

# Poetry response #1: "hope"

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Hope is very real and tangible, not just an idea. The poem, “ Hope” by Emily Dickinson is about how hope is not just a concept. The speaker believes that hope is always present and unselfish in actions.

It never deserts or asks anything of a person. Dickinson uses figures of speech such as personification and simile to get her point across—that hope is always in existence, even when it can not be seen. Two key elements in “ Hope” made evident by Dickinson’s careful use of words, are simile and personification. In this excerpt, “ Hope is—with feathers” (1), Dickinson gives hope the physical appearance of an angel. Since hope is the very basis of humanity’s drive, the author paints the philosophy as the saving grace of angel’s wings.

In the same breath she uses personification very artfully to continue to illustrate hope as a heavenly being. “ Perches in the soul” (2) is an excellent example of the human ability of sustaining a piece of ones person. Dickinson uses the word soul to have the reader believe that hope is apart of us all. In this passage, “ Sings—tune without—words” (3) hope is made indigenous to all people. It is not bound by the barrier of language or speech. “ Never stops—at all” (4) only further emphasizes the lack of judgment in the human accepts of hope.

Hope is not just human, though it does share some of the same qualities of an average person—it is something that lives forever in everyone. Hope has many different contexts in which it could be understood. The way a person views hope could be a sign of faith, a deep look into human psychology, or even idealist ramblings. However, whatever a person’s opinion on the hope,

Dickinson makes the main theme of her poem, and her view on hope, very clear. " Heard it in—chilliest land" (10) and " Never—in extremity—asked—Me" (11 and 12) point to the meaning of " Hope" as an ever present, part spiritual, part human being. In Dickinson's poem, it is not simply an idea, philosophy, or concept in the eyes of the speaker.

Hope is human in the way it influences and sings, but is ultimately presented as an angel in appearance and selflessness. Dickinson's choices of words are so vivid and generally appealing, that a person really does want to believe that hope exists inside the heart of every thing person. Hope is a part of us all no matter race, personal beliefs, or background. It drives people's goals and motivates change. It is the one consistency in the mind of every single individual that ties us all together.

Through use of personification and simile, Emily Dickson draws hope as the unseen angel of humanity. It never costs anything for a person to believe in it, or themselves.