



Writing Poetry

SAMPLES & TEMPLATES
FOR 5 TYPES OF POEMS





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Haiku

To be a haiku, a poem:

- ✓ Must have exactly 17 syllables
- ✓ Must have 5 syllables each in the first and third lines
- ✓ Must have 7 syllables in the second line
- ✓ Should create an impression or a mood
- ✓ Often focuses on nature or a season
- ✓ Does not need to rhyme

Examples of Haiku Poems

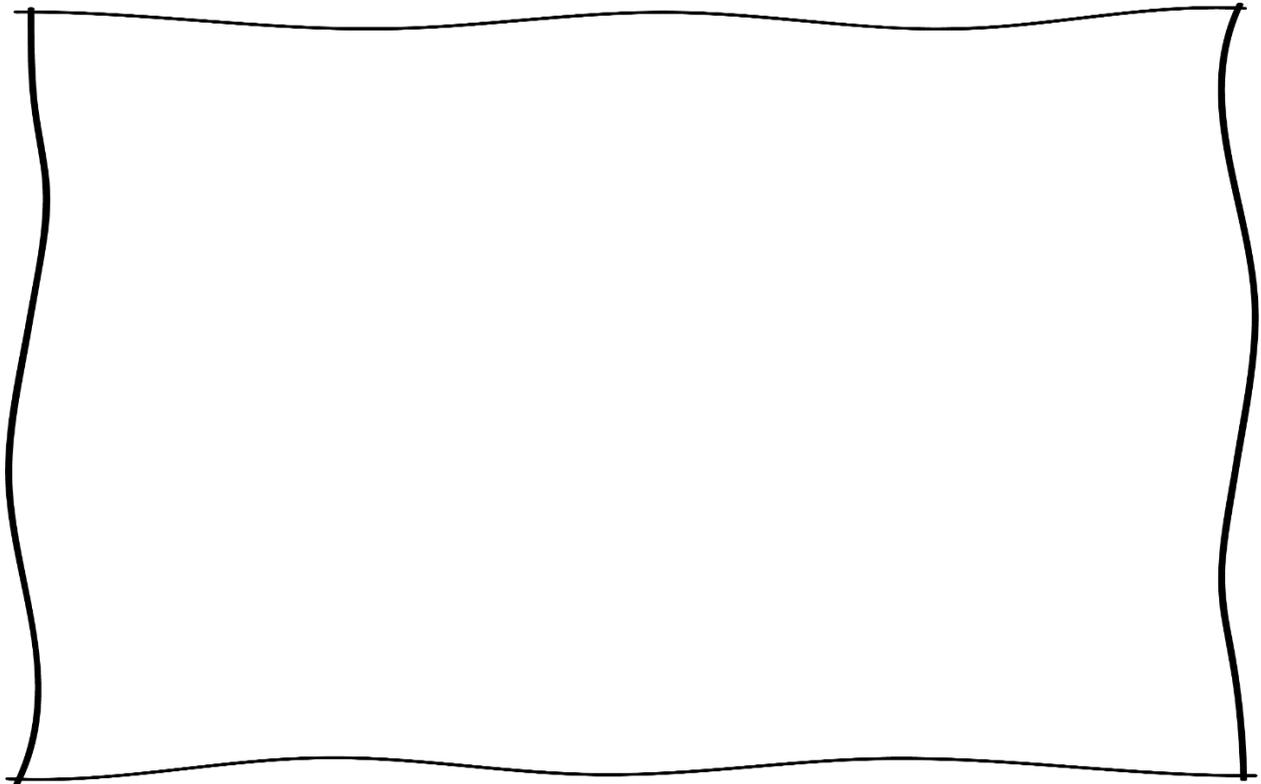
Temple bells die out.
The fragrant blossoms remain.
A perfect evening!
-Matsuo Basho

An old silent pond . . .
A frog jumps into the pond,
splash! Silence again.
-Matsuo Basho

In the twilight rain
these brilliant-hued hibiscus—
A lovely sunset.
-Matsuo Basho

A mountain village
under the piled-up snow
the sound of water.
-Masaoka Shiki

Write & Illustrate a Haiku Poem



Limerick

To be a limerick, a poem:

- ✓ Must have exactly 5 lines
- ✓ Must have the first, second, and fifth lines rhyme
- ✓ Must have the third and fourth lines rhyme
- ✓ Often begins with, "There was a . . ."
- ✓ Often ends the first line with the name of a person or place
- ✓ Is usually humorous and ends with a silly rhyme

Examples of Limerick Poems

There was an Old Man in a tree,
Who was horribly bored by a Bee;
When they said, "Does it buzz?"
He replied, "Yes, it does!
It's a regular brute of a Bee."

