Poetry is a clear expression of mixed feelings. --W.H. Auden

I would define poetry as recorded feelings. It's like keeping a record of emotions.  I think feelings are involved whenever poetry is writer, versus when other types of literature, it can just be about an opinion or to be informative. I recognize something is "poetic" when I can detect a rhythm.  I encounter poetry in music and in life, because I write poetry.

There is no hard and fast rule for defining a text as "poetic".  However, typically a text is found to be poetic if it relies on **the elements of sounds, imagery, rhythm, and figures of speech.** This is because poems are often intended to be heard.  Poetry, often, but not always, tends to be more concise, forcing the writer to work within particular generic constraints (length).  As such, poems are often intended to emotionally evocative in a short space of time.

"I remember awakening one morning and finding everything smeared with the color of forgotten love." Charles Bukowski, "memory," *What Matters Most is How Well You Walk Through the Fire*

**Verse** (two meanings):  The opposite of "prose"; A single line of poetry or a text in connection to other, separate lines that offer at least a somewhat regular patter.

**Line:** The basic unit of poetry, serves the same function as the sentence in prose.  May use punctuation grammar, and spelling rules in unusual ways.

**Meter**: Most poems have a structure in which each line contains a set amount of syllables.

**Stanza**: Grouping of lines, often with a specific rhyme scheme or meter.

* **Couplet**: a two line stanza
* **Triplet**: a three line stanza
* **Quatrain**: a four line stanza

Reading a Poem:

* Read it once, for surface content.
* On a second read through, begin paying attention to diction (repetition in particular)
* Paraphrase )not just a summary, but trying to *rephrase the poem in your own words* to capture the overall meaning/tone/theme in prose form)
* Begin looking for imagery, symbolism, and rhythm to consider how these work together to support the theme.
* Identify the genre within the poem is working, if possible as it may be playing to or against expected conventions.

**Broad Poetic Genres**

**Lyric Poem**: short poem expressing the thoughts of a single speaker.  Typically first person, with attention paid to rhythm and emotion.

**Narrative Poem**: tells a story.  Notably, these tend to be longer.  Examples include ballads and epics.  The narration is often in third person, though occasionally one will be in first place.

**Dramatic Monologue**: a poetic speech made by a single speaker, often addressed to a silent audience or listener.

**Didactic Poem**: A poem meant to instruct the listener in some meaningful way; offers a moral lesson or wisdom.

**Analyzing the Reading**

*Those Winter Sundays* by Robert Hayden

My father got up early everyday and was a hard working man.  Even though his hands hurt from working he made fire flame.  No one every openly appreciated it.

I would wake up and here him making the fire and when the house was warm, he'd call out to me and I would get up afraid to face everything.

Even though he made the fires and polished my shoes, I spoke to him without gratitude.  What did I know, my father actually loved me.

It's showing a realistic father-son relationship, and how he realizes later that his father did care for him.