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## Potpourri of poetry: A guide for using poetry in elementary schools

Penelope L. Levers

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California State University  
San Bernardino

POTPOURRI OF POETRY

A Guide For Using Poetry In Elementary Schools

A Project Submitted to

The Faculty of the School of Education

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the  
Degree of

Master of Arts

in

Education: School Administration Option

By

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1989

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## ABSTRACT

Research has documented that individuals feel a greater sense of responsibility and commitment to an organization when they are active members in organizational decision making. The administrator, as an instructional leader, strives to create activities involving students and teachers. Involving more teachers in student-based activities has a very positive effect in student-teacher relations. Staff teamwork results in a commitment to create a strong school culture.

A schoolwide poetry project would result in a positive recognition of students, teachers and the school. When students write poetry and then share it with others, self-confidence is built and self-image is improved. Activities build around a poetry theme would unify the students and instill a sense of school spirit. Unification occurs when members of a group work toward common goals.

A schoolwide poetry project would be in alignment with the new State of California Curriculum Framework. The new literature-based program integrates listening, speaking, reading and writing. Poetry is used throughout the new texts and is presented in a new format which includes teaching students to write poetry. Obviously, publishers of the newly adopted texts have included poetry because it is an important area of study.

Poetry is not a subject for a thirty minute lesson once a week, but rather an integral part of the entire language arts program. It should be included across the curriculum in social studies, science, math, music and art. For example, a unit on weather provides a wonderful opportunity to introduce the form of haiku. Studying about Indians is a perfect opportunity to learn some of the legends about nature which can become topics of cinquain poems.

This paper presents teaching ideas to incorporate poetry into the elementary school classroom. Topics included are: (1) writing poetry; (2) integrating poetry and language skills; (3) choral reading; (4) form poems, such as haiku and limerick; and (5) activities using poetry as a schoolwide theme. Poetry worksheets, a list of resources and a bibliography are also included.

Designed for teachers and administrators, the project is a guide for including poetry in the curriculum. Poetry seems to be the most neglected of genres in the language programs. Yet, it can be another technique in teaching reading and language.

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## CHAPTER I

### GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Poetry is an area of study often thought of as a "frill" in the academic curriculum. However, students are often introduced to poetry as part of their first language experiences before ever reaching the school and a rigorous academic curriculum. The well-known nursery rhymes are read and recited by parents, grand-parents, and others that take part in nurturing the young child. The sing-song rhymes and rhythmic poems delight the young child to the extent that many children memorize and recite the rhymes as part of their early communication skills. Learning early rhyming emphasizes the natural rhythmic patterns of language. Beginning readers have learned that repetition can help them remember and anticipate words, and that rhyme makes it easier to remember the next line.

Thus, why not continue using poetry throughout their school years as part of the language experience? Language books and basal readers include a few poems. However, the focus has been on the interpretation of the poem and on higher thinking skills that the young child is not ready to incorporate. There is a big jump from the delightful nursery rhymes to the intense interpretation expected when entering school.

Many elements of language can be taught by using poetry. Learning the parts of speech, syllabication, metaphors, similes, alliteration and personification are

examples of language elements that can be taught while teaching students to write poetry.

Furthermore, poetry is as universal as mathematics. There is research substantiating that all societies have had some form of poetry. Songs, chants, proverbs, ballads and folktales are all early forms of poetry. The poets unique perspective and sensitivity offers an understanding of the cultures around the world. Poems by the black poet Langston Hughes are examples of sharing attitudes and values. As we develop our imaginations, poetry helps us see the world as others see it. Accordingly, that is the goal in becoming a thoughtful and discerning citizen. A discerning citizen is one that is capable of seeing, discriminating, knowing and judging. Since poets see the world from their own perspective, so poetry offers insights other than those formed by the mass media.

With that goal in mind, the school administrator will understand that teaching poetry in all curriculum areas will foster opportunities for students to develop a better understanding of the world around them. Because poetry appeals to the senses, the student will be able to learn to apply the importance of understanding all aspects of a particular area of study. This sensitivity awareness can be the motivation in learning.

Many educators are not comfortable with teaching poetry or teaching students how to write poetry because they remember the English class where poems were analyzed to such

an extent that poetry became a negative study to avoid. Poetry should not be avoided but rather it should be approached with a plan to reacquaint children with something they are already familiar with and expand their appreciation.

An administrator can use a schoolwide poetry theme to compliment the basic curriculum. The principal can ask teachers to teach a unit on poetry and display students' work. Students can also recite poems at the school assemblies. An end of the year poetry book would be a culminating activity to highlight accomplishments. Students feel success when they are able to read, write, memorize and recite information. Poetry is the perfect vehicle to give a student this sense of accomplishment.

The focus of this paper is to present a plan to teach children to write poetry, as well as, to teach the elements of language in an active format. The plan will also include implementing poetry schoolwide as a unifying element between students, staff and community.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Poetry should be included in reading programs from kindergarten through high school. The student hears poetry as part of early language development. Croker (1988) states "From infant days children are introduced to rhythmic patterns of language - lullabies, nursery rhymes and clapping rhymes" (p.3) Children enjoy the repetitive nature of poems along with the musical qualities that many poems contain. Thus, poetry is a natural building block in language development.

Most children have had positive poetry experiences and many poems are meaningful to them. Marsh (1982) believes that "When children hear a poem, something is left with them through the rhythm, tone, or mood of the piece, even though they might not know the word" (p.1). It is unfortunate that we discontinue the use of poetry after the child enters second grade. Beginning in second grade the basal reader dominates the curriculum and continues through elementary school. Mullican (1984) states "Some scholars even suggest that poetry is the basic stuff of language...These scholars speculate that metaphor, an important element of poetry, is basic to the development of language.." (p.2).

Fortunately, the new literature based language/arts curriculum has introduced core literature in the reading books. Poetry is included in the new texts along with lesson plans for writing poetry. Reading should be an active

experience; reading and writing poetry lends itself to active involvement. Furthermore, the student gives part of themselves when reciting and writing poetry.

Poetry has been a part of the curriculum in a rather fragmented manner. Poems are found in basal readers and language books, but they are more of a frill in the reading experience. The teacher is expected to read the poem and ask the students questions. After some discussion, the teacher gives a textbook interpretation and the students move on to the next reading skill. Poems are merely placed in the textbook because it seems appropriate to include them. Mullican (1984) states "Perhaps we can make poetry more accessible by removing the aura of academic stuffiness from the study of poetry" (p.4). Actually, this practice does concern some educators. Wilmer (1984) states that "The appreciation of poetry in our culture has now become so marginal that only effective, sympathetic and imaginative teaching can save it from extinction..." (p.47). Thus, there is a need to include poetry as an integral part of the language curriculum. Writing poetry would give children the opportunity to use language and have a personal involvement.

Mullican (1984) cites that "...Poetry is basic to full human development and helpful for developing a thoughtful, discerning, and creative citizenship" (p.2). This statement is in strong support of including poetry as a well planned part of the school curriculum. When writing poetry, the student is thinking of details while analyzing

the subject. Critical thinking as well as creativity are used while writing a poem.

Extending students' skills in complex thinking, as well as developing their abilities to apply that thinking process to the creative solution of problems, has become an important goal of education. Several years ago, Dr. Benjamin Bloom of the University of Chicago developed a taxonomy or classification system of the cognitive domain in order to identify the levels of thinking demanded of students. This classification makes it possible to deliberately develop school assignments that enable students to extend their learning into higher and more creative levels of thinking. An application of the system in teaching poetry follows: The student will (Knowledge/Comprehension) voluntarily choose to memorize a minimum of two of his favorite poems and recite them for the class, (Application) identify at least two examples of descriptive words or phrases found in a poem he likes, (Analysis) be able to describe in his own words the sensory imagery to be found in a given poem, (Synthesis) make and classify a collection of "favorite" poems according to a system he devises, (Evaluation) voluntarily contribute samples of his own poetry to be included in a class anthology. Writing poetry lends itself well to the higher thinking skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

Teachers often shy away from developing poetry units for many reasons. One reason is that poetry units with

workable lesson plans are not provided. A second reason is that some teachers are simply following the publishers treatment of poetry as it appears in the reading and language books. Lastly, many teachers have had dreary experiences with poetry in high school and college.

Sharing favorite poems and investigating the poetry available for children would be a way for an educator to develop a new interest in teaching a poetry unit. Hillman (1980) believes that " Acquainting children with some of the exciting, interesting poetry written for them can be accomplished more easily if the teacher also enjoys the poem" (p.2). Most teachers are willing to try new ideas if there is a definite plan to follow.

Koch has written an excellent plan for teaching children to write poetry in his book, Wishes, Lies, and Dreams. Koch (1970) cites that "Children have a natural talent for writing poetry and anyone who teaches them should know that. Teaching really is not the right word for what takes place: it is more like permitting the children to discover something they already have" (p.25). Koch also has ten lessons on adult poems that are read to students in a twofold purpose in his book Rose, Where Did You Get That Red?. One purpose is to introduce students to a variety of poetry. The second purpose is to use the poems for ideas in their own writing.

Another facet of poetry lends itself to learning specific language skills. Language books are not presently

purchased in some districts. Parts of speech, syllabication, antonyms, synonyms, metaphors and simile can all be taught by using poetry. Hillman (1980) states that "Common forms of poetry are found as models in many language arts textbooks: haiku, tanka, cinquain, diamante, and the very familiar and usually funny limerick" (p.8). Further, learning to use a dictionary and thesaurus is usually a skill included in most language books. These tools will be used quite regularly when writing poetry.

Lastly, poetry lends itself nicely as a schoolwide focus. Poetry is easily integrated across the curriculum. There are poems that have been written on most topics in the curriculum areas. Students hearing poems in every subject, and writing poems in every subject, will not only learn to love poetry, but will also reach greater depth in the various subject areas. The depth of learning is attained by having more sensitivity in each subject. Poetry arouses more feeling and imagination as it appeals to the senses. It is a personal response to the subject. A focus on poetry would be a vehicle of an academic nature which could result in children performing choral poetry reading in monthly assemblies. Furthermore, children's poetry could be published in a monthly newsletter and in a literary magazine for a particular class or the entire school. Poetry writing would be a prestigious activity by giving student poets the chance to be published and read.

As an instructional leader the principal can "...grow and develop professionally by being actively and constantly engaged in improving their schools..." (Cooper, 1989, p. 16). The most recent areas of educational concern, cooperative learning, writing, and critical thinking skills would be dealt with in a study of poetry. The principal would improve the school spirit as well as sharing leadership with teachers. School spirit is achieved when teachers and students have a commitment in the goals of the school. Principals can give teachers a sense of their own importance and expertise by providing them with recognition as they lead, develop, and implement the schools' goals. Cooper (1989) states, "These principals know that it is their responsibility to create a strong school culture, enabling teachers to collaborate with them in designing the instructional program so that all students can learn" (p. 16).

