

Emily Dickinson Poem Riddle Cards

These poems are riddles written by Emily Dickinson in poem form. You can make them into a guessing game with your kids to see who can guess the riddle! Some of the language can be quite challenging, so plan on getting out the dictionary to help them understand the words first!

These were created by Teach Beside Me. They are not to be re-sold, nor to be shared without permission.



Pink and small and punctual
Aromatic, low,
Covert in April,
Candid in May,

Dear to the moss,
Known to the knoll,
Next to the robin
In every human soul,

Bold little beauty,
Bedecked with thee,
Nature forswears Antiquity.

(an arbutus- a plant with small pink or white flowers)

His bill an auger is,
His head, a cap and frill.
He laboreth at every tree,—
A worm his utmost goal.

(a woodpecker)

A everywhere of silver,
With ropes of sand
To keep it from effacing
The track called land.

(the sea)

I like to see it lap the miles,
And lick the valleys up,
And stop to feed itself at tanks;
And then, prodigious, step

Around a pile of mountains,
And, supercilious, peer
In shanties by the sides of roads;
And then a quarry pare

To fit its sides, and crawl between,
Complaining all the while
In horrid, hooting stanza;
Then chase itself downhill

And neigh like Boanerges;
Then, punctual as a star,
Stop—docile and omnipotent—
At its own stable door.

(a train)

A fuzzy fellow without feet
Yet doth exceeding run!
Of velvet is his countenance
And his complexion dun.

Sometimes he dwelt in the grass,
Sometimes upon a bough
From which he doth descend in plush
Upon a passer-by.

(a caterpillar who becomes a butterfly)

It sifts from leaden sieves,
It powders all the wood,
It fills with alabaster wool
The wrinkles of the road.

It makes an even face
Of mountain and of plain,—
Unbroken forehead from the east
Unto the east again.

It reaches to the fence,
It wraps it, rail by rail,
Till it is lost in fleeces;
It flings a crystal veil

On stump and stack and stem,—
The summer's empty room,
Acres of seams where harvests were,
Recordless, but for them.

It ruffles wrists of posts,
And ankles of a queen,—
Then stills its artisans like ghosts,
Denying they have been.

(snow)

A route of evanescence,
With a revolving wheel —
A resonance of emerald
A rush of cochineal —
And every blossom on the bush
Adjusts its tumbled head —
The mail from Tunis, probably,
An easy morning's ride.

(a hummingbird)

A narrow fellow in the grass
Occasionally rides;
You may have met him, —did you not,
His notice sudden is.

The grass divides as with a comb,
A spotted shaft is seen;
And then it closes at your feet
And opens further on.

He likes a boggy acre,
A floor to cool for corn.
Yet when a child and barefoot,
I more than once, at morn,

Have passed, I thought, a whip-lash
Unbraiding in the sun,—
When, stooping to secure it,
It wrinkled, and was gone.

Several of nature's people
I know, and they know me;
I feel for them a transport
Of cordiality;

But never met this fellow,
Attended or alone,
Without a tighter breathing,
And zero at the bone.

(a snake)