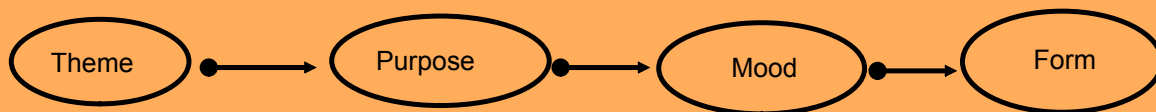


Just like the body has a skeleton to hold its shape, poems have a structure that hold their ideas together. In poetry, that "skeleton" is called form. There are different types, or forms of poetry such as Haiku, Lantrene, Couplet, Quatrain (a four line poem), Limerick, and Free Verse.

Some points to consider when choosing a "skeleton" for your poem are, of course, its theme, purpose, and mood but also think about if you want your poem to be compact or lengthy, rhymed or unrhymed, metered or unmetered.



Theme

When you select a theme, this becomes the focus of the whole poem. It is the main idea of the piece and everything in the poem relates to that idea and reinforces it. All the words, descriptions, figurative language, detail sentences, and scenes are all small parts that add to the reader's understanding of what you feel about the theme.

PURPOSE

After your theme is selected you must ask yourself three (3) questions to guide you in the development of your theme.

1. Who is your audience and what do you want to tell them?
2. What is your theme?
3. How can you support the theme with descriptive elements?

Mood is defined as a created atmosphere or context. In the movies mood is achieved by special lighting, sound effects, selected music, and the tone of the actors' dialogue and actions. In poetry, to create mood, the writer must rely on his/her use of words and phrases to "paint the right scene" - in other words, create the right mood. The mood may be somber, light-hearted, "other worldly," comical, silly, or thought provoking.

Three questions will help you decide how the purpose and mood will combine to complete your poem.

1. How do you feel about the theme?
2. Is the theme serious, funny, sad?
3. Are you explaining something?

After the mood of the poem has been determined, decide which **poetic form** you will use to BEST achieve the mood, fulfills the purpose, and supports the theme that you've determined.

There is so much to learn about poetic form but the best way to learn is to try to put some "flesh" or "meat on your bones" on your skeleton and experience writing poetry using different poetic forms. So, here are definitions and examples of the four out of the six forms we will be concentrating on.

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 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!

Examples:

The Rose

The red blossom bends
and drips its dew to the ground.
Like a tear it falls

A Rainbow

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

Limerick is the second poetic form we will learn about.

A **limerick** is a five-line poem written with one couplet and one triplet. If a couplet is a two-line rhymed poem, then a triplet would be a three-line rhymed poem.

The rhyme pattern is a b b a with lines 1, 2 and 5 containing 3 beats and rhyming, and lines 3 and 4 having two beats and rhyming. Some people say that the limerick was invented by soldiers returning from France to the Irish town of Limerick in the 1700's.

Limericks are meant to be funny. They often contain hyperbole, onomatopoeia, idioms, puns, and other figurative devices. The last line of a good limerick contains the PUNCH LINE or "heart of the joke." As you work with limericks, remember to have fun, I mean FUN! Say the following limericks out loud and clap to the rhythm.

Examples:

A flea and a fly in a **flue**
Were caught, so what could they **do**?
Said the fly, "Let us **flee**."
"Let us fly," said the **flea**.
So they flew through a flaw in the **flue**.

Anna Maria From France

Anna Maria from France
Hated to sing and dance
But she boogied one day
What an awful display!
When her neighbor set fire to her pants

Let's practice...

There once was a pauper named Meg

Who accidentally broke her _____.

She slipped on the _____.

Not once, but thrice

Take no pity on her, I _____.

The third poetic form is Free verse

Free Verse is just what it says it is - poetry that is written without proper rules about form, rhyme, rhythm, meter, etc.

In free verse the writer makes his/her own rules. The writer decides how the poem should look, feel, and sound. Henry David Thoreau, a great philosopher, explained it this way, ". . . perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away." It may take you a while to "hear your own drummer," but free verse can be a great way to "get things off your chest" and express what you really feel.

Example:

Did I Drop a Match?

How come your eyes are coal
Any your smile is fireproof glass
That I can not climb?
Use to be
You were a meadow
And I was your sun
What fire has
Eaten your grasses
Killed your flowers
Spooked your animals?
Did I drop a match
Or something?

The fourth type is Couplet.

Couplet lesson

Attachments

Couplet lesson 1.notebook