An administrator can use poetry as a thematic unit of study for managing the academic goals of the school. Caring about words is the first step in learning to read and write. Students will learn to care about words while studying poetry.

The values of choral reading are participation and cooperation. Stewig (1978) cites that "There are psychological values in satisfying group experiences without self-consciousness as in a formal presentation" (p.3).

Children also learn to use their voices effectively. All of these values will benefit students and be reflected in schoolwide growth.

Amann (1986) summarizes by saying, "the benefits of poetry are seen as many in the reviewed literature. It can easily be integrated into other disciplines" (p.10). Poetry has a place in the classroom and it is the administrator's responsibility to assist teachers in finding this place. Meaning and relevance can give the necessary joy that will help develop lovers of poetry and future poets. Writing poetry is a perfect way for students to react and respond to the world around them. Finally, creating a poem will give a student a great feeling of self-worth.

### CHAPTER III

#### WRITING POETRY

Teaching children to write poetry is not an easy task. Unless teachers have had training in a method, the task is so overwhelming that some teachers shy away from the area. Textbooks treat poetry as something to be read and analyzed. This is usually the extent of poetry that students can expect in elementary school. Writing poetry in elementary school is not considered an important part of the curriculum. Amann (1986) states, "There appears to be no national movement to push the body of knowledge ahead"(p.3). Amann believes that there needs to be more statistical research to support the benefits of teaching poetry in elementary schools. However, there has been a great emphasis on developing writing skills during the past few years. The problem with teaching children to write remains the same; the overwhelming fear of a large blank piece of paper. Of course, some children are natural writers and do not have any problem expressing themselves via paper and pencil.

Teaching children to write poetry can be a stepping stone to other types of writing and can include components of self-esteem and self-worth. Students who participate in poetry writing feel good about something they have written and gain enhanced self-confidence and willingness to approach other writing tasks. There are many reasons why learning to write poetry is important. One reason is that a



few words can become a complete poem. It is not necessary that the students have a have tremendous flow of verbage in order to have a finished product. Another reason is that poetry builds confidence in the ability to write because there is more freedom in writing. There are not as many rules to follow and most poetry is accepted as written. Further, students like games and poetry becomes a game of the "power of the word." Sharing their work and delighting their classmates becomes a motivating source to create. The editing of written work is probably the most negative part of writing to the young new writer. Since poems contain less words, less editing is required. Finally, poetry can be memorized and shared. This aspect builds self-confidence in the student and helps make writing a pleasurable experience.

Ideas for teaching children to write can be found in Koch's (1970) Wishes, Lies, and Dreams: Teaching Children to Write Poetry. Koch describes a process that worked for him while teaching children to write poetry. He starts out with class collaborations. The class writes a poem together, everybody contributing one line. Koch (1970) states that, "No one had to worry about failing to write a good poem because everyone was only writing one line; and I specifically asked the children not to put their names on their line"(p.5). Class collaborations build success as a first poetry writing experience and later as a practice for understanding after introducing other types of poetry

writing. It is an excellent method of giving the students confidence to write and the ideas shared are motivators in instilling excitement in the lesson.

Koch then suggests having the students write a poem in which every line begins with "I wish." This is another type of poem that children enjoy writing. All students have wishes and if they can wish for anything real or make believe it gives them the freedom to be more creative. Again, this is a successful lesson because the students can let their imaginations run wild. They also enjoy illustrating these poems.

Comparisons and sounds were also popular with the students. They were asked to write how one thing reminds them of something else. (i.e. The sea is like a blue velvet coat). Koch (1970) suggests, "... people were aware of many resemblances which were beautiful and interesting but which they didn't talk about because they seemed too far-fetched and too silly. ...if the grass looked like an Easter egg they should say so."(p.9). This type of free associating is fun for students and again class collaborations and sharing gives good examples to set the stage before they write their own poems.

Writing Noise Poems were next in the sequence. This type of poem makes use of the sense of sound and is a catalyst for the flow of adjectives. Simply making sounds and asking the students give words for the sounds begins a thinking process which leads to word association. This type

of poem begins to expand the language and creativity of writing poetry.

Koch (1970) found that Dream Poems gave students, "...the feeling of including the unconscious parts of their experience in their poetry" (p.10). The topic of dreams is relevant to most students and a topic that they can all expound on at length. Most students are motivated to write Dream Poems and enjoy illustrating and sharing them.

A Lie Poem was another type of poem that freed the students inhibitions and gave them a chance to say things that are not true. Koch (1970) used the word "lie" rather than "fantasy" or "make-believe" for "...its shock value and partly because it's a word children use themselves" (p. 19). An example of a Lie Poem would be--

When I am in the water, I am green.  
I eat lily pads and frogs.  
I am nine hundred years old.

Color Poems (Appendix A) are enjoyable for students to write. Most students can talk about colors and can collaborate on the colors of various objects. This type of poem stimulates their visual sense and brings a new awareness of the world around them. They especially become aware of shades of color after investigating colors together as a class.

Lesson plans for common forms of poetry are in Appendix A. Children enjoy learning these forms of poetry. If they

begin with the simple open form of poetry and progress sequentially to the more complex form of poetry the experience of writing becomes more easily understood. The form poems are particularly useful in teaching language skills. For example, haiku is a three-lined poem with five syllables in the first line, seven in the second, and five in the third. This is a way to teach syllables and apply it to a creative work of art.

There is more detailed information on the common forms of poetry in the next section on Learning Language Skills Through Poetry. Many of these poetry forms are particularly appropriate for writing on various topics such as holidays, seasons, weather, and academic areas. The poetry forms are also easily coordinated with various art projects (Appendix C).

Hughes (1967) Let's Enjoy Poetry is another excellent source. Rosalind Hughes wrote Let's Enjoy Poetry for Grades 1-3 and also Let's Enjoy Poetry for Grades 4, 5, and 6. Her books are not only anthologies but also include a teacher's guide after each poem, which helps with interpretation and readings. Her books have many poems appropriate for choral reading. Hughes (1967) states "Through choral speaking, teachers will find that children memorize poetry much more quickly and because of this are able to learn many more poems" (p. xiv).

Naturally the above methods of teaching students to write poetry are sample methods for incorporating poetry

into the curriculum. Students not only enjoy writing poetry but also enjoy hearing poetry. It is a pleasant experience in the classroom and the results are often a better appreciation of this literary art form.

Reading aloud is one of the most powerful charms for luring children to books. In Becoming a Nation of Readers, (1985) it was pointed out that, "The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children" (p. 23). The report goes on to say, "Choral reading of poetry and reading plays also contribute to oral reading skill and help keep oral traditions alive" (p. 52). By skillful use of the entertainment value of the stories and poems, the teacher not only persuades children to undertake the trials of learning to read but also introduces them to a wide variety of literature. Children develop their powers of aural comprehension. Reading poems aloud acts as a stimulant for writing. Furthermore, a powerful bond is established between the teacher and class as, together, they follow an adventure or laugh at the poems of Shel Silverstein.

As Koch (1970) states, "The educational advantages of a creative intellectual and emotional activity which children enjoy are clear. Writing poetry makes children feel happy, capable, and creative" (p. 53). Hence, poetry can help build a good self-concept.

## CHAPTER IV

## POETRY IN TEACHING LANGUAGE SKILLS

Poetry can be an integral part of the whole language program. Many form poems lend themselves well in teaching syllabication, parts of speech, antonyms, synonyms, metaphors, simile, and rhyme. Currently, most language books cover the above language skills as separate independent lessons. For example, the student learns that adjectives describe things. They are given samples and practice exercises. The practice exercises have the students underline the adjectives in a sentence. Sometimes the students are asked to write sentences using their own choice of adjectives. The point is that the lesson would be much more relevant and produce a finished product of their own creation if the lesson on adjectives was applied to a form poem such as the Name Poem. Mullican (1984) states "Our students become proficient in the language arts by using these arts, not by learning facts about language" (p. 34).

The Name Poem is an example of how poetry can be integrated with learning language skills. The following section describes and exemplifies poetry used to teach language skills.

Syllabication is usually not too difficult for students to understand, even in first grade. Clapping out the words is one of the techniques used to teach this skill. Applying syllabication is used when writing haiku and tanka poems.

Haiku is made up of seventeen syllables arranged in three lines of 5-7-5 syllables. These poems are usually about nature:

Behold the pine trees  
Bending low in the cool breeze  
On the mountain top.

When students write haiku poems they constantly apply the skill of counting syllables. They also find it necessary to modify the lines and use higher thinking skills as they create the poem.

Tanka is another type of Japanese Free Verse which uses thirty-one syllables arranged in five lines of 5-7-5-7-7 syllables (Appendix A).

Name Poems can be used as an application of nouns and adjectives. The noun (i.e. name, season) is written down. The student then writes a descriptive word (adjective) that begins with each letter:

Bold	Jubilant
Exciting	Energetic
Terrific	Angelic
Tantalizing	Nifty
Youthful	

The cinquain is a five-line poem (Appendix A). The cinquain makes use of nouns, adjectives, verbs and synonyms. When the student masters the cinquain poem, he has applied several parts of speech:

•

Jeans  
 Soft, blue  
 Aging, fading, clinging  
 Second skin for people  
 Levis

" Another kind of cinquain has two syllables in the first line, four syllables in the second, six syllables in the third line, eight in the fourth, and two in the fifth line. Any number of words can be used as long as the syllabic count is accurate" (Hillman, 1980, p.9).

Children  
 Many races  
 Running, jumping, playing  
 Happy, friendly, sad, mad, caring  
 Students

The teacher could choose the type of cinquain necessary to provide practice for the language skill being stressed. Cinquains can conform to other patterns.

" Diamante is another form in which the shape of the poem is diamond-like, with seven lines, and each line has a certain characteristic (similar to the pattern of the cinquain)" (Hillman, 1980, p.9). This type of poem is particularly good for the application of antonyms (Appendix A).



### Country

Beautiful, peaceful

Calming, resting, flowing,

Shade, trees, dust, smog,

Rushing, hurrying, working,

Busy, ugly

City.

The beginning stage of the diamante is thinking of nouns that are opposites. The transition is in the fourth line. The first two words are associated with the noun in the first line and the last two words are associated with the noun in the last line.

These poetry ideas for teaching language skills can be used in any classroom. Students are excited about learning how to write form poems. The language skills are learned while creating a written product about subjects that are of interest to them. The language skills are retained and easier to retrieve when the students can associate parts of speech with a poem that they have written and memorized.

Dictionary skills are part of the language curriculum. As students need to find words for their poems, the dictionary and thesaurus have more relevancy than simply looking up unrelated lists of words. Most second and third graders are excited about using a dictionary, but the excitement becomes drudgery once the task is mastered unless

they can apply the skill. Writing poems throughout the school year soon gives meaning for the use of a dictionary.

