

## What are the different estimates enunciated by Arnold?

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Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) published “The Study of Poetry” in 1880. In this essay, he explained how readers judge poetry. He described three kinds of estimates. Among them, only one is correct and useful. The others often cause wrong judgment.

**Real Estimate:** Arnold called this the only true estimate. It judges poetry by real value. It looks for deep beauty and excellence. It gives joy and helps compare poets fairly. This estimate shows if a poet is truly classic. It avoids outside influence and personal emotion. Arnold says,

*“Our estimate of poetry should be governed by the real estimate, based on the presence or absence of high poetic quality.”*

#### Historic Estimate:

This estimate comes from a poet’s past glory. It values poetry for its old place in history. Arnold said this is a natural but wrong method. It makes readers overrate old poets. History should not hide real poetic power. True art must stand alone.

**Personal Estimate:** This estimate comes from personal likes and habits. It affects how we judge modern poets. Arnold said our feelings can mislead us. We may praise weak poetry because we like it. So, this estimate gives a false sense of value. The author claims this method to be faulty in the following quote.

*“... two other kinds of estimate, the historic estimate and the personal estimate, both of which are fallacious.”*

In the final, Arnold warned against historic and personal estimates. He asked readers to follow the real estimate only. It helps find true excellence in poetry. By using this, readers can judge fairly and wisely. This is the way to understand great poetry.