

Forms of Poetry

Haiku: Abstract Poetry based on conveying emotion rather than thought, using textures, sounds, rhythms, etc. rather than making sense. Haiku is an objective, Japanese short poem based on a nature theme, with three lines consisting of the following number of syllables per line-- five, then seven, then five.

A field of tulips –
Convulsions of vivid hues
Ferried by the breeze

Acrostic: Acrostic poems are special requirement poems. In the case of the Acrostic, the special requirement is that the first letters of each line spell out a word or phrase or name. There are many variations on the acrostic, some of which have their own names and will be discussed below. One could have the key phrase hidden in successive positions down the lines, thereby creating a diagonal. One could use the initial letters of words in successive positions in each line. The possibilities are endless.

Prosing spewing from every lip
Operetta unions, written in solo
Energy of many, sharing love
Tears touching every heart
Rivalry forgotten, visions clear
You and I spreading peace and joy

Cinquain: (sing-KANE) A five-line stanza of syllabic verse, the successive lines containing two, four, six, eight and two syllables. Most cinquain poems consist of a single, 22 syllable stanza, but they can be combined into longer works. A cinquain consists of five lines. The first line has two syllables, the second line has four syllables, the third line has six syllables and the fourth line has eight syllables, the final line has two syllables:

Tucson Rain
The smell
Everyone moves
To the window to look
Work stops and people start talking
Rain came

Free Verse: A fluid form which conforms to no set rules of traditional versification. The free in free verse refers to the freedom from fixed patterns of meter and rhyme

Lento: Written in 2 quatrains (a stanza consisting of 4 lines) with a fixed rhyme scheme. All the FIRST words of the verse should rhyme aaaa, bbbb with the first word of the verse and the END of second and the fourth lines should rhyme with a scheme abcb.

Composed in winter of Two Thousand Five,
Proposed by my dreams, this entire theme,
Exposed now for all to write and have fun,
Supposed to be easy though it doesn't seem.

Two verses of four lines each you will write,
Do rhyme the beginning word in every line,
Pursue to keep last rhymes in line 2 and 4,
Chew your brain a little, you'll do just fine!

Couplet: Two successive lines of poetry, usually of equal length and rhythmic correspondence, with end-words that rhyme.

The weighty seas are rowled from the deeps
In mighty heaps,
And from the rocks' foundations do arise
To kiss the skies.

Traditional: A standard poetry form in which the end of each second and fourth lines rhyme.