-Edward Lear

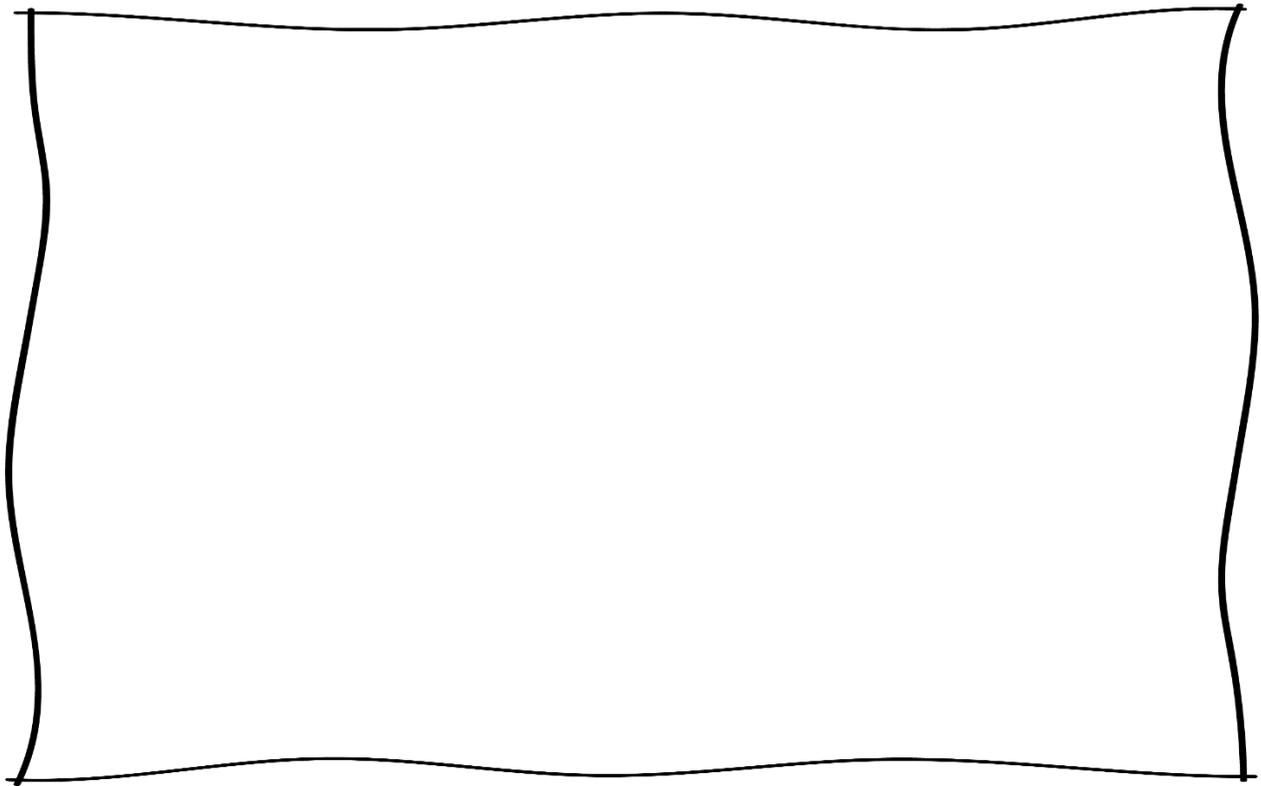
There was a Young Lady whose chin
Resembled the point of a pin;
So she had it made sharp,
and purchased a harp,
And played several tunes with her chin.

-Edward Lear

There was an Old Person of Dover,
Who rushed through a field of blue clover;
But some very large bees
stung his nose and his knees,
So he very soon went back to Dover.

-Edward Lear

Write & Illustrate a Limerick Poem



Acrostic

To be an acrostic, a poem:

- Must be arranged so the first letter of each line form a word or follow in alphabetical order
- Can be of any length
- Does not have to rhyme

