

TAKE YOUR POET TO WORK DAY

July 16, 2014

John Keats

John Keats was an English Romantic poet born in London in 1795. After losing both parents at a young age he went on to study medicine and earned his apothecary license, entitling him to work as a surgeon. He was determined to write poetry instead.

Keats was welcomed into the literary circle of publisher Leigh Hunt where he became acquainted with Percy Bysshe Shelley and John Reynolds. Hunt published his sonnets "On First Look into Chapman's Homer" and "O Solitude" in The Examiner in 1816. He later published Keats' first collection, *Poems*, in 1817, which was met with bad reviews. He published *Endymion* in 1818. The epic poem was also harshly received, with critic John Wilson Hartgrove writing, "It is a better and a wiser thing to be a starved apothecary than a starved poet, so back to the shop, Mr John, back to the plasters, pills, and ointment boxes." Some believed he never quite got over the critical rejection, Lord Byron among them, who later wrote that Keats was "snuffed out by an article."

Later, he moved in with his friend Charles Brown, during which time he met and fell and love with Fanny Brawne, whose family rented half of the house. It is believed that at some point they were engaged to be married, but that Keats would not move forward until he could provide properly for her. He fell ill in 1820 and moved to Rome for its warmer climate. The same year, he published his third and final volume of poetry, *Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, and Other Poems*. It was much better received than his first two collections and is now known as one of the most important works ever published.

Though he is widely regarded as one of the finest lyric poets in history, Keats would have been as surprised as his early critics to find himself in the company of the other Romantic poets. He died in 1821 at the age of 25 still believing "I have left no immortal work behind me—nothing to make my friends proud of my memory" and insisted that his friends inscribe on his gravestone "Here lies One Whose Name was writ in Water."



*I am certain of nothing
but the holiness of the Heart's
affections and the truth
of the Imagination.*

Want to take your favorite poet to work for Take Your Poet to Work Day?



1. Color your poet
2. Cut out your poet along dotted lines
3. Attach a popsicle stick to the back of your poet with tape or glue
4. Take your poet to work as shown



For more of the best in poetry and poetic things, visit us at TweetspeakPoetry.com



@speakpoetry



/speakpoetry