Spelling words correctly soon becomes more important as the written material is displayed, or published in the school newsletter. Educators have learned that relevance in learning is one of the most important factors in motivation for learning.

Further information on teaching language skills can be found in Koch (1970) Wishes, Lies, and Dreams. Specific poems are used to identify the use of metaphors, similes, alliteration, personification and onomatopoeia.

Poetry is, therefore, a vehicle in which language skills can be applied. Obviously the students must like learning to write poetry before this "vehicle" can be used as motivation. The teacher's enthusiasm is a the necessary catalyst to make poetry an enjoyment and this is the great challenge of administration.

## CHAPTER V

## POETRY INTO THE CURRICULUM

Poetry can be a part of almost all curriculum areas and thus is an area that can be utilized as a schoolwide focus. Since it is an area with inherent laterality, poetry has enough flexibility to permit a broad schoolwide theme.

Some basic ideas about how to use a schoolwide poetry theme will follow. This section will be broken down into basic objectives, suggestions for schoolwide poetry ideas, and building community relations using a poetry theme.

Some basic objectives are:

1. To induce students to like poetry.
2. To give students pleasant experiences with poetry.
3. To use poetry as a unifying theme in order to have a sense of school spirit.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR SCHOOLWIDE POETRY IDEAS

1. Choral reading in the classroom and at school assemblies is of great benefit to students. Choral reading at a school assembly is a way of sharing in a group experience. Classes could sign up to read poetry at monthly assemblies during the year. For example, the primary grades could use Maurice Sendak's poems in Chicken Soup With Rice. Upper grades could choose a poem from Where the Sidewalk

Ends (Silverstein, 1974). Another source of poems for choral reading can be found in Rosalind Hughes, Let's Enjoy Poetry. (Appendix C)

The poem of the month should be displayed on a large chart and also copies should be made available to take home. The students can work on memorizing the poem as a sponge activity (i.e. ten minutes before lunch, recess or dismissal at the end of the day). The poem should also be on a tape recorder equipped with earphones that students can listen to in their spare time or as a group listening activity during reading group rotation.

2. Another assembly idea would feature a student from each class that was chosen as the class poet of the month. The teacher would pick out a student's original poem and display the student's picture and poem on the school office bulletin board. The student would recite the poem at the monthly assembly and the poem would also be published in the school newspaper. If there were twenty rooms, there would be twenty students featured each month and two hundred for the year. This number would allow a lot of student recognition.

Parents would need to be invited to the assemblies. They would also need to be aware of the schoolwide poetry theme by notification in the first school newsletter.

3. Teachers should read a variety of poetry to the class throughout the year. Marsh, (1982) states "The poems

read to the children should be taken from professional poets, other children's poetry, and from poems written in class". Marsh suggests Green is like a Meadow of Grass: An anthology of Children's Pleasure in Poetry, edited by Nancy Larrick as a good source of children's poetry. The anthology by Arbuthnot and Sutherland is also very useful (Appendix B).

4. The school could study a different poet each month. Teacher's could read some of the poet's work throughout the month. The poet could be featured on a bulletin board in each room and in the school office. A suggested list of poets to feature is listed in Appendix B.

5. Poetry days could be established. Students and teachers would share poems that they like with one another. These days could be once a year or perhaps one day each quarter. The students would look forward to the day as a special day devoted to poetry. Reading, writing, and listening to poetry would take up most of the day. Films on poets and a guest poet could enrich the day.

6. Each year the California Poets in The Schools publishes a Statewide Anthology made up of California students' poems. Submitting poems to this publication would be an excellent schoolwide effort. Imagine the pride students would have if a poem from their school was chosen for the publication. Information on getting involved with CPITS is found in Appendix C. Every school library should

buy this annual publication which includes a bibliography listing the most up to date books and periodicals on poetry.

7. At the end of the year, a School Poetry Booklet could be published. Poets of the month plus other students' poetry would be included in the booklet. Students talented in drawing could illustrate for the booklet. The booklet could be kept in the school library and a copy in each classroom which would result in a nice collection of children's poetry after a few years.

8. Teachers could also write poetry and share their writings with the staff and students. The teachers could be featured each month also.

9. The principal and/or vice-principal could read a favorite poem at the beginning of each assembly. Another idea would be to read a poem each Monday over the loudspeaker.

10. Inservices for teachers would be valuable. Sharing ideas on Reader's Theatre and Choral Poetry would teachers the confidence to try it in the classroom. New poetry forms could be shared. These inservices provide support to those teachers that have not taught poetry before.

These are just some of the possibilities for poetry activities that would allow the administrator to involve the total school. The main ingredient would be the administrator's enthusiasm.

## IDEAS FOR COMMUNITY RELATIONS

1. Notify the parents of the schoolwide poetry theme. Explain the plan for the year and welcome parent's input.

2. Get the P.T.A. involved in supporting the theme. The members may want children to read poems as part of the P.T.A. meetings. They can also raise money to pay for the publication of the Poetry Booklet and to buy additional books on poetry for the school library.

3. Notify the local newspaper about the school's plan. Ask to have children featured in the newspaper each week. (Many papers have a section each week for student accomplishments).

4. Work with local libraries and ask them to share new books on poetry with the school.

5. Find out if there are any adult poets in the community and invite them to become involved in the plan. They could share their own creations or actually may volunteer to help in the classroom for poetry lessons.

6. Prepare students to give a poetry presentation for the local board of education.

The above ideas are a few ways to involve the community in a school plan. The main idea is to publicize what the school is doing and let people know about student

accomplishments. There is plenty of negative publicity in the newspapers and on television about the schools. It is every educator's responsibility to work on reporting the positive news about their schools.



## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Poetry is an important ingredient in the elementary school curriculum both for its intrinsic qualities and as a vehicle for other subject matters. Hence, in order to revive poetry, a commitment by administrators and staff is necessary. Clearly, poetry can be used as a base as well as an extended activity in most curriculum areas.

Currently the new literature-based language-arts curriculum includes more poems and lessons for teaching children to write poetry. This trend is not only encouraging but supports the importance of keeping poetry in the curriculum. Eventhough some studies and research have been conducted in this are, more are necessary in order to understand the far-reaching value of continuing and expanding the use of poetry in learning to read and write.

Administrators need to provide opportunities for staff, students, and the community to work together toward common goals. A schoolwide poetry theme will not only accomplish this task but also result in a positive school environment.

Thus, poetry will serve as a motivator for total school involvement and higher academic achievement.

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## Appendix A

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## LESSON PLAN 1

Topic: Couplet - Two Line Rhyme

Objective: Class collaborative poem  
Individual poems

Language Element: Rhyme and rhythm

Procedure:

1. Read the following couplets to the class:

Have you seen my little cat?  
He is sleeping on the mat.

There was a little guinea-pig,  
Who, being little, was not big!

They fall, they fall, without a sound -  
Red and yellow leaves to the ground.

2. Ask the students if they know that a poem can be made out of only two lines. Explain that the couplets or two line rhymes are examples of poems that rhyme.
3. Have students help make up different last lines to the above poems. Brainstorm other words that would rhyme with the last word in the first line. Share new ideas and poems and write some on the board.
4. Have students copy down the two first lines for a new poem.
  - a) Where is my sister Jane?
  - b) There is a black bird in the tree -
5. Ask students to write down a second line to the above first lines (a and b).
6. Have students write a first and second line poem. Ask them to illustrate the poem.
7. Students can read their poems to the class and write them on 5x7 index cards for their first page of a poetry book.

Note: Students tend to write the second line too short or too long. It will be helpful to talk about rhythm and clap out the lines.

## LESSON PLAN 2

Topic: Name Poem

Objective: Individual poem/ self-concept

Language Elements: Nouns and Adjectives

Procedure:

1. Write the following on the board.

Bold	Jubilant
Exciting	Energetic
Terrific	Angelic
Tantalizing	Nifty
Youthful	

2. Explain that a name poem is the name of a person, season, or any topic (noun) that is written down (vertically). The student then writes a descriptive word (adjective) that begins with each letter.

3. Have the students write a name poem as a class collaboration. Brainstorm various adjectives for the given letters of the topic. Remind them about using a dictionary or thesaurus for help in finding adjectives.

4. Have students illustrate their poem and copy the edited copy onto a 5x7 index card for their poetry booklet.

Note: Students may need help identifying adjectives. This is a perfect time to have a lesson on adjectives. Some students may want to use words that are not positive... try to promote the idea of positive adjectives.

Extension: These poems are ideal to use for Mother's Day and/or Father's Day. Students write their parents first and last names down using adjectives with the first letters.

## LESSON 3

Topic: Class Collaborations

Objective: Individual lines on a topic used for a five line class poem

Language Element: Topic sentence

Procedure:

1. Write a topic on on the board. (Examples: Friendship, Favorite Food, Animals, Emotions, Favorite Places, Seasons).
2. Have students write a sentence about the topic.
3. Collect the sentences and then read five of the students' sentences. This will make a five line poem.
4. Have students write five sentences of their own on a topic.
5. Students may want to read their poems to the class.
6. The students should edit their poems, illustrate them and copy them onto 5x7 index cards for their poetry booklet.

Note: Class collaborations can be used to write poems in various class disciplines (social studies, science, math, etc.)

Extension: The topic sentences can be used to write paragraphs. The class can choose the sentences that could go together into a paragraph.



## LESSON PLAN 4

Topic: Sestinas

Objective: Lines are made up to fit certain words which appear in a predetermined order at the ends of the lines.

Reference: " The sestina was invented by the troubadour poet Arnaut Daniel. (Koch, 1970, p. 222).

Procedure:

1. Explain the rules in writing the sestina. (Koch, 1970, p. 222)
  - a) There are 39 lines.
  - b) There are 6 end words used in each stanza.
  - c) The 6 end words recur in a certain order:  
123456, 615243, 364125, 532614, 451362,  
246531.
  - d) In each of the last three lines there are two end-words, and the order is 123456

Example:

-----pink	-----blue
-----aquamarine	-----purple
-----green	-----pink
-----blue	-----green
-----purple	-----red
-----red	-----aquamarine
-----red	-----aquamarine
-----pink	-----blue
-----purple	-----red
-----aquamarine	-----purple
-----blue	-----green
-----green	-----pink
-----green	--pink-----aqua----
-----red	--green-----blue----
-----blue	--purple-----red----
-----pink	
-----aquamarine	
-----purple	

2. Ask the students to think of lines to fit the end-words. This should be done as a class collaboration and after several collaborations, students should try to write their own.

3. The end-words can be any six pre-determined words.. not only color words.

4. Students can read their poems to the class and write them on 5x7 index cards for their poetry book.

Note: This type of poem is more appropriate for 4th, 5th and 6th graders because of the length.

