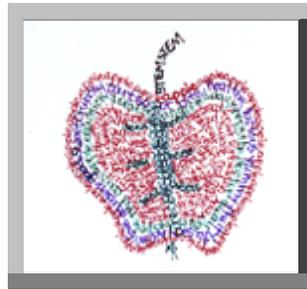


20 Days of Poetry - Day 1

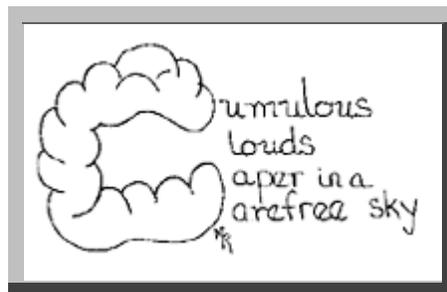
Concrete Poetry

Concrete Poetry is the use of words and their physical formation to convey meaning. This may be done with color, the shape of the letters, and/or the arrangement of words. Samples below show some of the many variations available. To view various forms of **concrete poetry** on the Internet, click on the words in bold lettering in this sentence. You may use the information you find at this link, but you may not publish it in anything other than a school report.

Directions: Graphically create a scene using only words. From a distance this will look like a picture, but up close it will consist only of words and phrases. No extra lines or shapes should be used. A light pencil line might be drawn first as a guide. Use colors, shapes, and sizes that will enhance the meaning of words.



An alternative is to use a letter of the alphabet and create a phrase in which most of the words begin with that letter. The major letter should be drawn so that it suggests the object you are describing.



20 Days of Poetry - Day 2

Synonym Poetry*:

Choose any word. Write that word in capital letters on the first line. In a thesaurus (you can link to the [Webster\(TM\) Dictionary](#) based on Merriam-Webster's Collegiate(R) Dictionary, Tenth Edition by clicking here) look up the word and find three to five synonyms for it. Write the synonyms on the second line. On the third line, write a descriptive phrase about the word. The last two lines of the poem should rhyme.

Student Examples:

LOVE

Attachment, adoration, warmth, adore
Love is so pure, right down to the core.
---Kimiko Brantley (Grade 10)

NOISE

Clamor, uproar, hullabaloo.
These things can really annoy you.
---Shasta Inman (Grade 9)

*The Synonyms were suggested by Paul Janezco in workshops sponsored by NNWP.

20 Days of Poetry - Day 3

Opposites*:

Choose two things that are opposites. It could be the opposite sides of a question. Humor is good. The poem should be two or four lines long. The first two and the last two lines should rhyme. Sight rhymes are acceptable.

The opposite of honest
What a lot of people do on a hard test.
---Benjamin Swanson (Grade 9)

OPPOSITES

What is the opposite of love?
Maybe it is as beautiful as a white dove,
Because love is so fine,
This is something that I know is mine.

What is the opposite of a smile?
Maybe it is a frown that hasn't been seen in a while,
Because a great smile brightens up the day,
This has made my day better in every way.

What is the opposite of true?
It could be purple, or even blue.
Because truth is better than a lie,
I want the truth even from my special guy.
---Kimiko Brantley (Grade 10)

*The Opposites were suggested by Paul Janezco in workshops sponsored by NNWP.

20 Days of Poetry - Day 4

List Poems*:

There are so many things that can be written about in lists, that sometimes we cannot think of a thing to write. To help, some ideas for lists are below.

Lists can be either rhyming or not. It is up to the writer to decide which style s/he uses. In at least one of the poems you write, make the list humorous or far-fetched. Then, in the final line, give the poem a serious turn.

