

## General Tips for Writing Poetry

### 1. Find Inspiration

- **Observe surroundings:** Look outside, listen to sounds, or think about a favorite place or memory.
- **Choose a subject:** Poems can be about anything, from a pet to a favorite meal.
- **Use the senses:** Write down words about what you can see, hear, smell, taste, or feel (e.g., "sand, waves, sun, shells" for a beach day).
- **Write about feelings:** Describe a strong emotion like happiness, fear, or excitement.

### 2. Getting Started

- **Don't obsess over the first line:** Just write something down to get started, and fix it later.
- **Use a simple prompt:** Start with lines like "I am", "I feel", "I wonder", or "I see".
- **Create a word bank:** Brainstorm a list of descriptive words and exciting vocabulary related to your topic before you begin writing.
- **Try "Found Poetry":** Find a newspaper, magazine, or book, and circle words that jump out at you to create a new poem.

### 3. Writing and Crafting

- **Forget the rhyme:** Poems do not have to rhyme. Free verse poetry is a great way to focus on thoughts and ideas without worrying about finding matching sounds.
- **Use imagery:** Use similes (comparing things using "like" or "as," e.g., "strong as an ox") and metaphors (saying something *is* something else, e.g., "her smile is the sun").
- **Try personification:** Describe an object as if it were alive, like saying "the wind whispered".
- **Use line breaks:** You don't have to write to the end of the page. Use line breaks to create pauses, build rhythm, and highlight specific words.
- **Keep it simple:** Often, a short, simple poem is more powerful than a long, complicated one.

### 4. Simple Poetry Structures to Try

- **Acrostic:** Use the letters in a word (like your name) to start each line, with each line describing that word.
- **Haiku:** A short, three-line poem with a 5-7-5 syllable pattern (line 1: 5 syllables, line 2: 7 syllables, line 3: 5 syllables).
- **Limerick:** A fun, five-line poem with a specific AABBA rhyme scheme (lines 1, 2, and 5 rhyme, and lines 3 and 4 rhyme).
- **Shape Poem (Concrete Poetry):** Arrange the words on the page to look like the subject of the poem (e.g., a poem about a sun written in a circle).

## 5. Reviewing and Sharing

- **Read it aloud:** Read your poem out loud to hear where the rhythm works and where it might be awkward.
- **Use a thesaurus:** Swap simple words for more descriptive ones.
- **Add a title:** Give your poem a short title that hints at what it is about.
- **Decorate:** Add drawings or colors to illustrate your poem.

**Key Takeaway:** The goal is to have fun and be creative, not to be perfect. The best poems come from a unique personal voice.