

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, which you will soon be, write about everyday things. Many themes include nature, feelings, or experiences. Usually they use simple *words* and *grammar*. The most common form for a 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!

For this assignment, you will be completing two Haiku poems.

HAIKU EXAMPLES

The Rose

Donna Brock

The red blossom bends
and drips its dew to the ground.

Like a tear it falls

A Rainbow

Donna Brock

Curving up, then down.
Meeting blue sky and green earth
Melding sun and rain.

Print the examples from the previous page (if possible). Mark the syllables with your pencil. If you are having trouble figuring out how many syllables, try clapping out the words, or putting your hand under your chin and counting how many times your chin goes down. If all else fails, get a dictionary! :)

Now it's your turn. Pick your favorite sport/activity etc. That sport/activity etc. will be your theme. Decide:

- 1) For what purpose will you write?
- 2) What mood do you want to convey?

Think of the images, descriptive words, and figurative language that best describe that sport (remember sounds, smells, sights). Write them down as you think of them. Then the final step is to experiment by putting your ideas on the Haiku "skeleton" 5, 7, 5 (syllables) and 3 lines.

Look at your poem. Check it for correct syllables and lines. Now, for the real test, read it ALOUD. Does it really paint a *clear* picture? Share your Haiku with someone else. Listen to his or her *critique* of your poem. A *critique* is when someone tells you the strengths and weaknesses of your work. Revise your work. Remember, the BEST writers are REWRITERS!