



Cass County Library Reading

PROMPTS!

Beth Gulley | bgulley@jccc.edu | April 24, 2023

<https://timeeasesallthings.wordpress.com/>

POETRY BY KIM ADDONIZIO

The Philosopher's Club
Jimmy & Rita

POETRY BY DORIANNE LAUX

Awake
What We Carry

THE POET'S COMPANION

A Guide to the Pleasures of
Writing Poetry

KIM ADDONIZIO AND
DORIANNE LAUX

W. W. NORTON & COMPANY
NEW YORK · LONDON

IDEAS FOR WRITING Repetition Rhythm and Blues

1. Write a poem that uses anaphora. Use one or more of

the following, which are guaranteed to trigger something interesting. Or invent your own.

I want

I remember

I used to

America

Love

Daddy

Mother

Give me a break

You never

2. Using repeated words from the following list, write a chant that seems rhythmically interesting and has a sense of closure. Don't worry about what it means; just create something that feels complete. Let the words trigger the direction of the poem; you don't need to use all of them, and you can add as many words as you need.

Smoke

Angels

Mirror

Regret

Moonless

Pleasure

Rose

Glittering

Face

Oblivion

burning

strip

breaking

smolder

hotel

3. Do the preceding exercise with words you choose from a book of poems or fiction.
4. Write a short poem that begins and ends with the same line. The reader should feel differently about the line the second time he or she encounters it, because of what has happened in the poem.
5. Get yourself in the mood by listening to a few blues singers (we like Bessie Smith, Big Mama Thornton, Robert Johnson, Leadbelly, and Sonny Boy Williamson, to name a few). Then write your own blues poem, about something in your life that's getting you down. Or write a blues for a friend, your sister, Marilyn Monroe, or anyone else.
6. Steal a title from a blues song: "Empty Bed Blues," "Dead Shrimp Blues," "Honeymoon Blues," or anything else that appeals to you, and use it as a title for a blues poem of your own.
7. Write a poem with a refrain.
8. Write a poem with a refrain.
9. Try repeating images in a poem: images of light, images of a certain color, images of things that are square, images of things that crawl—the possibilities are endless.
10. Take an old poem you wrote that does not use much repetition and find words/images/rhythms/lines to repeat in it. Doing this might revitalize a poem that wasn't working.

Three Simple Lines

A Writer's Pilgrimage into
the Heart and Homeland of Haiku

Natalie Goldberg

New World Library
Novato, California

Haiku Lesson

Probably two decades ago I taught a year-long intensive, in which each student had to choose a practice for the full year. Beth Howard from Wyoming chose writing a haiku a day. When the year was up she continued.

I said to her at some point, "Tell me what you have discovered the rules to be."

I have a card from her that she sent in 2015 listing them. Recently I called her and she said, "Oh, let me see them. They would probably be all different now."

"No," I retorted. "I want to keep your first thoughts."

So here they are.

1. The first thing is to *let go*. To really enter what is before you, around you, there is a lot you have to let go of. It doesn't help to *look* for a haiku, but it does help to be clear — a blank slate — so a haiku can write itself in you.
2. Use an unfocused gaze or a wider view and perception. Our mind interferes with what we see and hear — often choosing to notice the familiar. In any

given instant there are so many things we do not see or hear or feel. It reminds me of the unfocused gaze we use in sitting meditation. As if using peripheral vision/hearing, etc. to see/hear whatever else is there.

