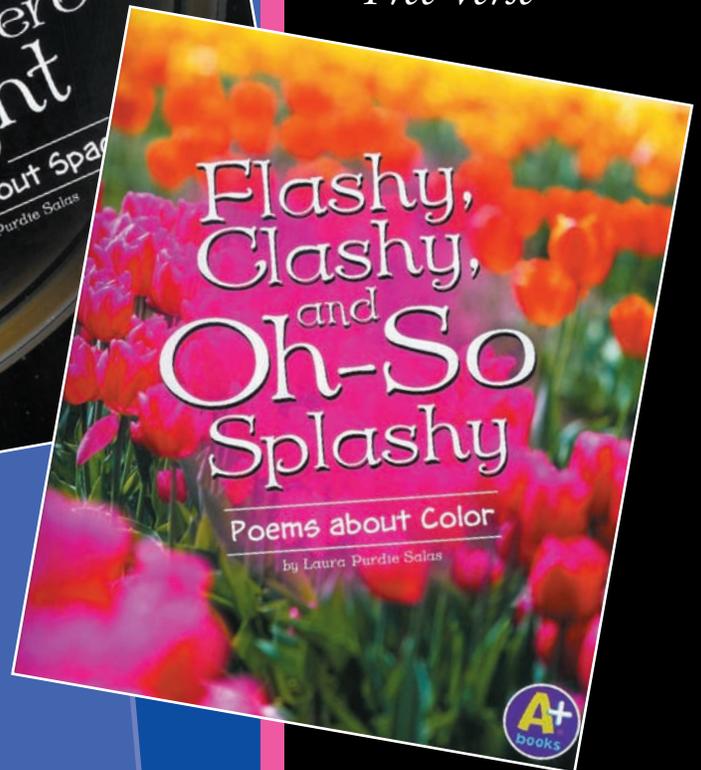
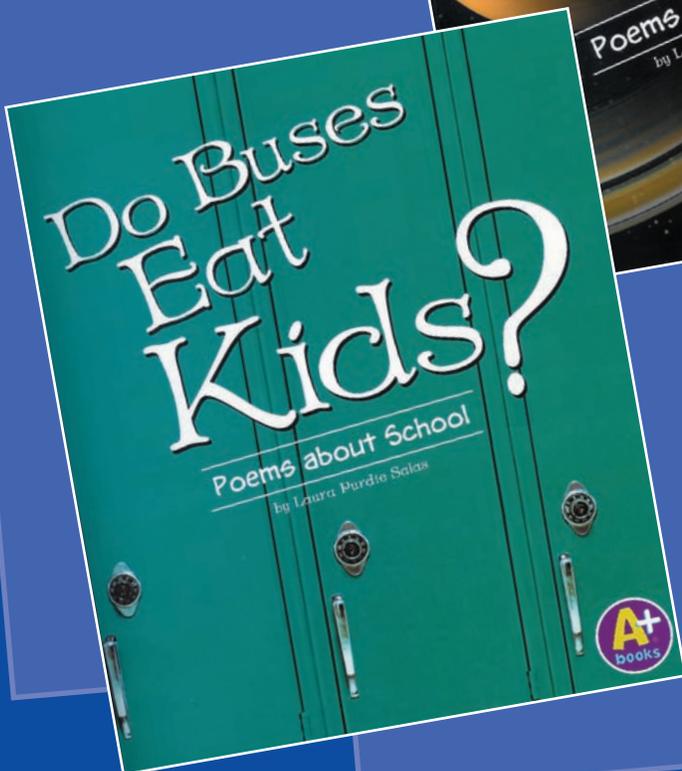
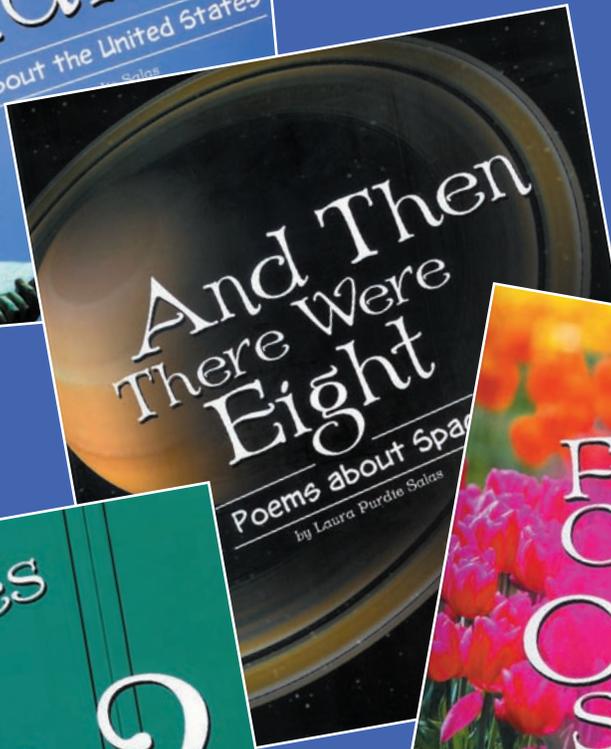
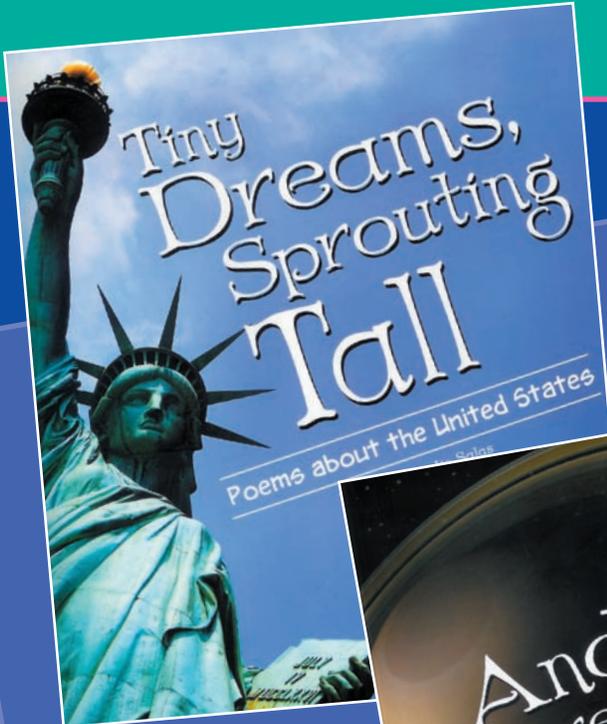


Poetry

Teaching suggestions
and reproducible
activities for reading
and writing poetry



- *Acrostic*
- *Diamante*
- *Limerick*
- *Haiku*
- *Cinquain*
- *Free Verse*

Poetry

Teacher's
Edition

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Published by Red Brick® Learning,

151 Good Counsel Drive, P.O. Box 669, Mankato, Minnesota 56002

<http://www.redbricklearning.com>

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Teachers using Poetry Teacher's Guide may reproduce the blackline master sheets in quantities for classroom use.

