

Chinese and Japanese Literature Unit

Haiku (HI-coo)

Haiku is a poetic form and a type of poetry from the Japanese culture. Haiku combines form, content, and language in a meaningful, yet compact form.

Haiku poets write about everyday things. Many themes include nature, feelings, or experiences. Usually they use simple words and grammar.

The most common form for Haiku is three short lines. The first line usually contains five (5) syllables, the second line seven (7) syllables, and the third line contains five (5) syllables. Haiku doesn't rhyme.

A Haiku must "paint" a mental image in the reader's mind. This is the challenge of Haiku - to put the poem's meaning and imagery in the reader's mind in ONLY 17 syllables over just three (3) lines of poetry!

To write a Haiku:

First - Choose a theme to write about. For ex. seasons, plants, feelings, sports, animals

Second – Compile a list of words that describe your idea. Use Dictionary.com and Thesaurus.com to find your inspiration.

Next – Write some ideas that give your theme meaning and imagery. (Think about color, texture, size, emotions, moods, sound, sights, smell, taste and more.)

Now – Begin to work with the syllables to form your poem

Finally – Put them all together and create your own Haiku!

Assignment: Create two Haikus about any subject. Write the poems using a Word document. Save as Haiku1 and Haiku2. Upload them in the student upload area.

Save them in a new folder marked "Poetry" in your Z:drive Sophomore English folder. We will be adding various poetry types throughout the year.