Poetry VS. Prose

Prose structure flows continuously in sentences and paragraphs, while poetry is typically arranged in lines and stanzas. Poetry often has deliberate line breaks that create rhythm and emphasis, whereas prose fills the page margin to margin. Poetry usually has a more musical quality, often using meter (regular rhythmic patterns), rhyme, or other sound devices intentionally. Prose has rhythm too, but it's more like natural speech—varied and less patterned.

On one hand, poetry language is short, tending to compress meaning into fewer words, with each word carrying significant weight. Poetry is ambiguous; meaning a single line of poetry might contain layers of meaning, imagery, and emotion. On the other hand, prose language is long, expressing ideas more directly and expansively. In addition, poetry often emphasizes emotional impact, imagery, and the aesthetic quality of language itself. Prose typically prioritizes narrative, explanation, or argument, though of course it can also be beautiful and moving. While narrative poems certainly exist, prose is the natural medium for extended storytelling. Novels and short stories can develop complex plots, multiple characters, and settings. They include dialogues among characters. Poetry usually includes a single speaker, delivering a monologue, capturing single moments, emotions, or perceptions with intensity. That said, the boundary between them isn't always rigid. Some prose is highly poetic (like literary fiction), and some poetry reads almost like prose (like narrative poems such as "Lord Randal'). But these general distinctions help us understand how each form uses language differently to achieve its effects.