Introduction to Poetry

“Do Buses Eat Kids?”

“Flashy, Clashy, and
Oh-So Splashy”

“And Then There
Were Eight”

“Tiny Dreams,
Sprouting Tall”

The Poetry series introduces students to the joy of reading fun, original poetry and the process of writing poetry. Full color photography, differentiated instruction, graphic organizers, and activity sheets support poems about space, the United States, color, and school.

Each lesson teaches a different poetic form and specific literary skills aligned to the twelve national content standards set out by the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association.

Lesson 1 Acrostic
teaches adverbs and adjectives.

Lesson 2 Diamante
teaches alliteration.

Lesson 3 Limerick
teaches rhyme and rhythm.

Lesson 4 Haiku
teaches imagery and personification.

Lesson 5 Cinquain
teaches repetition.

Lesson 6 Free Verse
teaches simile and metaphor.

The Poetry Teacher’s Guide assists teachers in using the poems. Each lesson’s instructional flow initially taps into students’ background knowledge and then focuses on the poetry’s genre and literary skills. Students are then introduced to the poems. They read and enjoy, look closely at the poem’s structure and vocabulary, and use the poems as a model for their own writing. Differentiated instruction is provided to students of varying learning styles, backgrounds, and abilities. Reproducible activity sheets and rubrics are provided for easy classroom preparation, teacher and self assessment.

Academic Content Standards for the English Language Arts

In 1996, the National Council for Teachers of English and the International Reading Association created a list of twelve core standards for the English Language Arts K-12 classroom. The NCTE/IRA standards were created to ensure that all students understand and are proficient in using English for school, work, and society. In this series, we will focus our instruction on grades 2 through 5.

NCTE/IRA 1. Read texts to acquire new information.

Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment.

NCTE/IRA 2. Read literature to build an understanding of the human experience.

Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.

NCTE/IRA 3. Apply strategies to interpret texts.

Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

NCTE/IRA 4. Use written language to communicate effectively.

Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

NCTE/IRA 5. Use different writing process elements to communicate effectively.

Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

NCTE/IRA 6. Apply knowledge of language structure and

conventions to discuss texts.

Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.

NCTE/IRA 7. Conduct research and gather, evaluate, and synthesize data to communicate discoveries.

Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.

NCTE/IRA 8. Use information resources to gather information and create and communicate knowledge.

Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

NCTE/IRA 9. Develop an understanding of diversity in language use across cultures.

Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.

NCTE/IRA 10. Use first language to develop competency in English language arts and develop an understanding of content across the curriculum.

Students whose first language is not English make use of their first language to develop competency in the English language arts and to develop understanding of content across the curriculum.

NCTE/IRA 11. Participate as members of literacy communities.

Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.

NCTE/IRA 12. Use language to accomplish individual purposes.

Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

Adapted from the NCTE/IRA Academic Standards for the English Language Arts

Acrostic

Background

In an acrostic, the subject of the poem is written vertically down the page. Each line of the poem starts with a letter from the word, and relates in some way to the subject. Variations on acrostic poems include those in which the letters of the subject word come in the middle or at the end of the line, and “abcdearian” acrostics in which the initial letter of each line follows the sequential organization of the alphabet, such as *A, B, C, D, E*, etc.

Instructional Focus

Introducing your students to acrostic poems is a good way to start a poetry writing unit as students at all levels find the form accessible and easy to understand. Writing acrostics also offers an opportunity to explore the use of descriptive words, adjectives and adverbs, and to gain an understanding of the differences between nouns, verbs, and descriptive words. Writing process skills such as brainstorming and rewriting integrate easily as students gain experience in writing acrostics.

Descriptive Words

Adjectives and Adverbs Explain to students that descriptive words tell more about the words they are near. Other names for descriptive words are *adjectives* and *adverbs*. Write this chart to the right on the chalkboard and encourage students to add their own descriptive examples.

Adjectives describe nouns.
Adjectives often come before the noun they describe.

stormy night

Adjectives come after the noun they describe when the sentence uses the verb form *to be*:

The night was stormy.

Adverbs describe verbs.
Adverbs often end in *-ly*:

quickly ran

Adverbs can also describe adjectives.

very clear water

Adverbs can describe other adverbs.

sang very loudly

Guessing Game Tell students that they will play a guessing game that uses descriptive words as the clues to guess an unknown object in the classroom. Have students listen as you list words to describe the object and write the words and phrases on the board. Ask, *What other words might tell us more about this object?* Have students suggest other descriptive words and phrases. Record all student suggestions. As a class, review the list to differentiate the descriptive words from the nouns and verbs. Then help students identify which descriptive words were most helpful in identifying the object. For additional practice on identifying descriptive words, have students complete the Descriptive Words activity sheet on page 8.

Working with Poetry

from *Flashy, Clashy, and Oh-So Splashy*, page 24, “Flavor by the Bunch”

Read and Enjoy Have students read this poem about grapes several times as they enjoy the photograph of the tempting and delicious looking grapes on page 25. Write GRAPES horizontally on the chalkboard and analyze it with students. Point out that the author used each letter in the word GRAPES as the first letter of a single word on each line of the poem. Tell students that grapes is the subject of the poem. Next point out that the poem consists of three words in series (*glowing, round, and purple*) followed by a two-word phrase (*edible sunlight*). Have students identify the descriptive words *glowing, round, purple, and edible*. Ask, *What do these words tell us about the grapes on page 25?*

Look Closely Focus students’ attention of the ending phrase, *edible sunlight*. Point out that *edible* is an adjective that tells about *sunlight*, a noun. Point out that adjectives often come before the nouns they describe. Have students find other adjective-noun phrases in other poems, stories, or environmental print in the classroom.

Write Encourage students to use the grapes poem as a model for their own acrostics. On the right are two additional examples you might discuss. Ask students to choose another food and write an acrostic consisting of a series of descriptive words and a word or phrase for the ending. Have students write their acrostic poems in the blank box.

Pithy,
Oval,
Tender,
And
Tasty,
Outstanding!