Ideas for List Poems

The Sources of:

grayness
stiffness
softness
redness
squeaks
cold
sights

Things That:

ring
light
you find in the grocery
hear in your house
smell in the school
are round/square
are red/blue/green/black

Things:

to do waiting for the bus
to do trying to fall asleep
you should have done
you should not have done
that make you feel tall
that make you feel small
that you tell your mother

Student Examples:

THINGS KIDS SAY WHEN THEY WANT TO GET OUT TO PLAY

--I did all my homework.
--I picked up my toys.
--I emptied the trash.
--My bed is made. No, there are no lumps.
--I ate all my vegetables.
--But everyone else is.
--Bobby's mom doesn't make

him.
--But, Mom.
--No, my dirty clothes aren't under the bed.
--Yes, Mom, I'm sure.
--Yeah, I'll be careful.. No, I won't poke an eye out.
--Oh, please!
---Steve Schlatter (Grade 10)

CAN YOU IMAGINE...

**A city without
violence
This classroom in
silence**

**Basketball
without a ball
Reno without a
mall**

**Ducks wearing
lipstick
No barbecue at a
picnic**

**Sky without stars
Jail with no bars**

**Thrusdays
without New York
Undercover
Being born
without having a
mother**

**The Lakers after
Shaq**

**Harlem without
crack**

**Pepsi without
caffeine
Every night
having the same
dream?**

**---Tierra Jones
(Grade 10)**

***The Lists were suggested by Paul Janezco in
workshops sponsored by NNWP.**

20 Days of Poetry - Day 5

Three Word Forms:

Each line of this form is made up of three words. The last two words become the first two words in the next line. In the poem, there will be a progress of images and a story will be told.

Student Examples:

MORNINGS

sleep, alarm, awake
alarm, awake, shower
awake, shower, clothes
shower, clothes, shoes
clothes, shoes, dog
shoes, dog, run
dog, run, breakfast
run, breakfast, sunrise
breakfast, sunrise, car
sunrise, car, work.
---Alex Buffington (Grade 10)

ball, snap, run
snap, run, tackle
run, tackle, sack
tackle, sack, pass
sack, pass, catch
pass, catch, 1st down
catch, 1st down, touchdown.
---Josh Jones (Grade 10)

20 Days of Poetry - Day 6

I Don't Understand...:

Begin the poem with "I don't understand..." List three things you do not understand about the world or people. Name the thing you do not understand most of all. End the poem with an example of something you DO understand.

Student Example:

I DON'T UNDERSTAND...

I don't understand
why people dislike me
why people can't get along
why dogs are colorblind and cats aren't

But most of all
why people are prejudiced
why people must move away
why people argue over stupid stuff
why there is wars

What I understand most is
why trees grow
why birds chirp
why the sun shines
why the car goes.

---Anita Pepper (Grade 10)

Day 7 - Just Because...

Just Because... poems ask you to describe yourself in the first line of the poem. The next three lines in each stanza tell what you are NOT. The final line restates the first line and adds a tag directing the reader to do something.

Student Examples:

Just because I'm scared

Don't laugh and giggle behind my head

Don't kid and play when I'm not there

Still ask me because I might play

Just because I'm scared

It doesn't mean I can't do it

It doesn't give you the right to talk about me

It doesn't stop me from having fun

Just because I'm scared

Still tell me everything you did

Can't wait until I get big

Just because I'm scared -- please try to be my friend

---Brandon Womack (Grade 10)

Just because I'm an only child

I'm not a freak

I'm not shy

Just because I'm an only child

I'm not lonely

I'm not selfish

I'm not spoiled

Just because I'm an only child

I know I'm not perfect

I can't always be the best friend

I'm not a nerd

Just because I'm an only child -- let me be me.

---Liz Webster (Grade 9)

Day 8 - I Am (Version 1-choose one)

Below are line-by-line directions for writing this kind of poem:

Line

#1. I am

#2. Three nouns about which you have strong feelings. Begin each with a capital letter.

#3. A complete sentence about two things that you like.

#4. Three nouns that describe what you like to see in other people; end with "are important to me."

Capitalize each noun.

#5. A sentence containing a positive thought or feeling. It can tell what you find acceptable in yourself.