## LESSON PLAN 5

Topic: Cinquains

Objective: Individual poems on one topic

Language Element: Parts of speech (nouns, adjectives,  
verbs)  
Topic, details, summary

Procedure:

1. Write the following poem on the board:

Jeans  
Soft, blue  
Aging, fading, clinging  
Second skin for people  
Levis

2. Ask students to brainstorm about the poem. Ask for the parts of speech represented in the poem.

3. Explain the format of the cinquain poem. Tell them that cinquain is a french word meaning five lines. Display a chart with the following information:

First line - One word tht names the subject  
Second line - Two words that define or describe the subject  
Third line - Three words that express actions associated with the subject  
Fourth line - Four words that express a personal attitude toward the subject  
Fifth line - One word that sums up, restates, or supplies a synonym for the subject.

4. Discuss the chart and point out that the poem makes use of nouns, adjectives, verbs and synonyms.

5. Solicit a class collaboration as practice in writing cinquains.

6. Have students write individual poems and illustrate

7. Students can read their poems to the class and write them on 5x7 index cards for their poetry book.

Extension: This type of poem is perfect for learning to write a paragraph. The first word is used for the topic sentence. The second through fourth lines are used for detail sentences and the fifth line is used for the summary sentence.

## LESSON PLAN 6

Topic: Diamante

Objective: Individual poem combining synonyms

Language Element: Parts of speech (nouns, adjectives,  
participles)  
Synonyms

Procedure:

1. Write the following poem on the board:

Country  
Beautiful, peaceful  
Calming, resting, flowing  
Shade, trees, dust, smog  
Rushing, hurrying, working  
Busy, ugly  
City

2. Ask students to brainstorm about the poem. Ask for the parts of speech represented in the poem.

3. Explain the format of the diamante poem. Point out the diamond shape and transition in the fourth line. (Synonyms)

4. Display a chart with the following information:

First line - A noun (Seventh line will suggest its opposite or a changed form).

Second line - Two adjectives describing the noun.

Third line - Three participles (-ing or -ed\_ indicating action related to the noun.

Fourth line - Four nouns related to subject: second two nouns begin to shift meaning.

Fifth line - Three participles indicating change or development of subject.

Sixth line - Two adjectives continuing idea of change.

Seventh line - A noun that is the opposite of noun in line one.

5. Explain that the beginning stage of the diamante is thinking of nouns that are opposites. The transition is in the fourth line. The first two words are associated with the noun in the first line and the last two words are associated with the noun in the last line.

6. Solicit a class collaboration as practice in writing cinquains.

7. Have students write individual poems and illustrate.

8. Students can read their poems to the class and write them on 5x7 index cards for their poetry book.

Extension: The diamante poem can be used in an art lesson. The students can divide the paper in half and illustrate the opposite nouns.

## LESSON PLAN 7

Topic: Epigram

Objective: Individual poem using a rhyme scheme

Language Element: Rhyme

Procedure:

1. Write the following poem on the board:

I wish I were a grapefruit  
 And here's the reason why  
 When you came to eat me  
 I'd squirt you in the eye.

2. Ask the students which words rhyme. Explain that this type of poem has a rhyme scheme. The scheme might look like the following:

ABCB - the most common (above poem)

How a minority	A	Candy	A
Reaching majority	A	Is dandy	A
Seizing authority	A	But meat	B
Hates a minority	A	Is neat	B

I had six honest serving men	A
They taught me all I knew	B
Their names were Why and How and Who	B
Where and What and When too	B

3. Have the students write several collaboration poems.

4. Have students write individual poems and illustrate.

5. Have students read their poems to the class and write them on 5x7 index cards for their poetry book.  
 Note: This poem leads in to the Limerick (Lesson Plan 8)

## LESSON PLAN 8

Topic: Limerick

Objective: Individual poem

Language Element: Rhyme Scheme, Short funny story

Procedure:

1. Write the following poem on the board:

There was an old man with a beard  
Who said, "It is just as I feared  
Two owls and a hen  
Four larks and a wren  
Have all built their nest in my beard."

2. Explain that the limerick is similar to the epigram except that it has an additional fifth line. However, this additional line often greatly enhances the enjoyment and effectiveness of the limerick. (Try to find more limericks to write)

3. Ask the students which words rhyme. Point out the rhyme scheme of AABBA.

4. Have students think of other last lines using different words to rhyme with beard and feared.

5. Have students do several class collaboration poems. Brainstorm words that rhyme when thinking of the last line.

6. Have students write individual poems and illustrate.

7. Have students read their poems to the class and write them on 5x7 index cards for their poetry book.

Note: This type of poem is especially fun to write for St. Patrick's Day.

## LESSON PLAN 9

Topic: Haiku

Objective: Individual poem - focus on nature and/or season

Language Element: Syllables, subject

Procedure:

1. Write the following poem on the board:

Behold the canyon  
So grand and yet so fragile  
A rainbow spectrum.

2. Explain that a Haiku is a poem made up of seventeen syllables arranged in three lines of 5-7-5 syllables. Haiku poems contain direct or indirect reference to nature and/or season; they focus on a particular object or a present event; implies a special, significant moment.

3. Discuss the poem on the board - applying the information in #2 above.

4. Give students more examples of Haiku poems.

5. Have students do several class collaborations. Brainstorm appropriate topics and brainstorm images about the topics. Write down the words describing the images.

6. Have students write individual poems and illustrate.

7. Have students read their poems to the class and write them on 5x7 index cards for their poetry book.

Note: This type of poem is especially good to write as the seasons change.

Extension: Tanka poems are similar to haiku in content. They have thirty-one syllables arranged in five lines of 5-7-5-7-7 syllables.

The twilight moves in  
Evening settles on the sea  
A fish leaps upward  
The sound of its splash muted  
By the thick blanketing fog.



## LESSON PLAN 10

Topic: Color Poem

Objective: Individual poem on a color

Language Element: Nouns, adjectives, comparisons, metaphor

Procedure:

1. Read some of the poems from Mary O'Neill's *Hailstones and Halibut Bones*. The poems in this book are written about one color. The following is an example of a color poem.

White is a ghost,  
That often scares.  
White is a kitten,  
Rolled up in a chair.

White is the bedsheet  
On which I sleep.  
White is the blossom,  
That smells so sweet.

2. Have a couple of the O' Neill poems written on a chart. Go over the format of the poems and point out the comparisons and metaphors.

3. Have the class do a collaboration poem. Brainstorm ideas for an elected color.

4. Ask students to look at their box of crayons. Have them pick a crayon from the box. Ask students to write out a list of things (nouns) that are the color they have chosen. Also have students write a sentence about the nouns.

5. Have students write their poem and illustrate.

6. Students can read their poems to the class and write them on 5x7 index cards for their poetry booklets.

Note: Koch's *Wishes, Lies, and Dreams: Teachings Children to Write Poetry* has some good input on writing color poems.

## Appendix B

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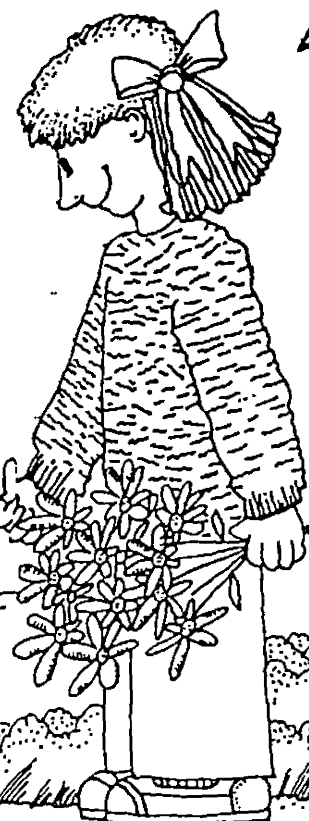
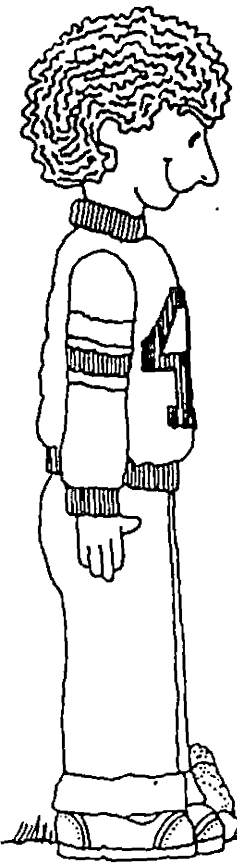


# Two Line Rhyme

Did you know that you can make a poem out of only two lines?  
A two-line poem is called a *couplet*.  
Here is an example of a *couplet*:

*There was a little guinea-pig,  
Who, being little, was not big!*

Couplets are easy  
to write.



Here are some words that rhyme with *cat*: *mat fat hat pat rat*  
Here is the first line of a *couplet*:

*Have you seen my little cat?*

Can you write a second line? \_\_\_\_\_

Choose one of the words that rhymes with *cat*.  
Use that word as the last word of the poem.  
Fill in the rest of the second line.  
Now you have written a *couplet*!

Make this into a *couplet* by adding another line. Make the last word rhyme with *sound*.

*They fall, they fall, without a sound —*

\_\_\_\_\_

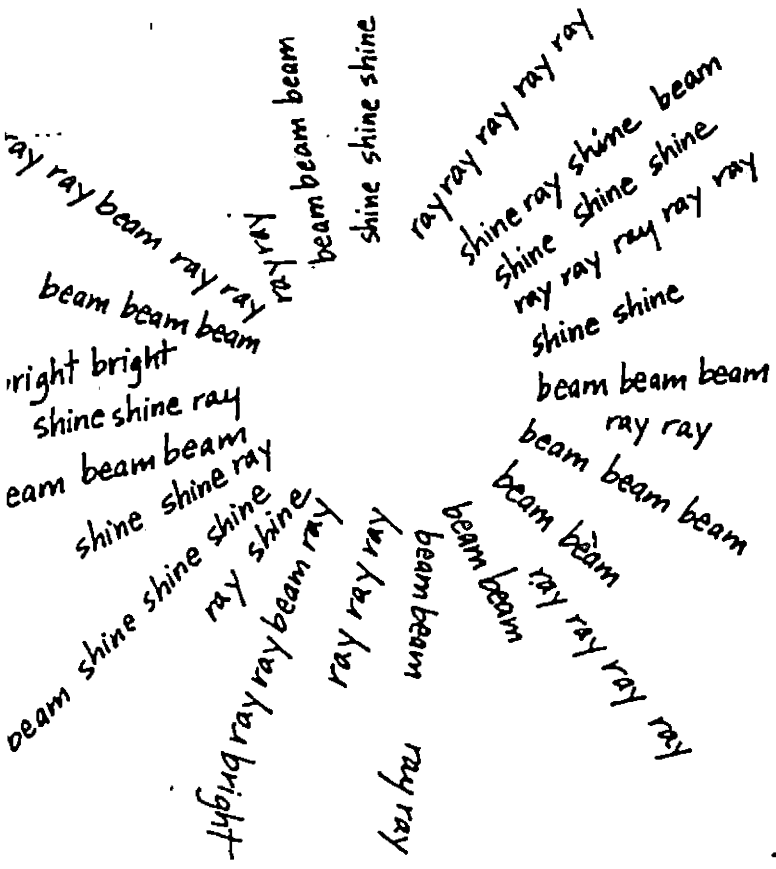
Now make up some *couplets* of your own. Make the last word in the first line rhyme with the last word in the second line.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

