

## *Lunatic poetry*

**E**mily Dickinson (1830-86) was one of the most distinctive poets of the nineteenth century. She was born in Massachusetts, into a prominent family. Her father took her out of college and from then she lived in almost complete isolation. She rarely left the confines of her home and she refused to meet guests. Her private life made her aware of everyday objects around us. That is she wrote such unusual, creative poetry noticing so vividly things like the moon. She forged exciting and fresh metaphors to describe the world around us. Little of her work had been published at the moment of her death.

The tone she uses in the poem is warm and light-hearted emphasized by the figurative language in which it is written. The language used helps to create the beautiful image of the moon. It is full of imagery, metaphors, personifications and similes.

# THE MOON WAS BUT A CHIN OF GOLD

The Moon was but a chin of gold  
A night or two ago,  
And now she turns her perfect face  
Upon the world below.

Her forehead is of amplest blond; 5  
Her cheek like beryl stone;  
Her eye unto the summer dew  
The likest I have known.

Her lips of amber never part;  
But what must be the smile 10  
Upon her friend she could bestow  
Were such her silver will!

And what a privilege to be  
But the remotest star!  
For certainly her way might pass 15  
Beside your twinkling door.

Her bonnet is the firmament,  
The universe her shoe,  
The stars the trinkets at her belt,  
Her dimities of blue.



### Think and discuss in small groups:

Why do you think  
Emily Dickinson made  
the moon a "she"?

Imagine E. Dickinson had  
written about the moon as a  
male. Which metaphors do you  
think she would have used to  
portrait the moon? Why?