Purple,
Lovely,
Ultimately
Munchy

Additional Acrostic Activities

Here are some additional approaches to use with acrostic poems in the poetry series.

from *And Then There Were Eight*, page 13, “Then There Were Eight”

This acrostic, written as a single sentence, is an excellent choice for a **Read and Enjoy** activity. Draw students’ attention to the rhythm of the poem by tapping the beat as you read it out loud with expression several times. Have students practice reading aloud with a partner, by themselves, or by recording it and listening as it is played back. Students then perform their poems the next day in front of the class.

from *Do Buses Eat Kids?*, page 6, “Mine”

Use a **Look Closely** activity to analyze this acrostic. Explain that in this poem the author uses descriptive phrases to refer to everyday things. In the first line, instead of *combination lock* the author uses the phrase *little white numbers*. Here the author mentions a part to refer to the whole. In the second and third lines, instead of *locker* the author uses *treasure chest*. This substitution suggests that a locker and a treasure chest share some characteristics.

from *Tiny Dreams, Sprouting Tall*, page 20, “Dare”

Use this poem as a model for a **Write** activity. Explain to students that the word *dream* is often linked to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. because of his famous “I Have a Dream” speech. Ask students to think of other famous people and words that are used to describe them. Challenge students to write an acrostic to honor that person. Examples are: Thomas Edison – *light*, Walt Disney – *magic*, and Abraham Lincoln – *log cabin*.

Differentiated Instruction

Here are some additional approaches to use with students of varying abilities.

Build Prior Knowledge

Name Game Challenge students to write acrostics about themselves using their first names as the subject word. If students have difficulty generating words for their poems, say, *Imagine that you need to describe yourself to someone you have not met.*

Use Specialized Vocabulary

Curriculum Crossover Create a class list of subjects for acrostic poems based on your current studies in science, math, and social studies. Challenge students to work with partners or in small groups to write acrostics about these subjects.

Increase Student Motivation

Class Poem Brainstorm ideas for a class poem. Ask, *What words or phrases could we use to describe _____?* Encourage students to offer their ideas and write down the exact words the students use in a list on the board. Set a time limit, five minutes might be appropriate. When the list is completed, discuss which words or phrases are the best.

Background

A diamante is a seven line poem shaped like a diamond. The first and seventh lines have only one word, the second and sixth lines have two words, the third and fifth lines have three, and the fourth has four words. The word on Line 1 is always a noun. Line 2 consists of two adjectives describing the noun. Line 3 consists of three gerunds (*-ing* words) that relate to line 1, and the first two words in line 4 are nouns that also relate to line 1. At this point in a diamante, the pattern reverses. The second two nouns in line 4 relate to the single noun in line 7. Line 5 has three gerunds (*-ing* words) and line 6 has two adjectives all relating to the noun on line 7, which contrasts with the noun on line 1.

Instructional Focus

Reading and writing diamante poems is a good way to encourage your students to think about words and their relationships. A diamante poem is written around two related words, one which begins the poem and one which ends it. The words may be synonyms or antonyms, or may be similar in some other way that is related to their meaning. For example, *square* and *triangle* could be used to start and end a diamante, because they are both shapes.

Writing diamantes also offers opportunities to explore the use of alliteration, and to differentiate between gerunds, nouns, and adjectives. Writing process skills such as clustering and editing integrate naturally as students gain experience in writing diamantes. Make note of the diamante format on Write a Diamante activity sheet on page 12 when introducing diamantes.

Similar Sounds

Alliteration When poets use a string of words that all begin with the same sound, this is called alliteration. Point out that alliteration is another element—besides rhyme and rhythm—that helps poems sound best when spoken aloud. Write alliterative phrases on the board. You might use phrases from poems, tongue-twisters, or well-known songs. Say each phrase and have students identify the alliterative words they hear. Ask volunteers to underline the letter or letter blend that makes the sounds the same. Make sure students notice that the spellings of the sounds do not have to be the same, as long as the initial sounds are the same when said aloud.

A box of biscuits

black bug's blood

the kid carried carts of kites

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers

Working with Poetry

from *Tiny Dreams, Sprouting Tall*, page 7,
“Grand Canyon”

Read and Enjoy Have students read this poem about the Grand Canyon several times as they enjoy the photograph of the beautiful landmark on page 6. Point out how the poem is written in the shape of a diamond. You might write the poem on the board in the same pattern and analyze it with students. Have students analyze the connection between the first and last word in the poem. Students may say that *rock* and *river* are almost opposites, others may make a scientific connection by saying that the canyon was first created as the river cut through rock.

Look Closely Point out the alliterative words (*red, rising, rippling*) that are said all together, even though they are not all on the same line. Have students suggest other alliterative words or phrases that could be added to the poem (*rocky, ride*). For additional practice in alliteration, have students choose a topic word, identify the first letter, then think of other words that tell more about it using the same first letter.

Write Encourage students to use this poem as a model for their own diamantes. Ask students to choose another landmark and write a diamante using the pattern on Write a Diamante activity sheet on page 12. Remind students to try to use alliteration in their writing. Have students illustrate their poems with original artwork or photographs for display. Use the two examples to the right for further discussion and analysis.

A Star

star
shiny, tiny,
sparkling, twinkling, shimmering,
once wished upon, now falling down,
guiding, hiding, flying,
bright, white
sun

The Capitol Building

House
noisy, bustling,
talking, voting, arguing,
making laws, passing laws,
debating, touring, electing,
quiet, orderly,
Senate

Differentiated Instruction

Here are some additional approaches to use with students of varying abilities. For each activity, use the Write a Diamante activity sheet on page 12.