#6.-#7. Sentence in which you show something negative in yourself or others, however the sentence must end by showing that out of something BAD can come GOOD. Use the word "but" to link the bad and good.

#8.-#9.-#10. Each line is a short sentence relating something about which you have strong feelings--likes or dislikes. They do not have to relate to each other or to the previous lines you have written.

#11. End with "This is me" or "I am."

Student Examples:

I am
Life, Hope, Living
I care very much about the world and life on it.
Honesty is important to me.
Optimism is important to me.
Unselfishness is important to me.
Hospitality is a good thing.
Meanness is bad, but can be good to get people
off your back.
The world is getting weaker.
The longer the days the more beautiful they are.
People are too negative.
I am.
--Liz Webster (Grade 9)

Day 8 - I Am (Version 2-choose one)

Below is the line-by-line set-up for this version of the "I Am..." poem:

1st Stanza

I am (two special characteristics you have)
I wonder (something you are actually curious about)
I hear (an imaginary sound)
I see (an imaginary sight)
I want (an actual desire)
I am (the first line of the poem is repeated)

Stanza 2

I pretend (something you really pretend to do)
I feel (a feeling about something imaginary)
I touch (something you imagine you touch)
I worry (a worry that is real to you)
I cry (something that makes you very sad)
I am (the first line of the poem is repeated)

Stanza 3

I understand (something you know is true)
I say (something you believe in)
I dream (a dream you actually have)
I try (something you make an effort to do)
I hope (something you really hope for)
I am (the first line of the poem is repeated)

Student Example:

I AM

I am the wine and the future
I wonder how many ripples I will have to swim
I hear the trickle of time in a bitter bottle
I see the translucent red drain from the wine
I want the sweet satin liquid to stain my tongue
I am the wine and the future.

I pretend to entertain the glowing embers
I feel the dew that sours the grapes
I touch the vine that grows new life
I worry the drunkard may speak the truth
I cry the dewdrop tears on the winery walls
I am the wine and the future.

I understand the dust on the bottle
I say it only makes it sweeter with time
I dream the sponge cork may never be replaced by lips
I try to glimmer the crack in my glass container
I hope the sun-faded label never creases for lost identity
I am the wine and the future.

--Katie Reilly (Grade 10)

*Based on materials by Suzi Mee, Teachers & Writers Collaborative

Day 9 - Diamonte

Diamonte:

The French word *diamont* means diamond. A **DIAMONTE** is a seven-line poem that gradually changes from one idea to a direct opposite idea. When it is completed, its total appearance is diamond shaped.

There are two patterns you can follow in writing a diamonte.

Pattern:

Line 1 = Noun

Line 2 = Adjective, Adjective

Line 3 = Verb, Verb, Verb

Line 4 = Noun, Noun, Noun, Noun

Line 5 = Verb, Verb, Verb

Line 6 = Adjective, Adjective

Line 7 = Noun

Pattern:

Line 1 = Opposite of line 7

Line 2 = Describe line 1

Line 3 = Action about line 1

Line 4 = 2 nouns about line 1
2 nouns about line 7

Line 5 = Action about line 7

Line 6 = Describe line 7

Line 7 = Opposite of line 1

Student Examples:

Love
Bright, Passionate
Charming, Drifting, Growing
Cherish, Infatuation, Antipathy, Uncaring
Animosity, Falling, Dead
Dark, Disgust
Hate
---Kimiko Brantley (Grade 10)

Day 10 - Cinquain

A CINQUAIN is a poem with five lines.

There are a few things to remember NOT to do with a CINQUAIN or any short poem: (1) don't be tempted to add extra words or syllables to fill out the form; (2) if every line sounds "finished," there is a full stop at its end and it sounds boring; and (3) a CINQUAIN should build to a climax and have a surprise at the last line.

CINQUAINS can be of either of two patterns: one is built on the number of words in a line; the second is based on the number of syllables in a line.