3. Notice the connections...to a person or a feeling if it's there. This is the leap that happens in haiku when a connection is there. This also is not something to look for or aim for, it doesn't work — just let go — open to *all* that is in the moment.
4. Write it down. I thought I would remember. I never remember (or hardly ever). Small memo pads are all you need, nothing fancy.
5. Put down every line that comes — there may be more than one choice that sounds right. Put them all down in the moment. You don't have to finish the haiku in the moment, but you don't want to lose it.
6. *Revise*. Make it crystal clear. Remove anything not needed. Did you use the best word to catch the moment? Do you feel the moment when you read it? Is something missing?

one cold day to another
linked like a freight train
cannot see the end

forget-me-nots
beside pathway to lakeshore
missing my parents

leaves show each day
effortlessly
how to let go

winter evening
great horned owl calls
one brief life

diving face-first
into lavender blossom
bumblebee

almost forgetting
tiny maple leaves open
son is at war

hickory
strange nut
like me

to learn how to live
watch the full moon rise

BETH HOWARD

Writing
Down
the Bones

Freeing the Writer Within

THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

NATALIE GOLDBERG

*Forewords by Julia Cameron
and Bill Addison*

SHAMBHALA
Boulder
2016



The Action of a Sentence

VERBS ARE VERY important. They are the action and energy of a sentence. Be aware of how you use them. Try this exercise. Fold a sheet of paper in half the long way. On the left side of the page list ten nouns. Any ten.

lilacs
horse
mustache
cat
fiddle
muscles
dinosaur
seed
plug
video

Now turn the paper over to the right column. Think of an occupation, for example, a carpenter, doctor, flight attendant. List fifteen verbs on the right half of the page that go with that position.

A Cook:
sauté
chop
mince

slice
cut
heat
broil
taste
boil
bake
fry
marinate
whip
stir
scoop

Open the page. You have nouns listed in a row down the left side and verbs listed on the right. Try joining the nouns with the verbs to see what new combinations you can get, and then finish the sentences, casting the verbs in the past tense if you need to.

lilacs
horse
mustache
cat
fiddle
muscles
dinosaur
seed
plug
video

A Cook:
sauté
chop
mince
slice
cut
heat
broil
taste
boil
bake
fry
marinate
whip
stir
scoop

Dinosaurs marinate in the earth.
The fiddles boiled the air with their music.
The lilacs sliced the sky into purple.

Here are some other examples of the use of verbs:

Her husband's breath *sawing* her sleep in half . . .
The sunken light of late day *stretches* on their propane tank.¹⁰

I *exploded* when I saw him . . .¹¹
Others in pairs in cars to the moon *flashing* river.¹²

. . . where angels and gladiolas *walk* your skin / to sleep in the earth . . .¹³

My blood *buzzes* like a hornet's nest.¹⁴

This does not mean that while you are writing you should stop and contemplate a new verb for an hour. Only, be aware of your verbs and the power they have and use them in fresh ways. The more you are awake to all aspects of language, the more vibrant your writing will be. You might decide ultimately that *run*, *see*, *go*, are for you. That's fine, but then it is a choice you make rather than some place in your sentence where you are unaware, asleep and snoring.

Types of Poetry

COUPLET: Is a pair of lines that rhyme. The couplet may be complete in itself or may be part of a longer poem.

*The artist stirred some blue and green
To paint an underwater scene.*

HAIKU: Is an unrhymed poem consisting of three lines and seventeen syllables. A haiku often describes something in nature

*The autumn wind blows,
Calling the leaves on the ground
To join him in dance.*

CINQUAIN: Is an unrhymed, five-line poem. Each line has a set number of words or syllables and a specific function.

Word Number Example/Pattern

<i>Butterflies</i>	<i>1 word</i>
<i>Gentle creatures</i>	<i>2 words</i>
<i>Fluttering, searching, landing</i>	<i>3 words</i>
<i>Lovely flashes of light</i>	<i>4 words</i>
<i>Miracles</i>	<i>1 word</i>

Syllable Example/Pattern (Most Common Form)

<i>Puppies</i>	<i>2 syllables</i>
<i>Fuzzy, playful</i>	<i>4 syllables</i>
<i>Running, eating, chewing</i>	<i>6 syllables</i>
<i>Tennis balls, toys, beds, shoes, leashes</i>	<i>8 syllables</i>
<i>Loving</i>	<i>2 syllables</i>

LIMERICK: Is a humorous five-line poem. It is made up of thirteen beats and has a rhyme scheme of AABBA.