Build Prior Knowledge

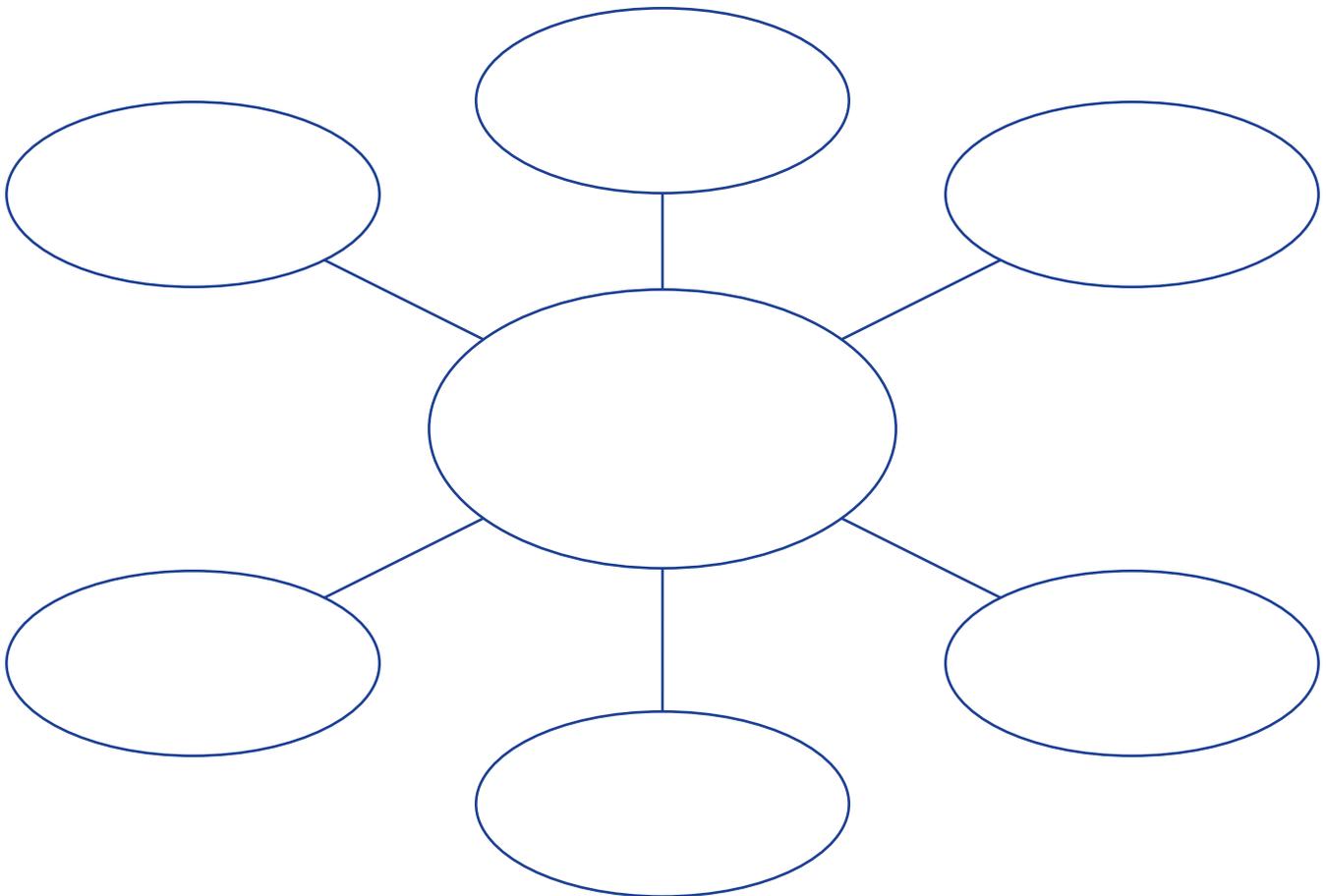
Put a Face to the Place Challenge students to create their diamantes about a place they have been to and/or know well. Students could use a family photo or postcard as an illustration.

Use Specialized Vocabulary

Curriculum Crossover Create with your students a list of subjects for diamantes based on your current studies in science and social studies, such as a poem about the Hope Diamond. Challenge students to work with partners or in small groups to write diamantes about these subjects.

Increase Student Motivation

Class Poem Clustering is a terrific brainstorming technique that groups and individuals alike will find useful when searching for related and opposite words. In clustering, have students focus on jotting ideas down quickly, without spending time analyzing word choice. Use the example below as a guide for cluster diagrams. Ask a volunteer to draw a circle in the middle of the board, then write a single word that is associated with the subject of study. Have class members add related words and phrases into the additional circles with connecting lines to the center circle. Using a variety of colors adds to the enjoyment.



Write a Diamante

1. Write the subject of your diamante on line 1.
2. Write two adjectives to describe your subject on line 2.
3. Write three *-ing* words about your subject on line 3.
4. Write two describing phrases or four nouns related to the subject on line 4.
5. Write three *-ing* words about your subject on line 5.
6. Write two adjectives to describe your subject on line 6.
7. Write either another word for your subject or the opposite of your subject on line 7.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

Background

Limericks have a set rhyme scheme and rhythm. They are always five lines long and may or may not have a title. Despite the structure, limerick tone and subject matter are usually humorous and are often fantastic or nonsensical.

Instructional Focus

Reading and writing limericks is a great way to help students understand rhyme and rhythm, because the limerick's structure is easy to identify. Although these poems have a limited structure, the scope of subject matter is not.

Rhyme and Rhythm

Rhyme Scheme and Rhythm Stress Pattern

Explain to students that the limerick rhyme scheme follows an AABBA pattern; two sets of couplets, then a single line that rhymes with the first set of couplets:

Line 1: A rhyme

Line 2: A rhyme

Line 3: B rhyme

Line 4: B rhyme

Line 5: A rhyme

There once was a lady from Brussels
Who spent all her days eating mussels.
She ate noon and night,
Till they gave her a fright,
And she wondered what all the fuss was.

Write the limerick rhythm, or stress pattern, on the board and model it for students by tapping the desk or clapping your hands as you read the limerick. Point out that the capital letters are parts of words that are stressed, or said with emphasis.

Line 1: da DUM da da DUM da da DUM

Line 2: da DUM da da DUM da da DUM

Line 3: da DUM da da DUM

Line 4: da da DUM da da DUM

Line 5: da DUM da da DUM da da DUM

Note that the first, second, and fifth lines have the same rhythm as well as the same rhyme scheme. The third and fourth lines rhyme, but vary slightly in rhythm.

Working with Poetry

from *And Then There Were Eight*, page 5,
“Lost in Space”

Read and Enjoy Have students read this nonsense poem about a fantastic happening on the moon as they enjoy the more realistic looking pictures on pages 4–5. You may even have the students point out the obvious differences between the poem’s tone and the pictures. Point out the beginning words of the poem. The majority of limericks begin in a similar pattern. You might wish to write the poem on the board and analyze it with the students. Have them first underline all words rhyming with *moon* (*balloon, afternoon*). Then have a volunteer use a different color to circle words rhyming with *away* (*dismay*).

Look Closely Direct students’ attention to the first two lines of the limerick. Remind them that they already know that these two lines rhyme. Tell students that two lines in a poem that are together and rhyme are called a couplet (*like couple*). Have students point out the other couplet in the limerick (*lines three and four*).

Write Encourage students to use this poem as a model for their own limericks. Many popular limericks begin with this phrase:

“There once was a _____ from _____ ,”
“Who _____ .”

Write the couplet phrases on the board as a starter for students.

Additional Limerick Activities

Here are some additional approaches to use with limericks in the series.

from *Do Buses Eat Kids?*, page 20,
“A Helpful Tip”

Have students read this limerick, then read the mussels or space limerick as part of a **Look Closely** activity. Ask students to point out similarities between the poems. At some point, they should be able to say that this limerick has the same rhythm or sounds the same as the mussels or space limerick. Review the stress pattern on the board. Most students will have probably already picked it up and may have already tried using it. Now all students should understand it and use it in their limericks.

from *Flashy, Clashy, and Oh-So Splashy*, page 10, “Dirt”

Have students read this poem and have them imagine the type of dirt described in it as part of a **Write** activity. Direct the students to look at the second couplet, asking students to focus on the last word of each line. The students should be able to point out that the words rhyme even though the words are not spelled the same. Remind the students that they encounter the same phenomenon and they should check for this as they proofread their poems before publishing them.

from *Tiny Dreams, Sprouting Tall*, page 16,
“America’s Game”

Have several students read this poem (and other limericks) aloud as part of a **Read and Enjoy** activity. Allow volunteers to act it out or use different voices to give each reading a unique interpretation. Or you may wish to give pairs or groups of students time to read aloud to each other to give everyone practice reading poetry aloud. Poems are an oral tradition, after all!