WORD PATTERN:

Line 1 = One Word (noun)

Subject & title of poem

Line 2 = Two Words (adjectives)

Line 3 = Three Words (verbs)

Line 4 = Four words that relate
feelings

Line 5 = One word that repeats or
refers to line 1 (subject)

SYLLABLE PATTERN:

Line 1 = 2 syllables

Line 2 = 4 syllables

Line 3 = 6 syllables

Line 4 = 8 syllables

Line 5 = 2 syllables

The ideal Cinquain would combine the elements of both columns.

Day 11 - Formula Poems

Formula poems help you use words effectively. Using parts of speech and literary devices help to make your work lively and exciting.

Formulas:

- #1: Participle, participle, participle
- #2: Noun
- #3: Adverb (how)
- #4: Verb
- #5: Adverb (where or when)

Title: Pick a color

- #1: Describe something associated to it
- #2: Simile or metaphor
- #3: Adverb or adverb phrase (where)

Title: Feeling

- #1: Three verbs
- #2: Adverb (where)
- #3: Who has the feeling

Samples:

- #1: Leaping, soaring, flying
- #2: The superhero
- #3: Nonchalantly
- #4: Crashed
- #5: Into the wall

Title: Green

- #1: Makes me think of Spring
- #2: Like a tree covered with leaves
- #3: In a wooded forest.

Title: Silly

- #1: Tickle, wiggle, giggle
- #2: Lying on the floor
- #3: My baby sister

Day 12 - Emotions and Actions

Sometimes it is hard to put your emotions and feelings on paper. The following patterns for poems are designed to allow you to get used to putting your emotions into writing.

Line #1: What if _____

Line #2: I might _____

(leave a space between lines 2 & 3)

Line #3: What if _____

Line #4: I could _____

(leave a space between lines 4 & 5)

Line #5: What if _____

Line #6: I would _____

(leave a space between lines 6 & 7)

Line #7: Ask a question.

Line #1: When I _____ (describe an action)

Line #2: _____ (describe where action takes place)

Line #3: (Write 2 to 3 words that describe how you feel)

Line #4: I wish I could _____ (describe an action)

Line #5: (Tell the reason why)

Title: EMOTION

Line #1: I _____ (describe what you did to show how you were feeling)

Line #2: (Write 3 words that describe how you felt)

Line #3: (Make a statement or ask a question with regard to what is written in the first two lines)

Line #1: If I could be _____

Line #2: I'd _____ (describe what you would do)

Line #3: _____ (describe how you would do it)

Line #4: _____ (describe where you would do it)

Line #5: (Exclamation that shows how you would feel)

Day 13 - Writing About Weather

Possibly the most famous poem about weather is Carl Sandburg's *Fog*. You can write about a force in nature in the style of Sandburg by following the formula below:

Title: Form of Nature chosen

Line #1: Title + (how it arrives or begins as the animal would arrive)

Line #2: Tell what it does

Line #3: And how it does it

Line #4: And where it is

Line #5: Tell how it leaves (as the animal would leave)

Student Example:

THUNDER

Thunder comes in loud
Like the majestic roar of a lion.
It answers the call
Of lightening
By striking fear into people.
Away, somewhere in the sky,
Somewhere in the unknown,
An unknown voice,
And then leaves without a trace
Of its existence
Except in peoples' stories.
---Elia Miller (Grade 9)

To see some other examples of writing about weather, you can go to the "[Windy Language](#)" page.

Day 14 - Month Metaphors

You can use a metaphor as a springboard to write a Month Metaphor poem. The format is the same as when you did WRITING ABOUT WEATHER.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Choose a month -- or a season -- and picture how it would arrive if it were a person OR an animal.

The list of MOTION WORDS below may help you, or you may use another word to show how the month or season arrives.

2. Add a few words to make the picture seem more complete. Tell how OR where it arrives. Use adverb or prepositional phrases. If you wish, use a THESAURUS to find synonyms to replace overworked words.

