On Reading Poetry

1. Read the poem slowly. Learning to read a poem slowly will not just make the poem easier to hear; it will underscore the importance in poetry of each and every word.
2. Read in a normal, relaxed tone of voice.
3. Obviously, poems come in lines, but pausing at the end of every line will create a choppy effect and interrupt the flow of the poem's sense. Readers should pause only where there is punctuation, just as you would when reading prose, only more slowly.
4. Use a dictionary to look up unfamiliar words and hard-to-pronounce words. (or see if you can get if from context

By Billy Collins and located at:
http://www.loc.gov/poetry/180/p180-howtoread.html