Differentiated Instruction

Here are some additional approaches to use with students of varying abilities. For each activity, use the Write a Limerick activity sheet on page 16.

Increase Student Motivation

Rhythm Discuss stressed and unstressed words with the class. Write the following words on the board using both capital and lowercase letters. Model reading each word aloud, emphasizing the stresses and pointing to the capital letters of the word. Then have students take turns saying the words and phrases, and suggesting some of their own.

Stresses in words:

LARva	BUTterfly
CATterPILlar	coCOON

Stresses in phrases:

HAPpy BIRTHday SISter
Be CAREful
have FUN toDAY

Use Specialized Vocabulary

Curriculum Crossover Create with your students a list of subjects for limericks based on famous people in history. Challenge students to work with partners or in small groups to write limericks about Benjamin Franklin, Sacajawea, or Thomas Edison.

Build Prior Knowledge

Brainstorming Draw a three column chart on the board. You may wish to do this first as a whole group activity before having them do it on their own. Tell students that this chart will help them brainstorm rhyming words for their limericks. After choosing a topic and writing it above the chart on the board, have students suggest three words that are related to that topic—one for each column heading on the chart. Write students' suggestions on the chart. Then ask students to suggest five words that rhyme with the column heading words. From this activity, the class can easily generate rhyming vocabulary for a class limerick. Once students feel comfortable completing the chart, have them copy the brainstorming chart onto a sheet of paper and generate their own lists of words for a limerick.

Background

Haiku are another highly structured form of poetry. As may be guessed by the name, haiku is Japanese poetry. Generally haiku uses comparative language, and the subject is often nature or the seasons. Although haiku has no rhyme scheme or rhythm pattern, each haiku contains exactly seventeen syllables, always arranged as follows:

Line 1: 5 syllables

Line 2: 7 syllables

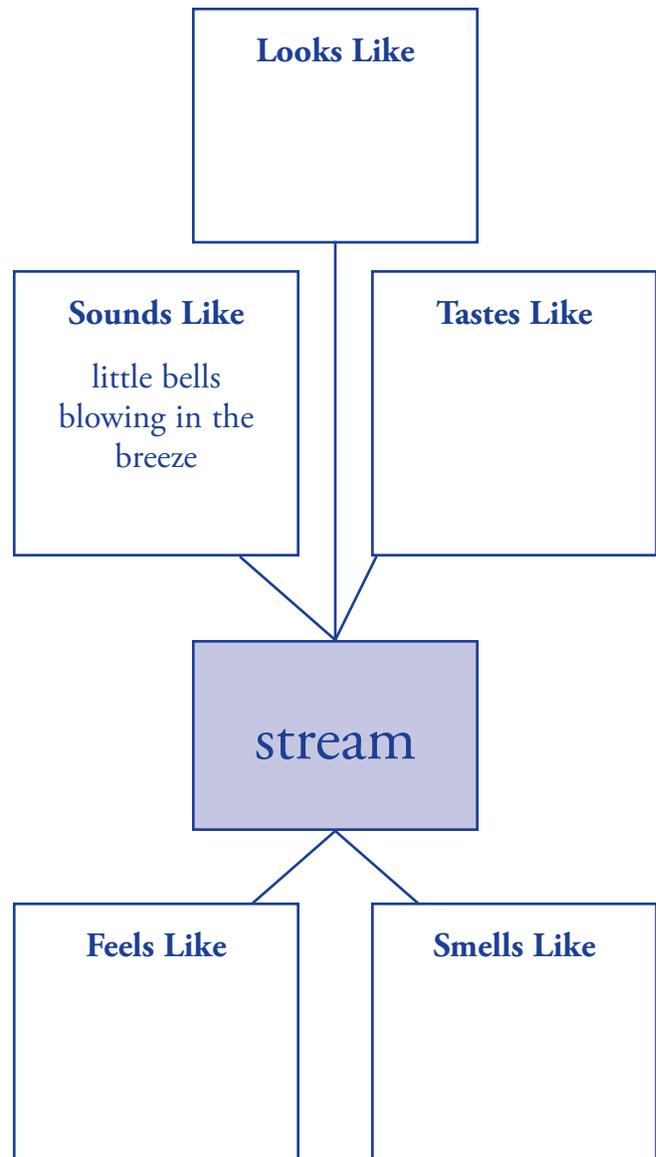
Line 3: 5 syllables

Instructional Focus

Reading and writing haiku will help students begin to understand the many different elements that can create the structures of poetry besides the all-too-familiar sing-song couplets of nursery rhymes. Haiku often uses imagery, appealing to one or more of the five senses, such as *sweet sticky juice dripped dripped down*. Haiku also uses the comparison device personification, which makes a non-human thing or animal sound human, such as *the sunshine skipped merrily*. Writing process skills such as word-webbing and publishing lend themselves to partner or small group work as well as more personal creativity.

Picture This...

Imagery Explain to students that imagery is when the poet's words "put pictures in your mind." Have students identify the five senses (*seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching*). Then suggest a familiar image in nature, such as a stream. Write *stream* in a box on the board. Then draw five branching boxes from the main circle. Label each with a different sense, such as *Sounds Like, Tastes Like*, etc. Then have students brainstorm words or phrases to describe what the stream is like. Write a haiku as a group, choosing words and phrases from the word-web you created.



Personification Explain that personification is when a writer makes a non-human object seem to be human either by doing something only a person would do or by seeming to feel an emotion, which is something only people do. Present the models below on the board and have students explain how the personification makes the object seem more like a person. Challenge students to create their own.

The stream skipped happily along.

My teddy bear hates being left behind.

Our computer loves to crash!

The chair wobbled from dizziness.

Working with Poetry

from *Flashy, Clashy, and Oh-So Splashy*, page 13, “Garden Canoes”

Read and Enjoy Point out the number of syllables in each line by clapping them as you read the haiku. Have students count the number of syllables to check that the haiku has seventeen syllables. Direct students to the ends of the lines to see that the haiku contains no rhymes.

Look Closely Have students read this poem and study the picture. Ask, *At what point in the poem did you realize that garden canoes were really pea pods and not boats?* Ask volunteers to identify the words or images that helped them understand this point (*slender green, to your mouth, peas, the picture*). You may wish to have students discuss how pea pods are like canoes (*carry things, waterproof, similar shaped*).