3. Tell something else the month or season does while it is here.

4. Tell how the month or season leaves.

NOTE: be sure you keep the same comparison (metaphor) throughout the poem. Don't change to a different picture.

MOTION WORDS

march	wobble	creep	steal
stagger	sneak	stumble	bound
skip	zoom	trot	bounce
prance	tramp	totter	dart
float	dance	strut	lope
tiptoe	shuffle	skate	trudge
gallop	scurry	slide	plod
hop	spring	leap	advance
limp	glide	slink	drag
hobble	flutter	skulk	slip
canter	lurch	crawl	saunter

Student Examples:

JULY trudges
right in
with a bang.

It crawls around
on the hot ground,
leaps around
spreading warmth,
then glides right
out of the way.
---Tierra Jones (Grade 10)

SEPTEMBER
creeps in quietly
and unnoticed.
It just sits there
waiting,
watching for something
to happen.
Then, just a quickly
as before,
it creeps back out.
---Elia Miller (Grade 9)

NOVEMBER
slides in
on clouds of snow
and rain.
It blows away
the warmth,
and sneaks in
the cold,
then drags away.
---Liz Webster (Grade 9)

Day 15 - Image Poems

It is the purpose of this lesson to help you to "see" things you can write about. The same formula can be used in writing about pictures, people, and things. This basic "formula" is:

Line #1: Describe the object with two or three adjectives

Line #2: Give the object an action

Line #3: Put the object somewhere

DIRECTIONS:

1. Choose a picture that is not too "busy." It should have only one or two subjects in it. Use the formula above to write about one object in the picture.
2. Can you imagine the object doing something really silly -- or someone doing something silly with it?
Use the formula to write about that.
3. Imagine something strange happening to the object or with it. Where is it happening?
Use the formula to write about it.
4. Imagine the object in a sad way. Where is this happening?
Use the formula to write once more.
5. Look at the four poems you have written. Are they four stanzas of one poem? If they are, combine them into one poem.

Here are some other possibilities for combining thoughts about the photo:

Imagine "Real and Beautiful"

Imagine "Unreal and Beautiful"

Imagine "Unreal and Strange"

Imagine "Unreal and Silly"

Instead of doing this with an object, do this with a real person or a character from literature.

Day 16 - Sense Poems

Think of a place that is special. Form an image in your mind of this place. If you need to, cluster this image. Then complete the following statements.

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| a. I see _____ | I see the sage-covered desert |
| b. I smell _____ | I smell the freshness of the morning |
| c. I hear _____ | I hear the scream of the hawk |
| d. I feel _____ | I feel the caress of a breeze |
| e. I taste _____ | I taste the dew on the wind |
| f. I think _____ | I think the new day is born |

After you have written out the sentences, remove the pronouns, verbs, and articles as you need to:

sage-covered desert
freshness of morning
scream of the hawk
caress of a breeze
dew of the wind
new day born

Day 17- Bull Durham Credo

In the movie *Bull Durham* Kevin Costner's character is asked what he believes in. His answer provides us with a poetic format. By following the formula below, tell what you believe in.

BULL DURHAM CREDO

I believe in the _____
the _____
the _____
the _____
the _____

But (something you don't believe in, i.e. ("but the novels of Susan Sontag are self-indulgent, over-rated"))

I believe in _____
I believe in _____
I believe in _____

And I believe in _____ (longest)

Student example: CREDO

I believe in the wisdom of elders,
the influence of peer pressure,
the importance of success,
the evil that exists in money,
the effectiveness of hard work,
dedication, courage, strength.

But the belief that you don't have to strive
for your goals is just outrageous.

I believe in the truth that will set you free,
I believe in love that will conquer all,
I believe in respect for others,
Courtesy, politeness, gratitude.

And I believe in the fact that tomorrow
isn't promised to you.

