

Preface to Lyrical Ballads Quotations

Writer: William Wordsworth | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Quote 1: Definition of Poetry: *"For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings."*

Explanation:

Wordsworth says that poetry comes from strong emotions. It is not made with effort but flows naturally from the heart.

Quote 2: Words of Common Men Avoiding Poetic Diction: *"My purpose was to imitate, and as far as possible, to adopt the very language of men."*

Explanation:

He wanted to write poetry using simple, everyday language. He avoided the decorative and artificial words used by earlier poets.

Quote 3: No Difference between Prose and Poetry: *"Poetry sheds no tears 'such as angels weep' but natural and human tears..."*

Explanation:

Wordsworth says that poetry is not magical or distant from real life. Like prose, it conveys genuine human emotions.

Quote 4: Poetry - Source of Knowledge: *"Poetry is the first and the last of all knowledge - it is as immortal as the heart of man."*

Explanation:

Poetry was the earliest form of knowledge, and it will remain forever. It speaks to the heart, not just the brain.

Quote 5: Definition of a Poet: *"He is a man speaking to men."*

Explanation:

A poet is not above others. He is an ordinary man who speaks from his heart to others with deep feelings.

Quote 6: Duty of a Poet: *"But poets do not write for poets alone, but for men."*

Explanation:

Poets should write for all people, not just for other poets. Their job is to give joy and meaning to everyone.

Quote 7: Poetic Truth Over All: *"Poetry is the philosophic of all writings...carried alive into the heart by passions."*

Explanation:

Poetry gives deeper truth than science or history. It touches the heart with emotions and not just facts.

Quote 8: Against Neo-Classical Writing: *"There will be found in these volumes little of what is usually called poetic diction."*

Explanation:

Wordsworth rejects the difficult, fancy language of old poetry. He chooses simple, clear words for real people.

Quote 9: Function of a Poet: *"So that it will be the wish of the Poet to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes."*

Explanation:

A good poet tries to feel what others feel. His own emotions must match those of the people he writes about.

Quote 10: Language of Poetry is the Language of Common Men: *"The poet thinks and feels in the spirit of human passions..."*

Explanation:

Wordsworth says that poets feel like all people do. Therefore, their language should not be significantly different from everyday language.

Quote 11: Poet of Nature: *“He considers man and nature as essentially adapted to each other...”*

Explanation:

Wordsworth believed that humans and nature are deeply connected. The poet's mind reflects the beauty and meaning of nature.

LxNotes