Write After students have read the haiku, have them think of something in nature that they could write a haiku about. Encourage students to brainstorm images of how these things are alike. This may also be a good time to use word-webbing with students. Then challenge students to describe their haiku’s subjects without telling what they are until the end. Or students may simply put the subject in the title. For examples of each, see the haiku below.

The Capitol Building

Busy highway rush
Never done. Always moving.
Where do they go? Ants.

My Cat’s Many Faces

Today cute bunny
Tomorrow ferocious beast
Next day tornado...

Additional Haiku Activities

Here are some additional approaches to use with haiku in the poetry series.

from *And Then There Were Eight*, page 27, “Magic”

Have students read this poem as part of a **Look Closely** activity. You will probably wish to point out the added information at the bottom of the page, explaining that this poem is about the northern lights. You may also wish to add further information about the northern lights, also known as the *aurora borealis*. Have students find the two things a person might do in the haiku (*slide down something and give a magic show*). Explain that this is personification, or making something non-human, like the sky, seem more like a person.

from *Do Buses Eat Kids?*, page 10, “Make It Up”

Have students read this poem aloud as a **Read and Enjoy** activity. Ask volunteers to explain the meaning of the haiku. Have students count the number of syllables in each line. Point out that although this haiku contains two rhyming words on the end of the first two lines, rhymes are not essential to haiku.

Differentiated Instruction

Here are some additional approaches to use with students of varying abilities. For each activity, use the Write a Haiku activity sheet on page 20.

Build Prior Knowledge

Charting the Weather Have students brainstorm words for each of the seasons (*icy, sweltering*). In addition to identifying adjectives to describe the weather, prompt students to think of activities they like to do during each season. Challenge students to write haiku using a season as a subject. If students have difficulty generating words or activities for their poems, provide students with these sentence starters.

I like to _____ during _____ .

Summer is _____ , _____ ,
and boiling.

Use Specialized Vocabulary

Curriculum Crossover Create with your students a list of subjects for haiku poems based on your current studies in science and social studies. Challenge students to work with partners or in small groups to write haiku about these subjects.

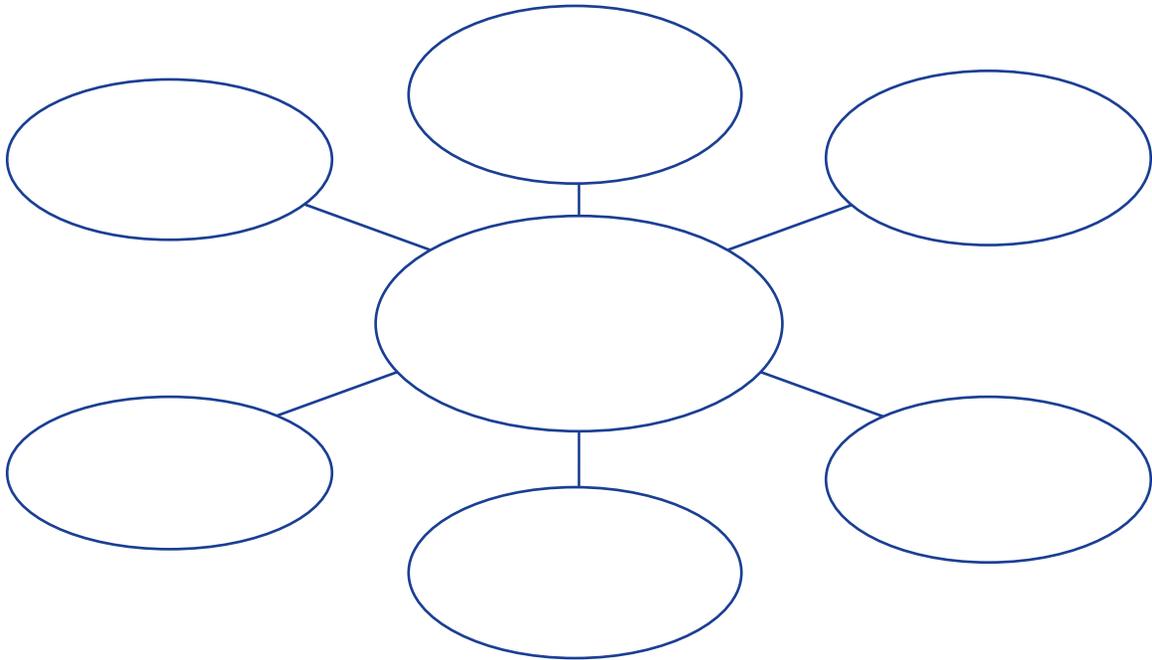
Increase Student Motivation

Bring Haiku to Life Have students form small groups and choose their favorite haiku to perform for the class. Ask students to think of actions that they could perform while the poem is being read aloud. Remind students to consider the syllabication rules of haiku when preparing to say the poems aloud. Set a time limit, five minutes might be appropriate. Then have students perform the haiku for the class.

Name _____

Write a Haiku

Write the subject of your haiku in the center circle. Then think about what it sounds like, smells like, feels like, tastes like, and looks like. Fill in the other circles using words that describe your subject.



Write your haiku using this pattern:

Line 1: 5 syllables

Line 2: 7 syllables

Line 3: 5 syllables

Then write an interesting title above your haiku.

Cinquain

Background

A cinquain poem contains five lines, often structured with a certain number of syllables in each line. If punctuation is included, the cinquain should be read aloud adding pauses according to the punctuation rather than line breaks. Quite a number of variations to cinquain exist, but the focus here will remain on one simple type. If students enjoy and excel at the cinquain, you may wish to explore other types that are more structured with the class.

Instructional Focus

Reading and writing cinquain poems will help reinforce students' understanding of syllables, especially when poems are read aloud. It will also give students further opportunities to create phrases using imagery and explore repetition in poetry. Writing process skills such as brainstorming lists and publishing integrate naturally as students gain experience in writing cinquain poems.

Rhythm and Repetition

Syllabication Explain that cinquain poems have a measured rhythm that makes them best read aloud. Write the following cinquain structure on the board and discuss it with students. Point out that syllable rhythm can be counted by clapping your hands or tapping your foot while reading aloud.

Line 1: 2 syllables

Line 2: 4 syllables

Line 3: 6 syllables

Line 4: 8 syllables

Line 5: 2 syllables

Repetition Tell students that in many forms of poetry, including cinquain, repetition of words or phrases is used as a poetic element, just as rhyme or alliteration. Read the cinquain poems below as examples.

Scissors

gleam, and
snip, snip, snip, snip.
Chatting, laughing, humming.
A new look today? Leave the old
behind!

Dead of Night

Scratch, scratch
meow? Meow. Meow! MEOW!
"Bad kitty – go away!"
I think tomorrow night I'll close
my door...

