are written in praise of stars. Dickinson writes rhyming couplets in a sighing voice, "Ah, moon - and star / You are very far - But were no one / Farther than you / Do you think I'd stop / For a firmament - / Or a cubit - or so?" While Dickinson addresses her prose to the stars themselves, Frost praises them as a third party observer. He writes, "How countless they congregate / O'er our tumultuous snow, / Which flows in shapes as tall as trees / When wintry winds do blow!" (Frost, n. p.).

Both poets often employ rhymes within their poetry. Both of these poems in question employ a simple rhyme scheme. Dickinson uses the scheme AABB and Frost uses ABAB. Frost's poem has an allusion to Greek mythology and the speaker in his poem about stars says, "those stars like some / Snow-white Minerva's snow-white marble eyes" (Frost, n. p.).

If there is a Frost poem that most resembles the style of Emily Dickinson, it might be his four line poem "Immigrants" The speaker of this poem says, "No ship of all that under sail or steam / Have gathered people to us more and more / But Pilgrim-manned the Mayflower in a dream / Has been her anxious convoy in to shore." Dickinson is known for her sparse style. While Frost's poems are fueled by nature imagery, it is Dickinson's ironic tone and wry observations that resonate with readers that are the keys to her success and popularity as a poet.

Emily Dickinson and Robert Frost wrote during the same period in American.

Both went on to become very famous poets. In terms of personality it is clear from their poetry that they were very different people. Emily Dickinson's poetry has naïve innocence to the tone. The speaker of her poems is a curious person who wonders and muses about things within the world. Frost's poems have an almost majestic tone to them. Both poets use nature as both themes and images in their poetry, but Frost's nature is a much larger, looming threatening element in many of his poem. Like her poetry itself, Dickenson was " quiet" and " small" in that she kept herself away from society. While they treat their subject matters differently, both poets shared similar poetic concerns that they explored through their verse. The most obvious are the poems both poets have about death and the inevitable passage of time. In both poems there is a speaker who is faced with death but has many questions about what death will be like and the portrayal that while death is a natural part of life, it is difficult to deal with the loss of the self.

## **Works Cited**

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