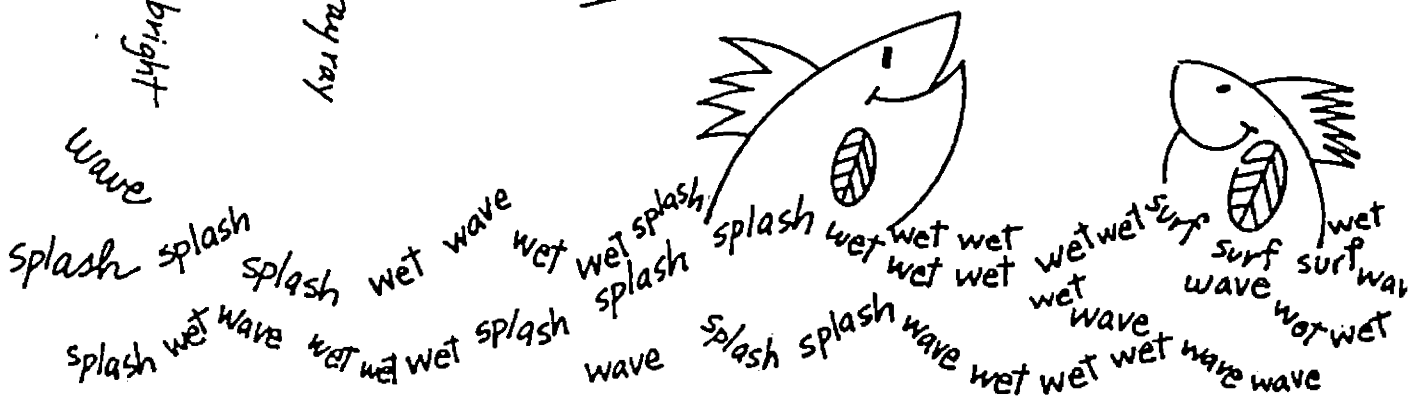
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# CONCRETE POEMS

This picture is made out of words. It is called a *concrete poem*. In a concrete poem the words are arranged in a way that helps describe the idea of the poem.

Here is another concrete poem.



Try writing some concrete poems of your own. Think of things with simple outline shapes, or think of simple actions.

Your five senses are: seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling or touching. You can use your five senses to write a poem. Here's how—

You've probably been to one of these places:  
A movie theater The beach A ball game The zoo A forest

Choose the place you remember best or think up a place of your own. Now, close your eyes and pretend you are there.

Think of all the things you can see there. What colors can you see? What shapes? (Make a list of two or three things you can see.)

\_\_\_\_\_

Think of all the things you can hear there. What sounds are around you? (Make a list of two or three sounds you can hear.)

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you smell hamburgers? Flowers? (List two or three things you might smell.)

\_\_\_\_\_

What can you taste? Are the things you can taste the same as the things you can smell? (List two or three things you can taste.)

\_\_\_\_\_

Is it hot or cold? Can you feel anything rough or smooth? (List two or three things you can feel or touch.)



Here is a poem that was written from lists like the ones you just made.

The Beach

*I see the white seagulls flying,  
I hear the loud crash of waves,  
I smell suntan oil,  
I taste salt water,  
I feel the hot, hot sun coming down, down, down.  
I know summer is here!*

Try writing a poem of your own. Go back over the lists you made and circle the words or ideas you like best. Try to make your readers know just how it feels to be at the place you are describing. You can make your poem longer or shorter if you wish, and it doesn't have to rhyme.

(title) \_\_\_\_\_

I see \_\_\_\_\_

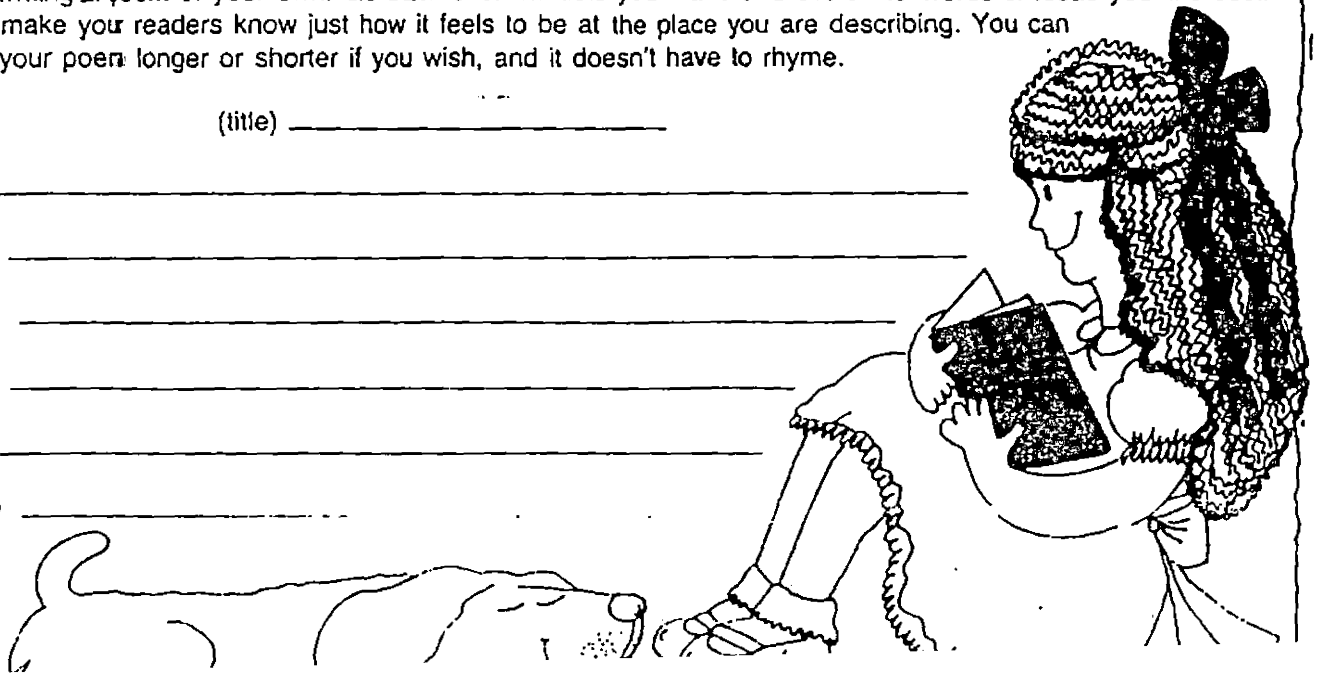
I hear \_\_\_\_\_

I smell \_\_\_\_\_

I taste \_\_\_\_\_

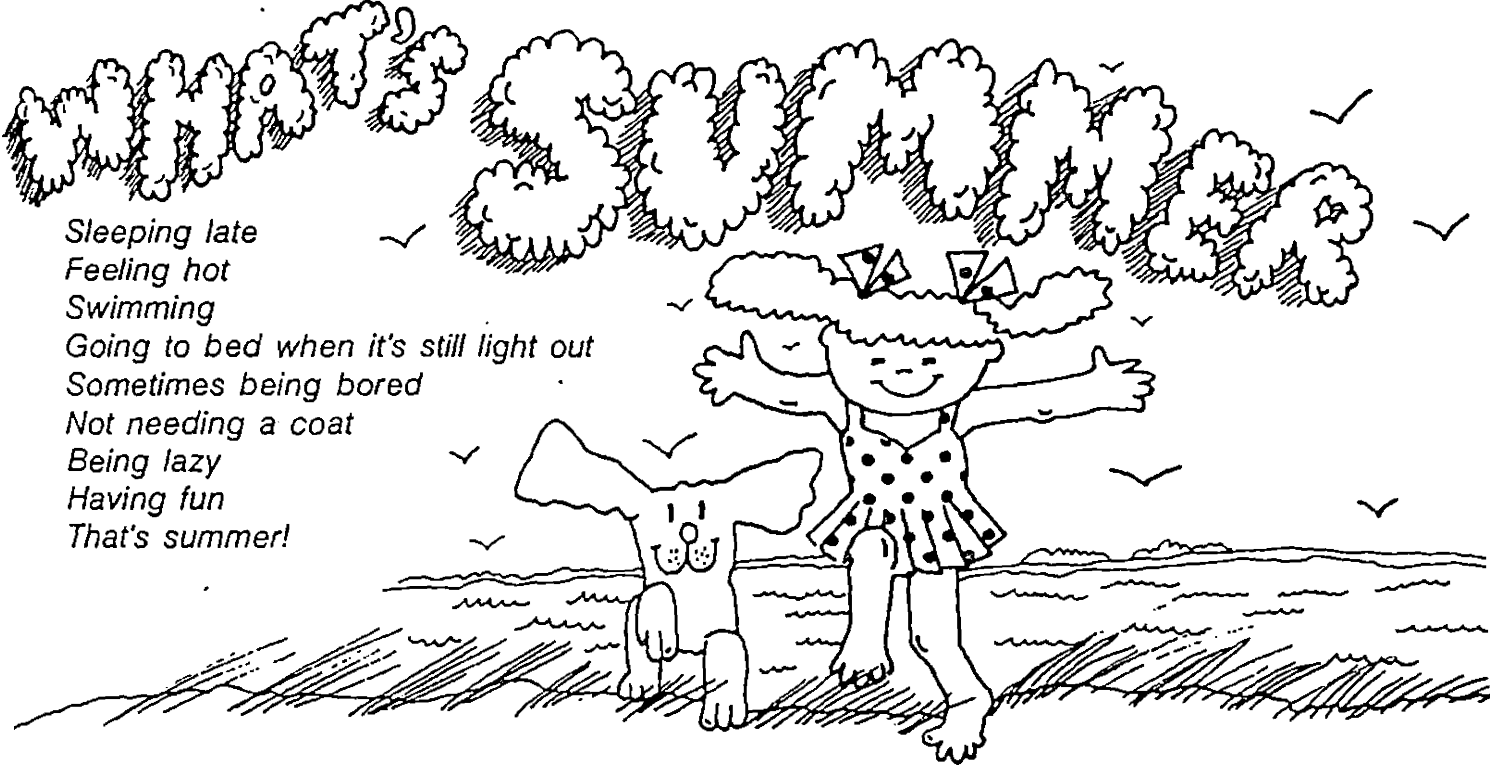
I feel \_\_\_\_\_

I know \_\_\_\_\_



### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Here is a poem about summer. The poem tells what the poet thinks about when you say the word, *summer*.



