

Art and Poetry: Everyday haiku poem

Morning Clusters

Deep orange velvet
cluster in glowing morning.
Petals loving light.

Creative Activity 2

Everyday Haiku Poem

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Deep orange velvet
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Petals loving light.



The poem above about a flower uses a poetry verse-form or structure called a Haiku.

A Haiku is a short poem which has 3 lines. The first line contains 5 syllables, the second 7 syllables and the third 5 syllables again.

You don't need to worry about having exactly that many syllables in each line, the important thing is that each line is short and only essential words are being used. The activity we have included below will help you write a Haiku of your own.

Step 1: Pick a subject

It can be anything from a cat to a hairbrush, a tree to a car – anything at all that interests you and that you can look closely at right now.

Step 2: Observe and describe your object

Look closely at the object and write down any words that you can think of to describe it in the notebook we have supplied. What colour is it? What shape? What is it used for? Does it make any sound? How does it feel if you touch it? Do any memories come to you when looking at it? Try to think of about 20 words. If sentences come to you as well that's great, just write them all down.

Step 3: Lines 1 and 2

For this activity we are just going to use the single words you've written down. Look at all the words you have that describe the subject without telling the reader what the object actually is. In our example the first line is: 'Deep orange velvet' – once the reader knows it is about a flower that makes sense but at first it could be about many things – a cushion even! So, your first 2 lines should show the reader lots of

details about the subject without revealing what it is. Don't worry about the syllables yet, just make each line no more than 5 words each.

Step 4: Line 3

The third line should reveal to the reader what the subject of the poem is, but ideally, without actually naming it. In the third line of our example we use the word 'petals' rather than 'flower' to make clear for the reader what the poem is describing. This is more interesting because it connects the reader to a specific detail of the subject.

Step 5: Syllables

Look back over your poem and read it out aloud. Poetry is a lot about the sound of language and reading it aloud will help you connect to the music and rhythm of the words. This is where the syllables come in. If you really like the poem as it is when you read it aloud you can leave it just as it is. You could also sound out the syllables when you read it, like this:



You can see this Haiku has 5 syllables in the first line, 7 in the second and 5 again in the third. See how many syllables your lines have.

If you want your Haiku to have 5-7-5 syllables you may need to redraft your poem moving words from one line to another or exchange some words you have used for other words from your original list.

You have now finished your very own Haiku!

Once you have exchanged your words, keep reading it out aloud until you are happy with it.

If you enjoyed this process you could try writing another Haiku about a different subject.

Or you could try using your Haiku as inspiration for a short story about your subject. If you wrote sentences to describe your subject at the beginning of the exercise, these could be the start of a short story. Even if you didn't write any sentences at the beginning of the exercise, perhaps you feel like it now? You have had success with your Haiku and this is a good time to ride the wave of inspiration.

Pick the sentence you like best and write that out on another page of your book. Then try and write another sentence that continues on from this. Keep going for as long as you feel like it. The only limit is your imagination!

The notebooks we have supplied are for filling up with your thoughts and drawings. If you fill yours up let the City of Sydney employee know and we'll send you out another one.

We hope you had fun!