---Tierra Jones (Grade 10)

Day 18 - Japanese-like Poems

Several forms of poetry are traditional to Japan. Those known in the United States are primarily haiku and tanka. In fact, there are several magazines and journals that accept these forms only for publication. We will examine both of these forms, but because you will be allowed more latitude in subject matter and form, we are calling this lesson "Japanese-like" rather than traditional Japanese forms. In the discussion below, I have linked to two haiku sites and two tanka sites on the web. Just click on the underlined words to get there.

HAIKU

Haiku poems are characterized by content, language, and form. Of the three elements, form is the least important. The content of haiku poems is primarily nature. Usually there are no similes or metaphors, nor are there many adjectives. The most common form is three lines, the first and third being the same length and the middle one being a little longer. In English-speaking countries this has been translated into a 5/7/5 syllable structure. However, this is not set in stone. In Japanese, it is 17 sounds. In English this translates to somewhere between 12 and 15 syllables. Therefore, if you do not have EXACTLY 17 syllables it is acceptable. The most famous writer of haiku is Matsuo Basho and his most famous poem is:

old pond...
a frog leaps in
water's sound

TANKA

A tanka is a mood piece, usually about love, seasons, sadness, or how short life is. Tankas use strong images and often have literary devices such as simile and metaphor. A tanka is short and usually has only five lines. Instead of counting syllables, you count ACCENTED syllables. The following pattern of ACCENTED syllables works well in English for a tanka: 2/3/2/3/3. Some claim the tanka contains 5/7/5/7/7 syllables. Actually, you can use either method for determining the sounds in this kind of poem.

DIRECTIONS:

Now that you are familiar with the haiku and tanka forms of poetry, you are to write at least two of each form. By writing more than one of each kind, you become familiar with the forms and used to following set patterns for writing different kinds of poetry.

Day 19 - Write About Yourself and Others

Someday Poems:

Begin each line with the word *Someday*... and complete it with a wish you have. Make the first two or three lines say something about your everyday wishes and slowly move away from yourself to the world in general. You may end the poem with the word *Someday*....

Student examples:

SOMEDAY...
Someday I will play the guitar
Someday I will have a job
Someday I will get married
Someday I will have kids
Someday I will be rich
Someday I will be noticed
---Melissa Manor (Grade 10)

One Window Is All I Need... Poems:

Begin your poem with the line *One window is all I need*...,and continue to write about this imaginary window in a personal way.

Student examples:

ONE WINDOW IS ALL I NEED

One window is all I need
To see what lies ahead for me
To lose myself in love
For a connection to my inner world
To see myself for who I am
And be able to make changes.
---Tierra Jones (Grade 10)

ONE WINDOW IS ALL I NEED...

to see the world
to reveal myself
to imagine adventures
to return to myself

and live.
---Alex Buffington (Grade 10)

WRITING ABOUT OTHERS:

When you write about others, pick one important thing about them. Keep the focus positive.

Line #1: The important thing about (name) is (most striking attribute)
Line #2: S/he is also _____(use as many lines as you need)
Last line: But the most important thing about (name) is (repeat Line #1)

Student example:

As you become comfortable writing poetry, you will find you will want to change the format and work on your own. This is great! The following student example came from such a growth:

THE NEW WORLD

Over 300 years ago,
my grandfather of many greats
moved from one world to another,
sailed across the Atlantic
and settled in Virginia.
He must have felt as
Christopher Columbus,
discovering a new world.
England to "The New World"
Not too terribly far apart,
but different in all ways.
All his routines changed,
his work changed,
his life changed,
he changed.
---Jon Mayne (Grade 10)

Day 20 - Pantoum

The pantoum comes to us from Malayan poetry. The Western (English) version of the pantoum is a poem of indefinite length made up of stanzas that have four lines. The formula comes in where lines 2 and 4 of each stanza are repeated as lines 1 and 3 of the following stanza:

First Stanza

Line #1

Line #2

Line #3

Line #4

Second Stanza

Line #1 (same as line #2 above)

Line #2

Line #3 (same as line #4 above)

Line #4

To see an example of a pantoum, [click here](#).