

# Five Reasons Whitman & Dickinson Influence Modern Poetry in America

**Walt Whitman's and Emily Dickinson's overall experimental styles serve as a means of promoting American writing and establish a new structure for American poets to follow.**

1. Both poets utilize a strong sense of individualism within their works. They both stress the importance of being a diverse, distinct personality within the growing population of American society.
2. Both utilize *intense* personal observations of the human condition: Whitman explores the concepts of the average American working class, whereas Dickinson promotes the worthiness of the then unacknowledged female intellect.
3. Both utilize unique and *unexpected* techniques and elements of poetry. As a result, they both experiment with the overall presentation of a poem. For example—

Whitman: \_\_\_\_\_ Dickinson:

free verse, no rhymes

folk ballad stanzas, slant rhymes

lack of strict meter

controlled, unusual patterns of meter

long, extended lines; long poems

short lines; short poems

public, celebratory orations

intensely private, inward reflections

4. Utilizing metaphysical themes, both poets often question preconceived notions of morality, immortality, and humanity's placement within the universe.
5. Both poets provide unique views and interpretations of experience within American society.