Sleeping late  
 Feeling hot  
 Swimming  
 Going to bed when it's still light out  
 Sometimes being bored  
 Not needing a coat  
 Being lazy  
 Having fun  
 That's summer!

Now you be the poet. What do you think of when you hear these words?

sleep a friend spring a grandmother the sky a baby snow Sunday

Choose one, or pick a word of your own. Use the word as your title. Start your poem with the word, *What's*, plus the title word, plus a question mark. Write down at least five things the word makes you think of. (You can write down more than five.) End your poem with the word *That's* plus the title word of the poem.

If you want to, draw a picture to illustrate your poem.

Write your poem here.

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# CINQUAIN

## A Poem in 5 Easy Steps

A cinquain is a special kind of five-line poem. Here is a cinquain about a game of tag.

Tag  
Fast, fun.  
Running, dodging, laughing.  
Okay, you caught me.  
I'm IT!

You can write a cinquain. Here's how.

1. What will you write about? Give your topic in one word. (It can be dogs, snow, TV, spaghetti — or anything you choose.) \_\_\_\_\_

Write your topic word here.

2. Think of two words about your topic. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Think of three "ing" words that fit your topic. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Write down any four words about your topic. (They don't have to make a sentence.) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Think of one or two words that would make a good ending for your poem. \_\_\_\_\_

Now put these five steps together to make your own cinquain.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

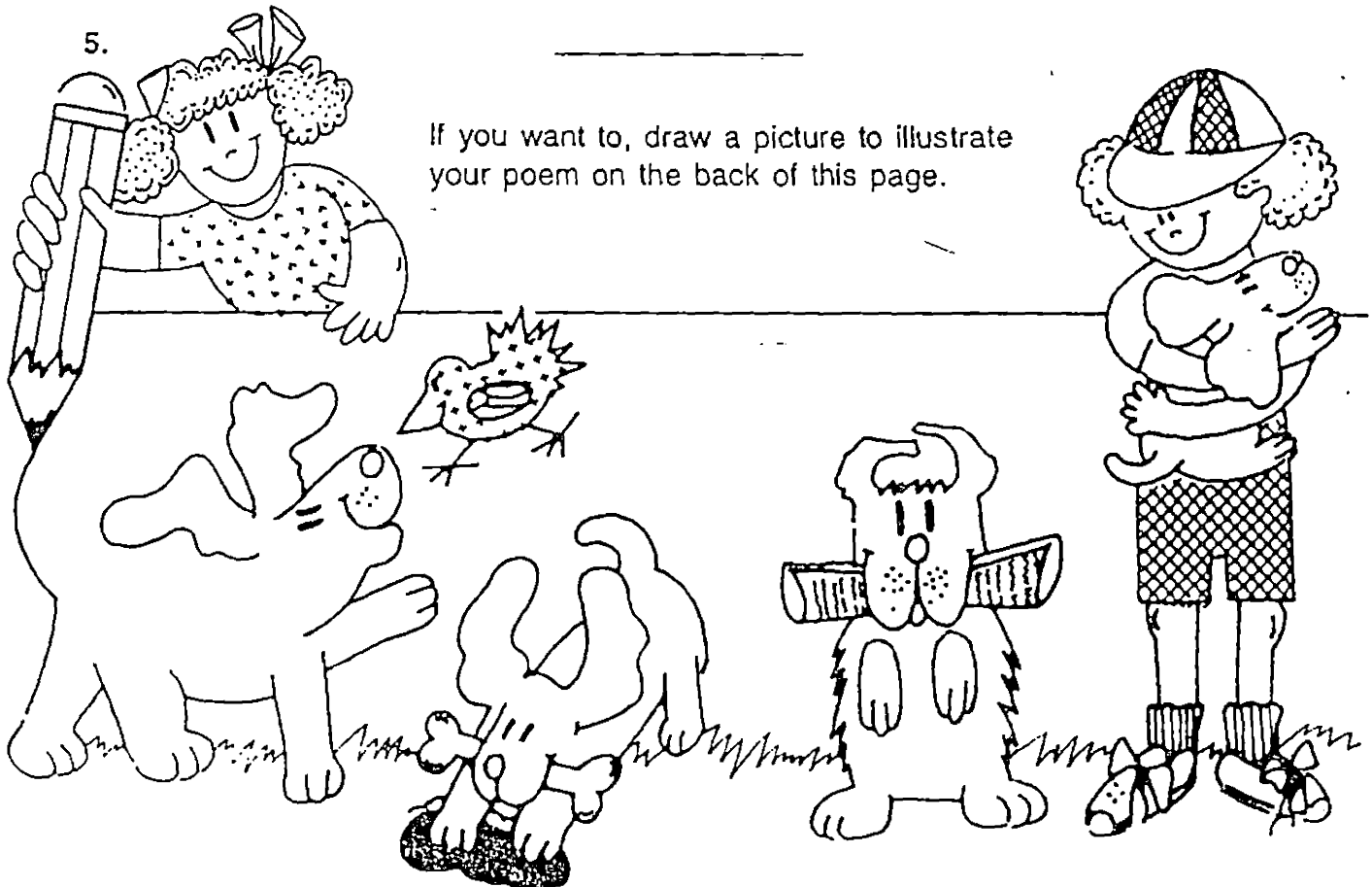
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3. \_\_\_\_\_

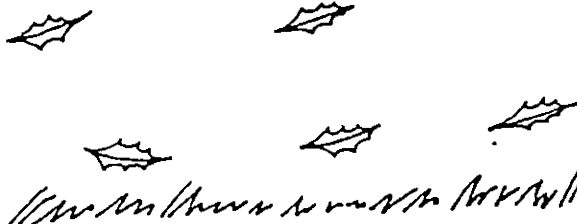
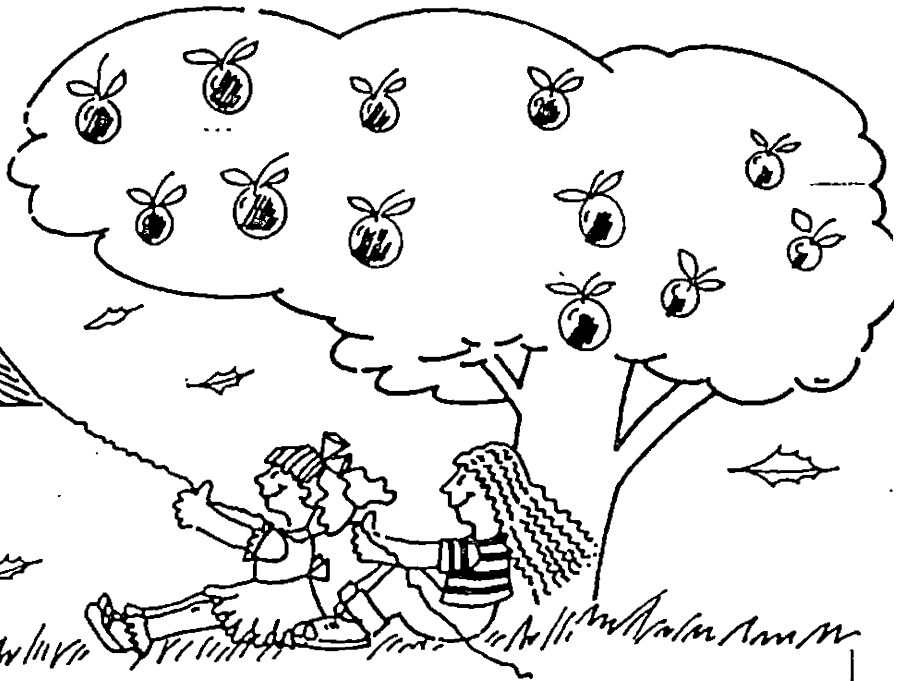
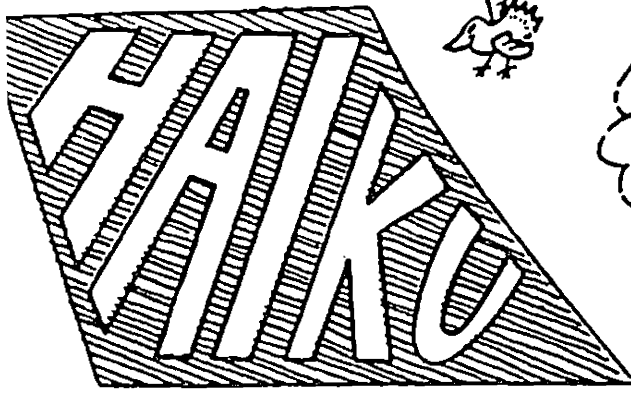
4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

If you want to, draw a picture to illustrate your poem on the back of this page.







A Haiku is a poem with only three lines. The first line has five syllables. The second line has seven syllables. The third line has five syllables. A Haiku poem is usually about nature. Here is an example.

*An old silent pond.  
A frog jumps into the pond.  
Splash, silence again.*

Write your own Haiku. It's not hard, and they come out sounding nice. Look out the window. Look at a picture of an outdoor scene. Or just think about a place you have been that you liked.

1. Write words that tell what you are looking at. Use five syllables.

2. Write a sentence that tells one thing you see happening. Use seven syllables.

3. Write words that describe just one small part of the scene. Use five syllables.

Make sure you have the right number of syllables.  
Make sure you like what you wrote. If you don't like some words, change them.  
Now put your three lines together. Give them a title.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Here is another example:

*Autumn  
A dark cloudy sky.  
An autumn leaf hurries by.  
Scarlet against gray.*

# Stanislaus County Department of Education



B-7

801 County Center Three Court-Modesto, CA 95355-Tel.209-571-6575

JOHN B. ALLARD-SUPERINTENDENT

COLLABORATIONS ARE WONDERFUL "INSTANT" POEMS THAT STUDENTS CAN PUT TOGETHER EITHER ALONE OR WITH A GROUP. GIVE STUDENTS PLENTY OF THINKING TIME!

COLLABORATION TOPICS:

FRIENDSHIP

EMOTIONS

SEASONS

FAVORITE FOOD

FAVORITE PLACES

ANIMALS

**BROTHERHOOD**



COLLABORATIONS!!

# Stanislaus County Department of Education



B-87

801 County Center Three Court-Modesto, CA 95355-Tel.209-571-6575

JOHN B. ALLARD-SUPERINTENDENT

---

## SHORT VERSE QUESTIONS

BY

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### EXAMPLES:

HOW OLD ARE YOU?

WHY, I JUST TURNED TWO!

WHAT DID YOU HAVE FOR LUNCH?

HAWAIIAN PUNCH.

# Stanislaus County Department of Education



801 County Center Three Court-Modesto, CA 95355-Tel.209-571-6575  
JOHN B. ALLARD-SUPERINTENDENT

## Sestinas

This wonderful form of poetry was invented by the troubadour poet, Arnaut Daniel. Lines have to be made up to fit certain words which appear in a predetermined order at the ends of the lines.

