

Haiku Poems

Haiku is a kind of Japanese poetry. Haiku poems are generally written to describe nature. The most widely recognised form consists of a three-line stanza that has a total of 17 syllables, written in the following pattern:

Line 1: 5 syllables

Line 2: 7 syllables

Line 3: 5 syllables

Clouds float slowly by
Fluffy, lumpy cotton balls
Silver, grey and white

Clouds float slow/ly by
Fluf/fy, lump/y cot/ton balls
Sil/ver, grey, and white

The words and phrases used in haiku do not rhyme.

Oceans: A Fact Haiku

Lesson Overview:

The sound and movement of ocean waves may be called poetry in motion. This lesson uses the ocean to teach students about a form of Japanese poetry. After learning about haiku, and hearing haiku, students listen to the ocean to inspire them in writing their own haiku.

Length of Lesson: Two 45-minute class periods

Instructional Objectives:

Students will:

- organize information with a logical plan.
- use vocabulary specifically about oceans.
- describe ways that oceans shape and reshape the land by eroding the land and by depositing soil.
- write a haiku about oceans.
- create their own books of haikus and a joint class book of haikus.

Instructional Plan:

Warm Up

Have students close their eyes and listen to the sound of the ocean for a minute. Do not tell them what the sound is, and ask them to write down what they believe they heard. List the suggestions on the board, and circle the responses that contain information about oceans.

Guided Practice Activities

1. Give students time to write down all of the things they can think of about oceans. Encourage them to think in terms of all five of their senses (you may wish to list the senses on the board).
2. Instruct students to use a different colour crayon or marker to circle observations that reflect each of the senses. (For example, circle all items relating to sight in red, those relating to touch in blue, etc.)
3. Have students think about the ocean environment, in terms of the animals that live there, the motions of the oceanic waters, etc. Have them write down their observations.

Learning about Haiku

- Describe the syllable pattern of 5-7-5, used to create a haiku. Read a collection of haiku, counting out syllables for each line.
- Refer back to some of the suggestions from the Guided Practice Activities. Pull ideas with descriptive facts about oceans. Arrange the descriptive words into sentences or phrases. Revise and edit the words until the syllable pattern 5-7-5 is in place. The finished haiku should describe one or more facts about the ocean.

Independent Activities

Students should use their own lists to create haiku describing facts about oceans.

Closure

Compile student haiku in a class book. If desired, have each student create an illustration to accompany their haiku.