## How to Write a Haiku Poem: Haiku Examples and Tips

**What is haiku?**

Haiku is a Japanese poetry form. A haiku uses just a few words to capture a moment and create a picture in the reader's mind. It is like a tiny window into a scene much larger than itself.

Traditionally, haiku is written in three lines, with five syllables in the first line, seven syllables in the second line, and five syllables in the third line.

**Characteristics of haiku** The following are typical of haiku:

* A focus on nature.
* A "season word" such as "snow" which tells the reader what time of year it is.
* A division somewhere in the poem, which focuses first on one thing, than on another. The relationship between these two parts is sometimes surprising.
* Instead of saying how a scene makes him or her feel, the poet shows the details that caused that emotion. If the sight of an empty winter sky made the poet feel lonely, describing that sky can give the same feeling to the reader.

**How to write a haiku - try it!**

You can use the pictures lower down on this page to give you ideas. In your haiku, try to use details related to the senses -- sight, hearing, touch, smell, or taste.

Or look out your window, and describe what you see. Try to "zoom in" on a small detail that contains the feeling of the larger scene.

Or follow the steps below to write a "surprise-ending haiku." This is based on an exercise from the poet Ron Patchett which is described in *[The Haiku Handbook](http://www.amazon.com/Haiku-Handbook-Write-Share-Teach/dp/4770014309/ref%3Dsr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1251804940&sr=8-1" \t "_blank)* by William J. Higginson:

1. Write two lines about something beautiful in nature. You can use the pictures below to give you ideas. Don't worry about counting syllables yet.
2. Write a third line that is a complete surprise, that is *about something completely different from* the first two lines.
3. Look at the three lines together. Does the combination of these two seemingly unrelated parts suggest any surprising relationships? Does it give you any interesting ideas?
4. Now rewrite the poem, using the 5-syllable, 7-syllable, 5-syllable format and experimenting with the new ideas or perspectives that have occurred to you.

Haiku examples

*Snowflakes are our friends,
They descend when winter comes,
Making white blankets.*

*The last winter leaves
Clinging to the black branches
Explode into birds.*

*One small piece of heart
is mended in a moment.
Rain falls, tears of joy.*

*Birds chirping their song,
Building their nest for their home
Getting ready for spring!*

*Flowers are blooming
Bursts of colors come alive
Fragrant smells around us!*

*Butterflies hatch.
Bees drink the juice from flowers.
Bees fly everywhere.*

*Green grass in April
Birds begin to sing in trees
Children playing outside*

Haiku

 Haiku is a traditional form of Japanese poetry.  Haiku poems consist
of **3** lines.  The first and last lines of a Haiku have **5** syllables and the middle line has **7** syllables.  The lines rarely rhyme.

 I am first with five.
Then seven in the middle.
Five again to end.

# Limericks



 A limerick is a silly poem with five lines.
They are often funny or nonsensical.
Limericks were made famous by Edward Lear, a famous author who wrote the "Book of Nonsense" in the 1800's. This was an entire book of silly limericks.

 **How to write a limerick:**

The first, second and fifth lines rhyme with each other and have the same number of syllables (typically 8 or 9).The third and fourth lines rhyme with each other and have the same number of syllables (typically 5 or 6)Limericks often start with the line "There once was a..." or "There was a..."

Example of an 8, 8, 5, 5, 8
syllable limerick:

 STAR *by Kaitlyn Guenther*

*There once was a wonderful star
Who thought she would go very far
Until she fell down
And looked like a clown
She knew she would never go far.*

 *“work”*

*The work of the world is common as mud.
Botched, it smears the hands, crumbles to dust.
But the thing worth doing well done
has a shape that satisfies, clean and evident.
Greek amphoras for wine or oil,
Hopi vases that held corn, are put in museums
but you know they were made to be used.
The pitcher cries for water to carry
and a person for work that is real.*