There is a mystery.

House near the Mississippi.

You are a fish.

You live in the ocean.

Your father doesn't have transportation.

King Kong the beast.

Roses are red.

Violets are pink.

Sugar is purple.

Your nose is aquamarine.

Her teeth are blue.

Her eyes are green.

\_\_\_\_\_ pink

\_\_\_\_\_ aquamarine

\_\_\_\_\_ green

\_\_\_\_\_ blue

\_\_\_\_\_ purple

\_\_\_\_\_ red

# Stanislaus County Department of Education



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JOHN B. ALLARD-SUPERINTENDENT

(Fill in the blank spaces poem #1)

Take the useful \_\_\_\_\_ for all \_\_\_\_\_  
 And for red \_\_\_\_\_  
 And even for blue \_\_\_\_\_

I want to put an end to \_\_\_\_\_  
 And \_\_\_\_\_

I want a new  
 Beginning for \_\_\_\_\_  
 And I want to see \_\_\_\_\_ blossoms  
 In \_\_\_\_\_  
 Or see \_\_\_\_\_ weather  
 And I want to tell you that  
 I like the \_\_\_\_\_  
 I even like what  
 Happens to be \_\_\_\_\_  
 Because all this will  
 Help me learn to \_\_\_\_\_

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The world's largest \_\_\_\_\_  
The latest in \_\_\_\_\_  
Capitol of the \_\_\_\_\_  
One huge \_\_\_\_\_,  
where people drive \_\_\_\_\_  
and everyone is from \_\_\_\_\_

This is the \_\_\_\_\_  
that lost its \_\_\_\_\_  
This is a place that \_\_\_\_\_ built  
Freeways, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_,  
where \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_  
combine with \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_  
to be \_\_\_\_\_ near the \_\_\_\_\_

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B-12



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(blank poem #2 as images spoken through a musical instrument)

My words go  
through this \_\_\_\_\_ (percussion, reed, or brass)

My speech is \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

My brain composes \_\_\_\_\_

But it's a \_\_\_\_\_ kind of music

My breath circles \_\_\_\_\_

And my fingers

Are turning into \_\_\_\_\_

Listen to my song the way

You would listen to a \_\_\_\_\_

Then it should make you feel \_\_\_\_\_

To you this might seem to be just noise

But to me it's just \_\_\_\_\_

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Again, any of the preceding variations can be distributed according to whatever a classroom teacher considers these student poets are capable of in terms of their development.

So, at this point, it's possible to "chalk up the board" with what the poet calls the skeleton of a piece of poetry. It can be simple--for example:

I used to be \_\_\_\_\_  
but, now, I'm  
just \_\_\_\_\_

Or try this with them. Tell them each to fantasize that they are some well-known media personality (soldier, politician, sports figure, television hero, artist, musician, super hero, cartoon character)--anything each of them individually chooses to be.

Once again, depending upon the mood swing of the class, you may feel like elaborating--for example:

I wish I was \_\_\_\_\_  
So I could \_\_\_\_\_  
And everybody would want me to \_\_\_\_\_

Maybe try this one using line breaks--for example:

I am \_\_\_\_\_  
I want \_\_\_\_\_  
I secretly need  
To \_\_\_\_\_  
I get mad when  
\_\_\_\_\_  
People have to realize  
That I am the one  
Who \_\_\_\_\_



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## The Limerick

After exploring the epigram and having experience with rhyme scheme, the student will enjoy the limerick. The limerick contains no additional rhyme sounds to remember. It has an additional fifth line. However, this additional line often greatly enhances the enjoyment and effectiveness of the limerick.

There was an old man who supposed	A
That the street door was partially closed;	A
But some very large rats	B
Ate his coats and his hats,	B
While that futile old gentleman dozed.	A

There was an old man with a beard	___
Who said, "It is just as I feared.	___
Two owls and a hen	___
Four larks and a wren	___
Have all built their nest in my beard."	___

The students will enjoy writing limericks and perhaps be able to locate several of historical interest. Try having them illustrate their own limericks.

Try some of your own!

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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## DIAMANTE

A large diamond shape with a horizontal line across its center. Inside the diamond, there are seven horizontal lines, each followed by a comma, arranged in a diamond pattern: one line at the top, two lines below it, three lines below that, one line at the bottom, two lines above it, and one line at the top.

noun  
adjectives  
ing words  
nouns  
ing words  
adjectives  
noun

Example:

Country,  
Beautiful, peaceful,  
Calming, resting, flowering,  
Shade, trees, dust, smog,  
Rushing, hurrying, working,  
Busy, ugly,  
City

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## EPIGRAMS

Epigrams have rhyme schemes. They look like this:

Remember the fights,	A	Roses are red	A
Remember the fun,	B	Violets are blue	B
Remember the homework	C	Hogs are hogs	C
That was never done.	B	And you are you	B

How a minority	A	Candy	A
Reaching majority	A	Is dandy	A
Seizing authority	A	But meat	B
Hates a minority	A	Is neat	B

What are the rhyme schemes of these epigrams?

I had six honest serving men,  
They taught me all I knew;  
Their names were Where and What and When,  
And Why and How and Who.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I wish I were a grapefruit  
And here's the reason why  
When you came to eat me  
I'd squirt you in the eye.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Multiplication is vexation  
Division is as bad  
The rule of Three, it puzzles me  
And fractions drive me mad.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## Haiku

Haiku--usually refers to nature

3 lines--17 syllables

5 syllables in first line

7 syllables in second line

5 syllables in third line

Season named or referred to

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Tanka

5 lines--31 syllables

First 3 lines--Haiku

Lines 4 and 5--7 syllables each

Answer or augment thought or picture expressed in Haiku

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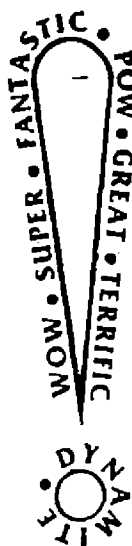
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# CONCRETE POETRY: Verse with Shape



DO  
ESA  
TEAR  
DROPS  
HEDIN S  
ORROWO  
UTWEIGHA  
TEARDROP  
SHED IN  
JOY?

