

TAKE YOUR POET TO WORK DAY

July 20, 2016

Elizabeth Barrett Browning



*He who breathes deepest
lives most.*

Elizabeth Barrett Browning was born in 1806, the eldest of 12 children of English parents with significant plantation and slave holdings in Jamaica. Browning, who grew up reading Shakespeare and Milton and would go on to teach herself Hebrew and Greek, wrote her first epic poem by the age of 12—a collection of four books of rhyming couplets.

Due to a pulmonary ailment and horse-riding injury in her mid-teens, Browning suffered chronic health problems and took medications including morphine for most of her life.

Her work was marked by themes of her religious faith, love, politics and social issues, including abolition. She published her first collection, *An Essay on the Mind and Other Poems*, in 1826. In 1844, she published *Poems*, which was noticed by Robert Browning. The two would exchange more than 500 letters over the next nearly two years, later eloping and moving to Florence, Italy.

Browning published *Sonnets for the Portuguese* in 1850, regarded as one of the most well-known collections of love poems in English and also considered to be the best of her work. She remained in Florence with her husband and estranged from her family until her death in 1861.

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



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