Repeated Phrases Repeated words or phrases are an important poetic element. They can create rhythm in a poem, help make words sound like an actual sound, or simply emphasize the phrase.

clickety-clack clickety clack
the stone was hard so very hard

Underline the repetitive words in the cinquain below.

One Moment

The moth
sat still so still
on my hand — then it was gone
gone in a flash — never to be
my pet

Discuss different reasons for using repetition.

For emphasis:
sat still so still

For onomatopoeic sound:
clickety-clack clickety clack

For rhythmic sound:
*then it was gone
gone in a flash*

Working with Poetry

from *And Then There Were Eight*, page 11, “Space Walk?”

Read and Enjoy Read this poem aloud, making sure to pause at the punctuation, not the line breaks. Ask students why you didn’t pause (*because there was no punctuation to indicate that you should, while there was punctuation in other parts of the poem*). Have volunteers read the poem again, each in their own way. You may wish to ask students to explain how the picture helps them interpret the poem’s meaning.

Look Closely Point out the structure of the poem, noting the number of syllables on each line, as outlined earlier. Have students suggest synonyms and antonyms for words in this poem that maintain the same rhythm and syllable structure.

Write Encourage students to use this poem as a model for their own cinquains. Ask them to choose another place or activity and write a cinquain poem. Have students illustrate their poems with original artwork or photographs for display. Here are some topic ideas that you might discuss:

Desert	Ocean
Antarctica	Rainforest

Additional Cinquain Activities

On page 23 you will find some additional approaches to use with cinquains in the poetry series.

from *Do Buses Eat Kids?*, page 4, “Ordinary”

Have students read this poem as part of a **Look Closely** activity. Ask students to contrast how this poem is the same as the previous cinquain read. (*syllables in each line are the same and that the picture helps illustrate the subject*) Then ask how they are different. You may need to ask leading questions or read the poem aloud to focus students’ attention on this difference. (*subject matter, no alliteration in this one, little punctuation except for two commas separating a series of nouns*) Ask students how they know where to pause when reading this cinquain. (*need to decide at the end of each line whether the next line continues the thought or not*) Another comparison to discuss is to contrast the ideas set by the title and the last line of the cinquain. Ask, *How can a pencil be both ordinary and magic?*

from *Flashy, Clashy, and Oh-So Splashy*, page 16, “Bright”

Have several volunteers read this poem aloud, using the punctuation as a guide for when to pause as part of a **Read and Enjoy** activity. Be sure to point out the lack of capitalization and end punctuation. You may wish to have students compare and contrast this poem to the other cinquains you have already read.

from *Tiny Dreams, Sprouting Tall*, page 3, “Majestic”

Explain that the subject of the poem is actually the first word of the poem, rather than the title. Everything else in the cinquain—including the title—describes the eagle or what the eagle does. Have the students create a list in the form of a two-column chart as a **Write** activity for the whole group. One side would list traits of an eagle (*majestic, glossy brown wings*); the other, activities of an eagle (*soaring, riding thermals*). Next, challenge students to create their own cinquains. Have them brainstorm lists after choosing a topic. Remind students to use the correct syllable structure.

Differentiated Instruction

Here are some additional approaches to use with students of varying abilities. For each activity, use the Write a Cinquain activity sheet on page 24.

Build Prior Knowledge

My Favorite Place Have students write cinquains about a favorite place they like to visit, such as the beach, the mountains, or even their bedroom. Ask students to use a photo or postcard as an illustration.

Increase Student Motivation

Cinquain Jam Session Have students form small groups and choose their favorite cinquain to perform for the class. Have one student read the poem in a clear loud voice, while other members of the group clap or tap the rhythm. Remind students to consider the syllabication rules of cinquain when preparing to say the poems aloud. Set a time limit, five minutes might be appropriate. Then have students perform the cinquain jam session for the class.

Use Specialized Vocabulary

Curriculum Crossover Create with your students a list of subjects for cinquain poems based on your current studies in science and social studies. Challenge students to work with partners or in small groups to write cinquain about these subjects.

Name _____

Write a Cinquain

Choose a subject that interests you. Brainstorm a list of words or phrases that describe your subject. Write them in the chart below. Use the words and phrases in the chart to write your cinquain. Be sure to use the cinquain form. Try to use repetitive words or phrases, if possible.

Write your cinquain using this pattern:

Line 1: 2 syllables

Line 2: 4 syllables

Line 3: 6 syllables

Line 4: 8 syllables

Line 5: 2 syllables

Then write an interesting title above your cinquain.

Free Verse

Background

Free verse is poetry that may or may not contain any rhymes or rhythm. However, the arrangement of words on the page can often lend emphasis to its rhythm or meaning. Each line and stanza may be different lengths. Poets may even play with text size and fonts of free verse. Free verse often uses comparative language, such as similes and metaphors. Famous poets Carl Sandburg and Walt Whitman used this style.

Instructional Focus

Introducing your students to free verse can be a very liberating experience, helping to loosen up their creativity as they write. The lessons 1-5 taught the rules of poetry, this lesson shows that it is acceptable to “break the rules.” Writing process skills, such as writing and publishing, integrate naturally as students gain experience in writing free verse poems.

Comparisons

Similes and Metaphors Both similes and metaphors compare unlike things. The main difference between the two is that similes use the words *like* or *as*, whereas metaphors do not. For extra practice in identifying and writing similes and metaphors, use the Similes and Metaphors activity sheet on page 27.

Here are similes and metaphors found in the A+ series. Write the similes and metaphors on the board and have students explain how the objects are alike.

Similes:

quick as a wink

letters march... like soldiers

Metaphors:

Saturn swings a skirt of circling rocky rings
watch the clock, minute-master of the day

Working with Poetry

from *And Then There Were Eight*,
page 10, “Ballerina”

Read and Enjoy Read this poem aloud to the class. Ask students to find the rhyme and rhythm in this poem. (*There is none of either.*)

Look Closely Challenge students to find the pattern of syllables or type of words in this poem. Students should conclude that this poem has no established pattern or line type of any kind. Ask students to explain why it is poetry rather than prose. (*It uses non-standard punctuation, contains metaphor, and uses non-traditional spacing.*)

Write Have small groups of students use this pattern as a model to write a free verse poem as a team. Prompt students to write about other planets or space objects that they know something about. Remind students to include similes and metaphors in their poems.

Additional Free Verse Activities

Here are some additional approaches to use with free verse poems in the poetry series.

from *Flashy, Clashy, and Oh-So Splashy*, page 17, “One Silver Speck”

Read this poem aloud as a prompt for a **Write** activity. Have students identify the internal rhymes (*shiver, quiver; scurry, hurry*). Point out how the poet used a different font for part of the poem. Direct students’ to find the pattern for this particular poem. Have small groups of students use this pattern as a model to write a free verse poem.

from *Tiny Dreams, Sprouting Tall*, page 27, “Cities”

Have volunteers read each stanza aloud as a **Read and Enjoy** activity. Ask students how this poem matches the theme of the book. (*it’s about different parts of the United States*) Then, have students practice reading it aloud with a partner, by themselves, or by recording it and listening as it is played back. Remind students to not rush the reading of this poem. You may wish to model reading this poem aloud at a relaxed pace.

from *Do Buses Eat Kids?*, page 5, “Stand Up Straight!”

