Born in Amherst, Massachusetts, Emily Dickinson has become one of the greatest American poets. Her unique style of writing has become iconic in the poetry world. No one can quite capture her ability to write. However, out of the 1,775 poems she wrote only 7 were published before her death. Her sister, Lavinia, found all of her poems and published them into a book known as “The Poems of Emily Dickinson.” Among these poems was “Because I Could Not Stop for Death.” In the particular poem, Dickinson uses personification, symbols, and metaphors to convey the connection between death and a person.

Dickinson uses personification to convey how death is like a person in her poem “Because I could Not Stop for Death.” This is shown when she conveys how death waits for her. This is specifically shown in lines 1 and 2 “Because I could not stop for Death- He kindly waited for me-.” This is personification because death cannot literally stop to wait for someone. Dickinson portrays that death acts like a person waiting for her to join. Another example is when she compares death to its manners. This is shown in line 8 “for his civility-.” She says this to illustrate that death is polite and his manners when in reality, this is not possible. Finally she uses personification to show how she and death travel together in line 5 “We slowly drove-He knew no haste.” Death is being personified as a person who is driving to death. These are all examples on how Dickinson used personification to compare death to a person.

Dickinson also uses metaphors in her poem “Because I Could Not Stop for Death”. She uses these to compare the journey and resting place of death. The journey to death is shown in lines 3 and 4, “The carriage held but just ourselves-And immortality.” These lines
are illustrating the final passage to death. By not using like or as, Dickinson is able to compare the transportation methods from the past and today. She compares a carriage to today’s hearse. Another thing Dickinson is able to compare in this poem is a home and sometimes final resting place. This is shown in the lines 17 and 18: “We paused before a House that seemed a swelling of the ground-“ The effect that this line has is showing how the house is where you go to sleep, and your final resting place is the last place you go to sleep. This is how Dickinson uses metaphors in her poem “Because I Could Not Stop for Death”.

Finally, Dickinson uses symbols throughout her poem as well. An example of this shown in line 12, “We passed the setting sun-“. This line symbolizes death and darkness by the use of the setting sun. Another example of the symbolism is shown in line 18, “a swelling of the Ground-“. This line symbolizes that there are people who have already died, and she is to join. Dickinson shows symbolism in line 5 as well when she says “We slowly drive-“. This symbolizes how death is a slow thing, and it doesn’t come quickly. These are some examples of how Dickinson used symbols throughout her poem.

This is how Emily Dickinson uses personification, metaphors, and symbols in her poem “Because I Could Not Stop for Death” to convey how death can relate to symbols of death and how death can be a person. The topic of the poem relates to how death is waiting to take you on that carriage ride home, the way God is waiting to take you to a new home in heaven.