**Haiku**

### WHAT IS A HAIKU?

A haiku is an unrhymed three-line poem. It is based on a traditional Japanese poetic form. Though there are different ways to write haiku, the traditional pattern in English is to write the first and last lines with five syllables each, and the middle line with seven syllables. In other words, the pattern of syllables looks like this:

Line 1: 5 syllables  
Line 2: 7 syllables  
Line 3: 5 syllables

### HAIKU ABOUT SEASONS

Let’s say that you decide to write your haiku about a season. First you will want to select a season: spring, summer, fall, or winter. I’ve decided to write a haiku about winter, and I know that in the last line I will want to make an observation. I want to say that winter is almost here, but we aren’t quite ready for the snow. Maybe it’s that we haven’t raked the leaves off the front lawn and we need to do it soon before it snows.

I want to say all of this, but I want to do it in a pattern of 5, 7, 5. So I might say something like this:

Winter is coming.  
Snow will be arriving soon.  
We should rake the leaves.

If you count the syllables on your fingers as you read this poem, you will see that the lines have five syllables, seven syllables, and five syllables, just as they should.

**GETTING STARTED WRITING HAIKU**

To begin writing haiku poems, just follow these steps:

1. Select a type of haiku. Decide if you are going to write a seasonal, nature, or other type of haiku.
2. Pick a topic. Select one specific season, item in nature, or something else you are going to write about.
3. Think about what is different about your last line. What observation do you want to make?
4. Start writing.
5. Don’t forget to count the syllables as you read to make sure you’ve got the right pattern.
6. Finally, “center” your poem on the page like the poems in this lesson. When you are all done writing your first haiku, see if you can write another one. And, most importantly, have fun!

<http://www.poetry4kids.com/blog/lessons/how-to-write-a-haiku/>