Read this poem aloud or have volunteers read it aloud, paying close attention to the punctuation in a **Look Closely** activity. Explain that this poem uses simile throughout the poem. (*letters march... like soldiers*) Have students point out how the poem continues the comparison.

Differentiated Instruction

Here are some additional approaches to use with students of varying abilities. For each activity, use the Write a Free Verse activity sheet on page 28.

Increase Student Motivation

Publishing Since the look of free verse can be an essential part of the poem, spend extra time with your students helping them publish their work. Tell students that using the computer can be an advantage, especially if they wish to experiment with texts, colors, or fonts. Encourage students to also include illustrations or photographs with their free verse poetry. Remind students that certain computer programs may be set to auto-correct, which students may not want if they want a certain look for their poetry. You may wish to take the time to show the class how to turn off auto-correct features in a program.

Build Prior Knowledge

Curriculum Crossover Create with your students a list of subjects for free verse poems based on your current studies in math and science. Challenge students to work with partners or in small groups to write free verse poems about these subjects.

Use Specialized Vocabulary

Synonyms and Antonyms If students have difficulty creating similes and metaphors, explain that a quick way to generate words around a subject is to think of synonyms and antonyms.

Similes and Metaphors

Similes and metaphors are figures of speech that compare unlike things.

Similes use the words *like* or *as*.

The biting June wind made it seem as cold as winter outside.

The flower was like a huge bug magnet.

Metaphors do not use the words *like* or *as*.

She cried on her friend’s shoulder so much, she started calling it “her pillow.”

The huge whale of a plane seemed to swallow the people.

Read each sentence. Explain how the two things are being compared.

1. The biting June wind made it seem as cold as winter outside.

2. She cried on her friend’s shoulder so much, she started calling it “her pillow.”

3. The flower was like a huge bug magnet.

4. The huge whale of a plane seemed to swallow the people.

Now write at least two similes and two metaphors below.

Name _____

Write a Free Verse

Think of a subject that you know a lot about. Write it here.

Now think of some unlike things you might compare it to. Write some similes and metaphors relating to your subject on the lines below. They do not need to be complete sentences.

Write a free verse poem. Try to use similes or metaphors in your poem, if possible.

Rubrics and Assessment Activities

Rubrics

As students complete their individual poems after each lesson, use the rubric below to help you assess each poem. Even the free verse poem's structure — or lack thereof — can be evaluated using this simple rubric. Refer to the different elements of each type of poem described in the “Background” section of each lesson.

Poetic techniques and the use of figurative language, such as imagery or alliteration, are encouraged throughout the lessons. Although students may or may not have incorporated these creative elements, they should not be penalized if these elements are not present in a particular poem. Writing poetry is a creative endeavor and should never be forced or systematic.

Make copies of the rubric below to use when assessing your students' writing.

Self-Assessment Poetry Rubric

You may wish to have students assess their own poems before submission. Give students a copy of the rubric on page 30. Model how to assess a group poem using the rubric. Have students hand in their rubrics along with their poems. You may find that many students are harder on themselves than you are on them. Completing a self-assessment can help show self-esteem, self-confidence, as well as an awareness of his or her extent of knowledge. Student assessments can be very handy when conferencing with students or parents.

Poem contains all essential elements that make up this style of poetry.	Poem contains most of the elements making up this style of poetry.	Poem has few to none of the essential elements that make up this style of poetry.	Student has made no effort to create a poem of any kind.
3 points	2 points	1 point	0 points
Name			Points

Make copies of the rubric below and distribute to students for use during their self assessment.

Self-Assessment Rubric

Type of Poem _____

My poem has the most important parts that make up this type of poetry.	My poem has some of the important parts that make up this type of poetry.	My poem has one of the important parts that make up this type of poetry.	I did not write a poem.
3 points	2 points	1 point	0 points
Name _____			Points _____

Assessing Creativity

Assessing creativity can be difficult. For example, a student’s initial attempt to create a regular rhythm in a poem may appear confused. Sometimes spelling or spacing may be the issue rather than rhythm. You may wish to point out some words that have been changed to fit rhythmically, such as until shortened to ’til in the poem “Cow Colors” on page 23 of *Flashy, Clashy, and Oh-So Splashy*.

Class Project

Publish a book of the class’s best poems to send home with each child. Students might use group conferences to discuss or even vote on favorite poems to include—everyone includes only one poem in the book. Alternatively, you may wish to set up a class website to publish their poems.

Conferencing

Conference with students as you evaluate their work. In fact, conferencing at any point in the writing process could be helpful to you and the student. Have students bring their pre-writing activities, first and subsequent drafts, final published works, and their completed rubrics to your conference. Help each student choose his or her best poems to keep for a portfolio or journal, if appropriate. If your students are comfortable working in groups, you may have them conference with each other before publishing their final work. They could proofread each other’s work and discuss how to improve their poems by using illustrations, photos, or other graphics in the final product.

Answer Key

Descriptive Words activity sheet p. 8

Possible response:

Death-defying

Incredible

Very scary

Entertainment

Write a Diamante activity sheet p. 12

Possible response:

puppies
rolly polly
jumping, wagging, sleeping
tiny footprints, playful nibbles
barking, fetching, playing
smiley happy
dogs

Write a Limerick activity sheet p. 16

Possible response:

There once was an old man from France,
Who tried very hard not to prance.
He rocked to and fro,
But he never could go,
And ask an old lady to dance.

Write a Haiku activity sheet p. 20

Possible response:

Footprints in the sand.
The tide will wash them away.
Like a soothing kiss.

Write a Cinquain activity sheet p. 24

Possible response:

typing.

faster, faster.

I must make my deadline.

Who heard of school on the
weekends anyway?

Similes and Metaphors activity sheet p. 27

Possible responses:

1. The biting wind is being compared to winter.
2. Her friend's shoulder is being compared to a pillow.
3. The flower is so attractive to bugs that it is being compared to a magnet.
4. The plane is as big as a whale.

Similes:

My parrot screeches like a rusty hinge.
Her grin was as wide as the Mississippi.

Metaphors:

He was a mountain of a man.
His heart lay in pieces.

Write a Free Verse activity sheet p. 28

Possible response:

Cherry Blossoms

Falling softly like snowflakes,
the petals grace my shoulders.
How magical it seems,
to see the pink confetti of bloom.