Example of an Acrostic Poem

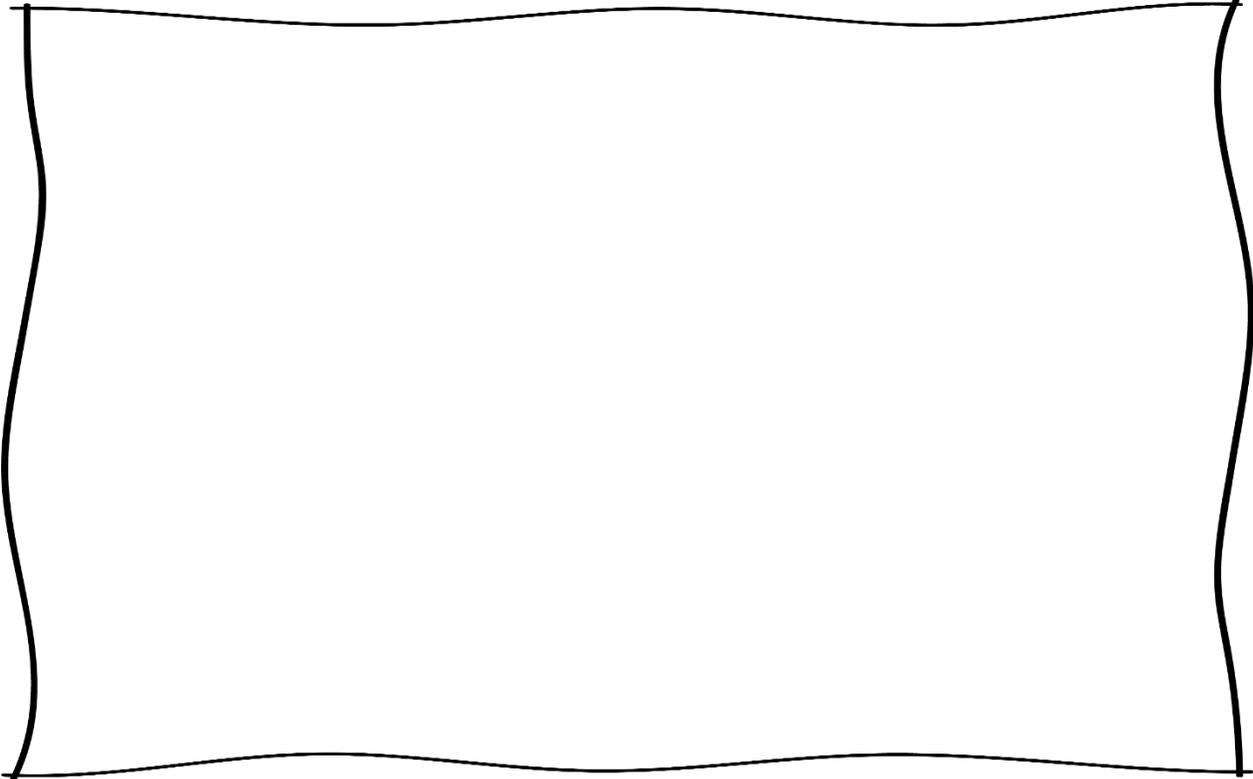
“To Beatrice”

B
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E
Beauty to claim, amongst the fairest place,
Enchanting manner, unaffected grace,
Arch without malice, merry but still wise,
Truth ever on her lips as in her eyes,
Reticent not from sullenness or pride,
Intensity of feeling but to hide,
Can any doubt such being there may be?
Each line I pen, points, matchless maid, to thee!

-Planché

The first letter of each line spells the name of the woman he is writing about, “Beatrice.”

Write & Illustrate an Acrostic Poem



Ballad

To be a ballad, a poem:

- ✓ Must tell a story in verse
- ✓ Will usually have a repeating refrain
- ✓ Will usually have stanzas of four lines each
- ✓ Will often introduce the character and a situation in the first verse

Example of a Ballad Poem

“Casey at the Bat”

The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville Nine that day;
the score stood four to two, with but one inning more to play.
And then when Cooney died at first, and Barrows did the same,
a sickly silence fell upon the patrons of the game.

A straggling few got up to go in deep despair. The rest
clung to that hope which springs eternal in the human breast;
they thought, if only Casey could get but a whack at that -
they'd put up even money, now, with Casey at the bat.

But Flynn preceded Casey, as did also Jimmy Blake,
and the former was a lulu and the latter was a fake,
so upon that stricken multitude grim melancholy sat,
for there seemed but little chance of Casey's getting to the bat.

But Flynn let drive a single, to the wonderment of all,
and Blake, the much despised, tore the cover off the ball;
and when the dust had lifted, and the men saw what had occurred,
there was Jimmy safe at second and Flynn a-hugging third.

Then from five thousand throats and more there rose a lusty yell;
it rumbled through the valley, it rattled in the dell;
it knocked upon the mountain and recoiled upon the flat,
for Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.

There was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped into his place,
there was pride in Casey's bearing and a smile on Casey's face.
And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly doffed his hat,
no stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey at the bat.

Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt;
five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on his shirt.
Then while the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his hip,
defiance gleamed in Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's lip.

And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through the air,
and Casey stood a-watching it in haughty grandeur there.

Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped-

"That ain't my style," said Casey. "Strike one," the umpire said.

From the benches, black with people, there went up a muffled roar,
like the beating of the storm-waves on a stern and distant shore.

"Kill him! Kill the umpire!" shouted someone on the stand;

and it's likely they'd have killed him had not Casey raised his hand.