*There was a young boy from Caboo,
Who had trouble tying his shoe.
He said to his ox,
"I'll just walk in my socks."
Now all of his friends do that too!*

QUATRAIN: Is a four-line poem. Its rhyme scheme may be AABB, ABAB, ABBA, for ABCB. Quatrains are often combined to form a long poem.

*A fresh patch of snow
Tiny snowflakes all aglow
Soft and smooth as silk
Icy white as milk*

ACROSTIC: The first letters of the lines of this type of poem spell out the topic or title of the poem. Acrostic poems may or may not rhyme.

*C*uddly
*A*dorable
*T*iny

DIAMANTE: Is a seven-line, diamond shaped poems that follow a specific patterns using parts of speech. Each line uses a different part of speech. Many diamante poems **begin with one subject** and then **transitions/ends to a contrasting subject** in the fourth line.

<i>Plants</i>	<i>Subject</i>
<i>Green, beautiful</i>	<i>Adjectives</i>
<i>Living, giving, creating</i>	<i>Verbs</i>
<i>Flowers, trees, fruits, vegetables</i>	<i>Nouns</i>
<i>Growing, blooming, ripening</i>	<i>Verbs</i>
<i>Bright, fragrant</i>	<i>Adjective</i>
<i>Gardens</i>	<i>Subject</i>

CLERIHEW: Are funny poems about real people. A clerihew has four-lines and an *AABB* rhyming scheme. The first line includes the person's name.

Our teacher, Ms. Brite
Really knows how to write,
But her awful singing
Often leaves our ears ringing.

"I AM" POEM: The writer expresses personal thoughts and feelings, following a ten-line format. This type of poetry is called "personal poetry."

I am Charles
Silly, talkative, energetic
Child of Wendy and Tim
Who loves mystery books
Who needs understanding
Who feels curious
Who gives honesty
Who fears thunderstorms
Who would like to be a doctor
I am Charles

FIVE SENSES: Is shaped like a triangle because of the patterning of words used. It uses sensory words to describe its subject. Five senses poems do not have to rhyme.

Puppy
Fresh, warm
Fuzzy, soft, cuddly
Brown, playful, fast, cute
Panting, licking, jumping, digging, barking

Writing with Random Verbs

Write down three numbers from 1-100. Then find the corresponding verbs from this list. Write about a single subject that does all three verbs.

- | | | |
|------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1. be | 35. keep | 69. understand |
| 2. have | 36. let | 70. watch |
| 3. do | 37. begin | 71. follow |
| 4. say | 38. seem | 72. stop |
| 5. go | 39. help | 73. create |
| 6. can | 40. talk | 74. speak |
| 7. get | 41. turn | 75. read |
| 8. would | 42. start | 76. allow |
| 9. make | 43. might | 77. add |
| 10. know | 44. show | 78. spend |
| 11. will | 45. hear | 79. grow |
| 12. think | 46. play | 80. open |
| 13. take | 47. run | 81. walk |
| 14. see | 48. move | 82. win |
| 15. come | 49. like | 83. offer |
| 16. could | 50. live | 84. remember |
| 17. want | 51. believe | 85. love |
| 18. look | 52. hold | 86. consider |
| 19. use | 53. bring | 87. appear |
| 20. find | 54. happen | 88. buy |
| 21. give | 55. must | 89. wait |
| 22. tell | 56. write | 90. serve |
| 23. work | 57. provide | 91. die |
| 24. may | 58. sit | 92. send |
| 25. should | 59. stand | 93. expect |

26. call	60. lose	94. build
27. try	61. pay	95. stay
28. ask	62. meet	96. fall
29. need	63. include	97. cut
30. feel	64. continue	98. reach
31. become	65. set	99. kill
32. leave	66. learn	100. remain
33. put	67. change	
34. mean	68. lead	

https://literacyforall.org/docs/100_Most_common_in_American_English.pdf