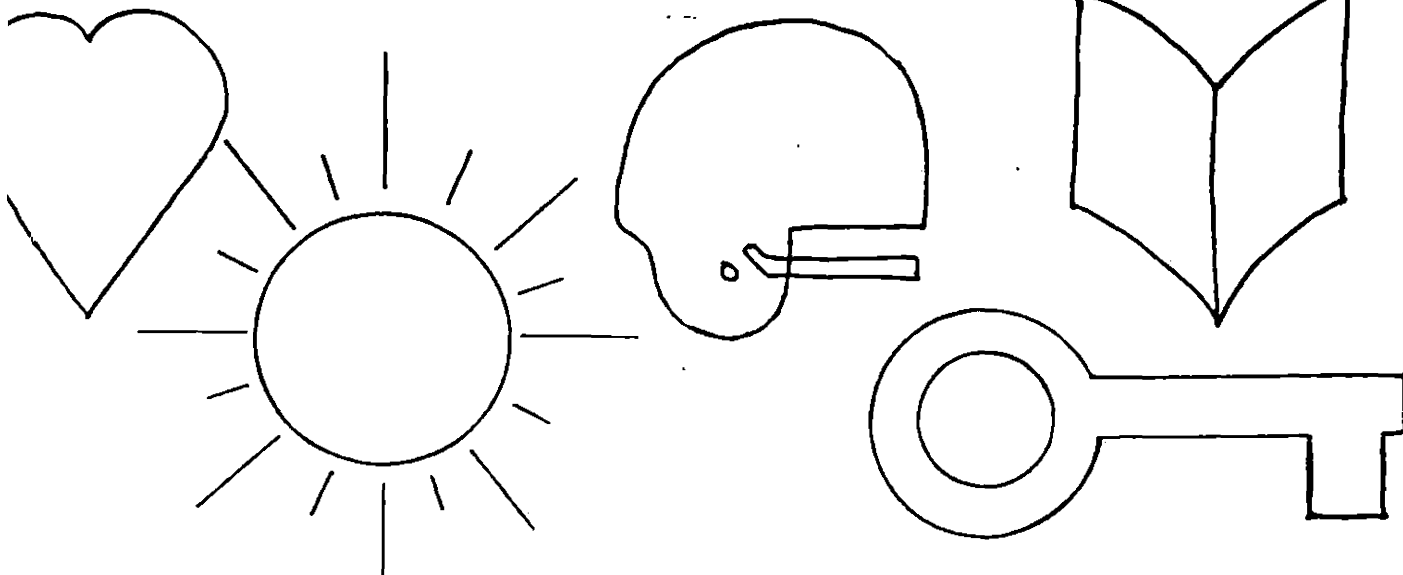
Point Scored

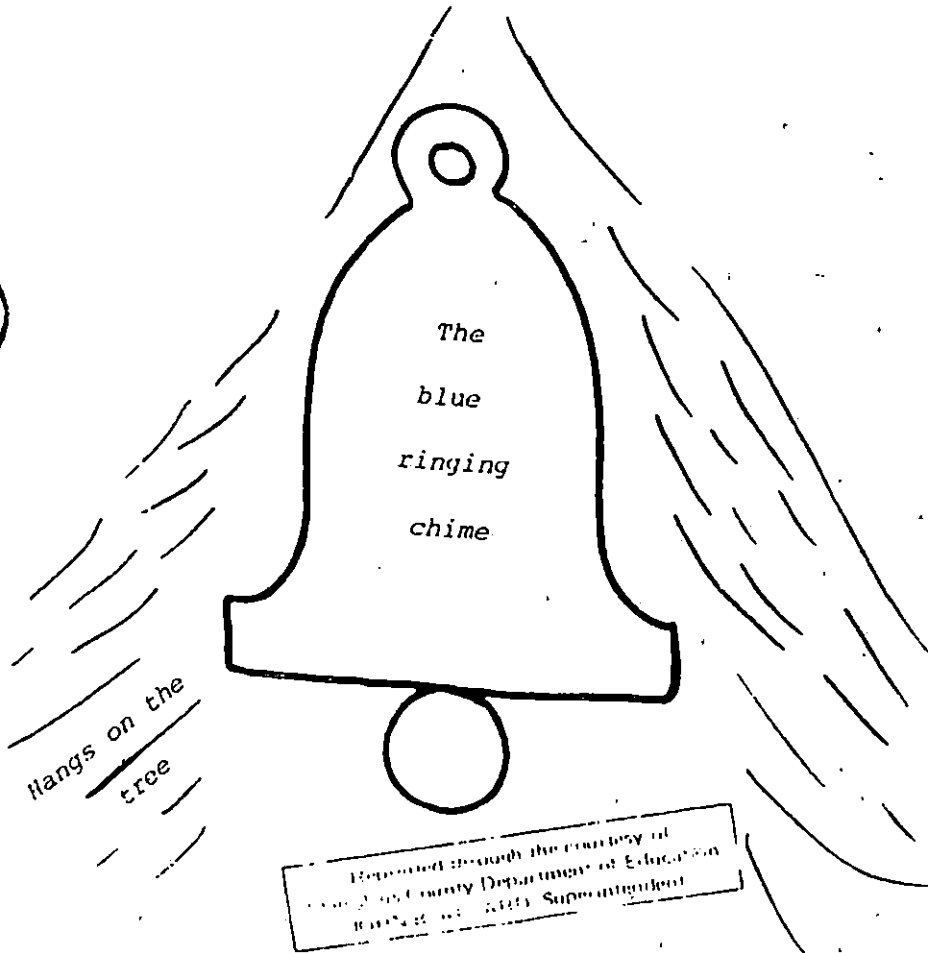
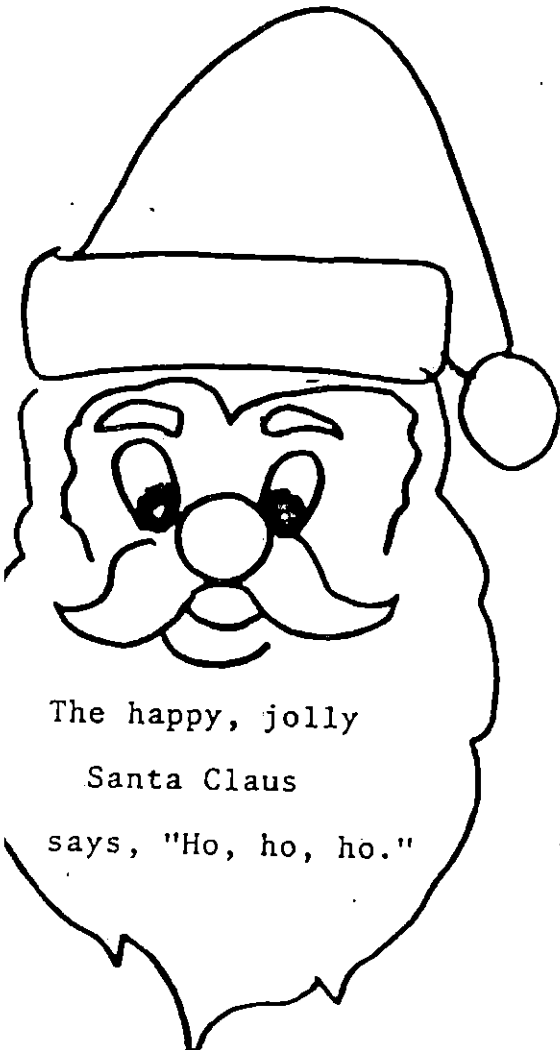
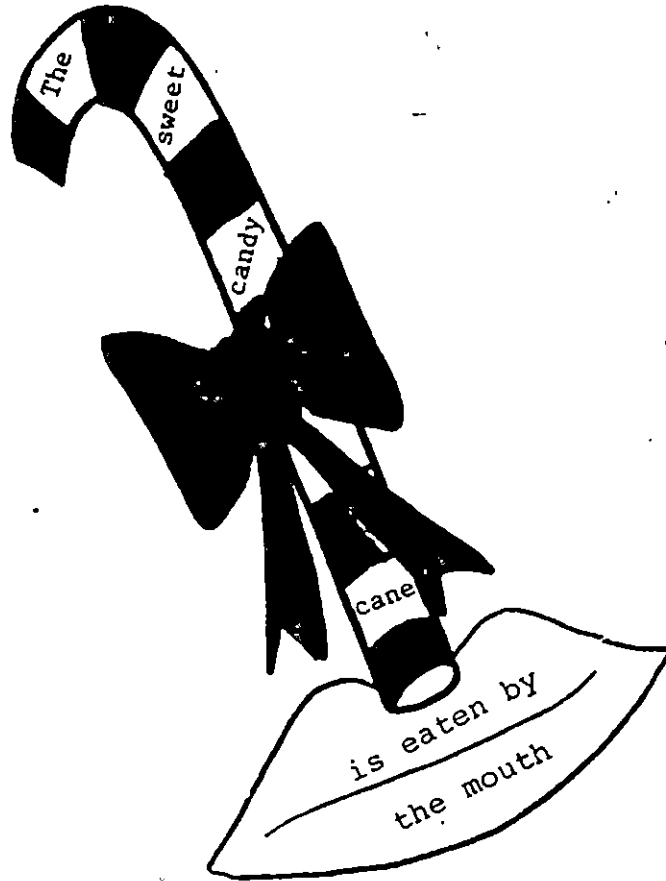
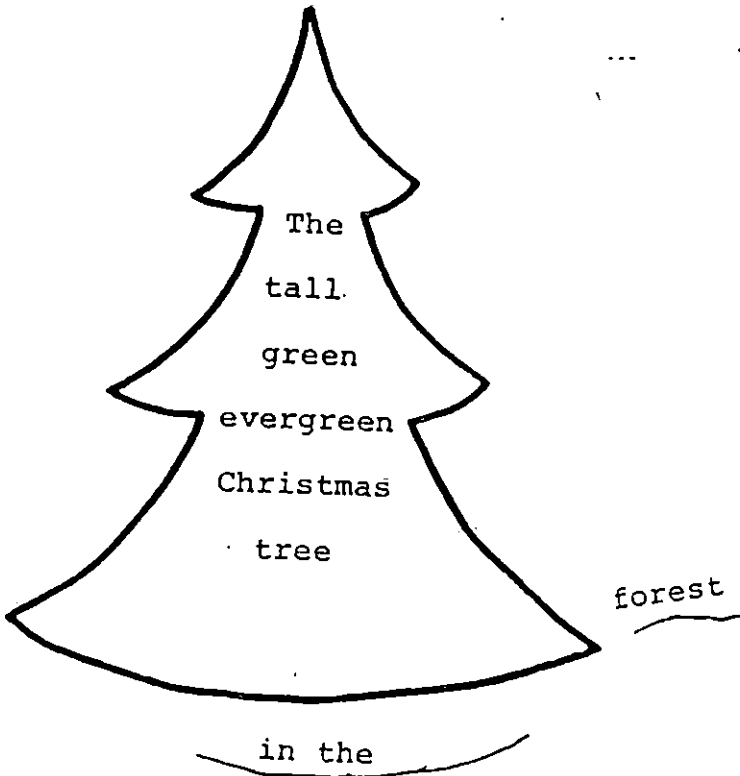
up  
against  
the  
backboard  
...almost...bullooi...  
leaning...looping  
in

The three examples above are concrete poems – picture poems made out of letters and words. The words of a concrete poem can either outline the shape of an object, fill in the shape, or trace the movement of an object. Before even reading the poem the reader can get a visual impression from the shape in which the words are arranged. For instance, the first poem above is arranged in the shape of an exclamation point; the second one is a teardrop; the third traces the path of a basketball at the net.

Some concrete poets use complete sentences in their poems; others use single words. The first and third examples above are word poems. The second is a sentence poem.

To write your own concrete poem, begin by jotting down the first words and phrases that come to mind. Then choose words from your list to expand into an idea for a poem. Your poem can consist of a single word or several sentences. It doesn't have to rhyme or have a certain number of words or syllables. After the poem is written, draw an outline of a shape that relates to the subject and arrange the words within or along the outline. Or use one of the shapes below as your outline.





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## POET OF THE MONTH

Each month a different poet's work would be looked at, and a few times a week one of his or her poems would be read during "listening" time. While studying a particular artist, his or her picture would be hung on the wall and as many appropriate books of theirs as can be found would be placed around the scarecrow in the reading center. Poets that might be included are: Elizabeth Coatsworth, Aileen Fisher, Karla Kuskin, Myra Cohn Livingston, David McCord, Eve Merriam, A.A. Milne, Ogden Nash, and Shel Silverstein.

## Appendix C



## Resources

Arbuthnot, May Hill, and Shelton L. Root, Jr. eds. Time for Poetry, 3rd gen. ed., ill. by Arthur Paul. Scott, Foresman, 1968. There are more than seven hundred poems in this newest edition of a favorite collection ranging from Mother Goose to T.S. Eliot. The discussion of reading poetry to children and using poetry in verse choirs and the notes throughout the text are invaluable for adults.

Arbuthnot, May Hill, and Zena Sutherland eds. Children and Books 4th ed. Scott, Foresman, 1964. There are three chapters in this anthology about poetry. Included are many poems, notes about the poets, and an extensive annotated bibliography.

California Poets In The Schools Publications:

My Eyes All Out of Breath, 1981

All of a Sudden I am One of Them, 1982

Two Hearts the Color of Flesh, 1983

This Poem Knows You, 1984

Forgotten Languages, 1985

Under the Bridge of Silence, 1986

Thread Winding in the Loom, 1987

These poetry anthologies from CPITS give you the students' own words, visions, landscapes, thoughts, and feelings, often in remarkable and startling ways. They also include poetry by poet-teachers and short essays on the state of the art. They are available at \$5 per copy. The address: CPITS, 2845 24th Street, San Francisco, CA 94110.

Gensler, Kinneeth and Nyna Myhart, The Poetry Connection: An Anthology of Contemporary Poems with Ideas to Stimulate Children's Writing. Teachers & Writers Collaborative, 84 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011. 1978. \$4

This is the most useful current text for a poetry writing curriculum. An excellent double anthology of poems by adults and by children, it is cross indexed with chapters of practical teaching approaches: sound and shape of a poem, the senses, memory, fantasy, dream, persona, animals, conversation, feelings, living and dying, etc.

Hughes, Rosalind, ed. Let's Enjoy Poetry: An Anthology of Children's Verse For Grades K to Grade III With Suggestions for Teaching. Houghton Mifflin, 1967.

- Hughes, Rosalind. Let's Enjoy Poetry: An Anthology of Children's Verse for Grades 4, 5, and 6 With Suggestions for Teaching. Houghton Mifflin, 1967. The above books by Hughes are a delightful collection of poems with teaching suggestions. Many are excellent for choral reading.
- Koch, Kenneth. Wishes, Lies, and Dreams: Teaching Children to Write Poetry Chelsea House, 1970. This book gives Koch's experience in teaching children to write poetry. He relates methods that have worked for him and gives the details for lessons and many examples of students' poems.
- O'Neill, Mary. Hailstones and Halibut Bones, ill. by Leonard Weisgard. Doubleday, 1961. Poems that experiment with words and colors, associating colors with objects, moods, and feelings.
- Sendak, Maurice. Chicken Soup With Rice Scholastic Book Services, 1962. Delightful poems about chicken soup for each month of the year. Children like the rhyme and rhythm and enjoy memorizing these poems.
- Silverstein, Shel. Where the Sidewalk Ends Harper & Row, 1974. Poems and drawings that have proven child-appeal. Many of these poems are humorous.