With a smile of Christian charity great Casey's visage shone;
he stilled the rising tumult; he bade the game go on;
he signaled to the pitcher, and once more the spheroid flew;
but Casey still ignored it, and the umpire said: "Strike two."

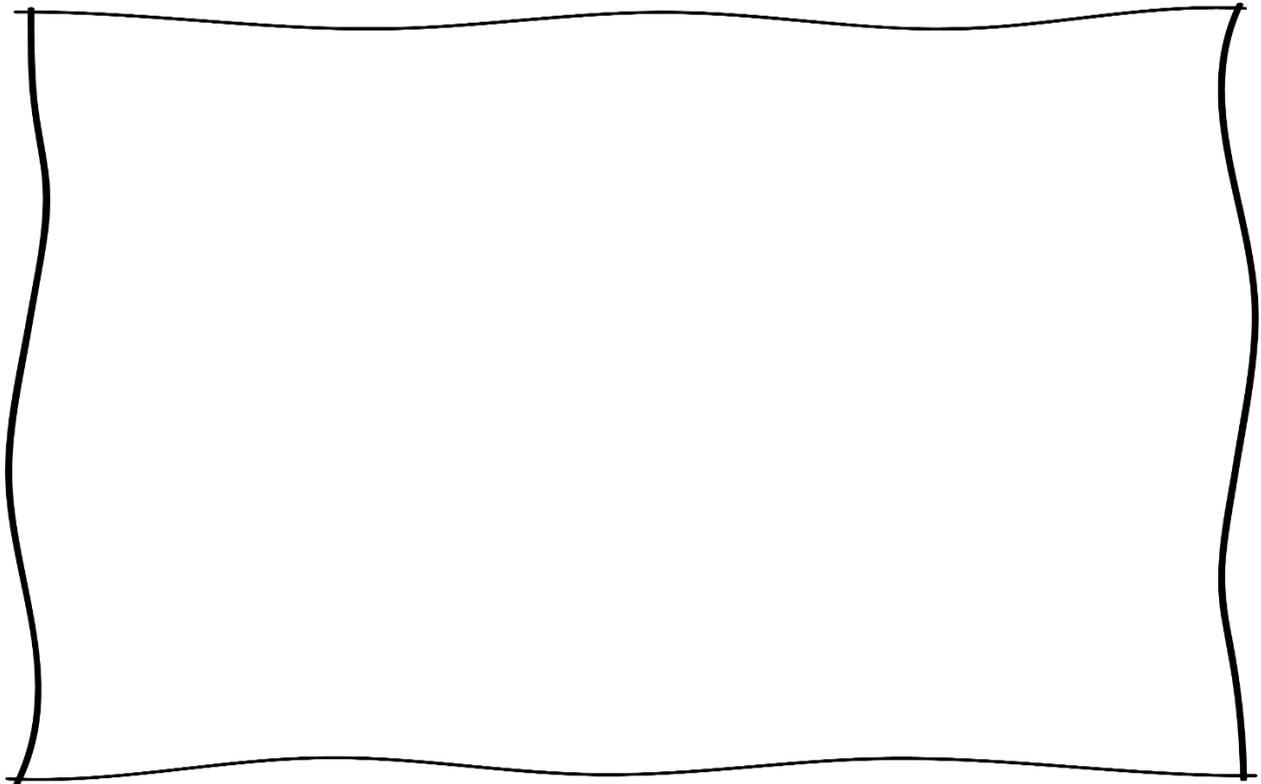
"Fraud!" cried the maddened thousands, and echo answered fraud;
but one scornful look from Casey and the audience was awed.
They saw his face grow stern and cold, they saw his muscles strain,
and they knew that Casey wouldn't let that ball go by again.

The sneer is gone from Casey's lip, his teeth are clenched in hate;
he pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate.
And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it go,
and now the air is shattered by the force of Casey's blow.

Oh, somewhere in this favored land the sun is shining bright;
the band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light,
and somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout;
but there is no joy in Mudville – mighty Casey has struck out.

-Ernest Thayer

Write & Illustrate a Ballad Poem



Cinquain

To be a cinquain, a poem:

- ✓ Must have five lines
- ✓ Must have two syllables in the first and fifth line
- ✓ Must have four syllables in the second line
- ✓ Must have six syllables in the third line
- ✓ Must have eight syllables in the fourth line

Example of Cinquain Poems

“Snow”

Look up . . .
From bleakening hills
Blows down the light, first breath
Of wintry wind . . . look up, and scent
The snow!

-Adelaide Crapsey

“Roma Aeterna”

The sun
Is warm to-day,
O Romulus, and on
Thine olden Palatine the birds
Still sing.

-Adelaide Crapsey

Write & Illustrate a Cinquain Poem

