

*Pearl Fincher* | Museum of Fine Arts

# Pearl at Home

Art projects designed for family fun, for suggested ages of 5 and up to be completed at home with easily-accessible art materials.

## HAIKU POEM BOOK



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# HAIKU POEM BOOK

## MATERIALS

- **Paper, cardstock, Bristol board, or poster board**  
In any size: regular letter - 8.5x11”, legal - 8.5 x14”, or tabloid - 11x17”  
Heavier papers are a little better than thinner paper for this project
- **Color construction paper or cardstock**
- **Media of your choice:**  
Paints, stamps & ink pads, colored pencils, markers, collage materials, etc.
- **Tools:** scissors, glue or glue stick, ruler
- **Pen or pencil and writing paper** • **Black Sharpie**
- **The “rules” to writing a haiku poem**, detailed below

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

Paintings and sculptures are not the only things we call art. Other art genres include film, photography, digital arts, dance, music, and literature – which includes poetry. All of the arts can easily influence the others, and they can be combined into multimedia presentations. Our project today is a combination of a specific type of poetry and illustration within a book.

The haiku form of poetry began in Japan in the 13th century. The form of the poem is always in **three lines** and **it does not need to rhyme**. Haiku poetry often focuses on images from nature, attempting to describe the image of a simple moment or expression. For example, a poet uses a “seasonal feature word” such as “snow” – which tells the reader what time of year it is – instead of directly using the word “winter” in the poem.

Another characteristic of haiku is a division somewhere in the poem, which focuses first on one thing, then on another. The relationship between these two parts is sometimes surprising.

The goal of this form of poetry is to describe the details of what caused an emotion to be felt, instead of directly saying how a scene makes one feel. If the sight of an empty winter sky made the poet feel lonely, describing that sky can give the same feeling to the reader.

In addition to these guidelines for a haiku, the structure is very important!  
**See the next page for the structure of a haiku poem, as well as several examples.**

## **STRUCTURE OF A HAIKU**

A haiku poem must have a TOTAL of 17 syllables\* (not words), broken up into 3 lines as follows:

The first line has **5 syllables exactly**

The second line has **7 syllables exactly**

The third line has **5 syllables exactly**

*Example:*

*The last winter leaves (5)*

*Clinging to the black branches (7)*

*Explode into birds (5)*

\*A syllable – pronounced sill-ah-bul – is a unit of pronunciation having one vowel sound, with or without surrounding consonants. It can form the whole word, or just part of it.

For example, there is only one syllable in the word “dog,” there are two syllables in “water” (wa-ter), and three syllables in the word “inferno” (in-fer-no).

## **EXAMPLES**

*An old silent pond...*

*A frog jumps into the pond,*

*splash! Silence again.*

— Japanese Master Poet: Basho, 17th century

Hawk, horse, butterfly  
Costumes of abilities  
Possibilities

Hot dogs and nachos  
Pitches, hits, throws and runners  
Waiting on a bug

Pelt, scales, feathers, shell  
Bark, leaf, stem, flowers forming  
Mom’s favorite clothes.

Tree clad walls of mist  
Float densely above a stream  
Sunlight stutters bright

Flickering shadow  
New thought’s signpost reflection  
Metamorphosis

Friends smiling faces  
Cake, ice cream and games await  
Happy Birthday now!

New puppies wriggle  
Chicks fluttering in their nest  
Happy Mothers’ Day!

# DIRECTIONS

## 1 Write or find a haiku poem to illustrate

Write your own haiku poem, thinking about how you might illustrate it. If you don't want to write your own, you can use one of our examples on the previous page or look online to find a poem you'd like to illustrate.

## 2 Make an accordion book

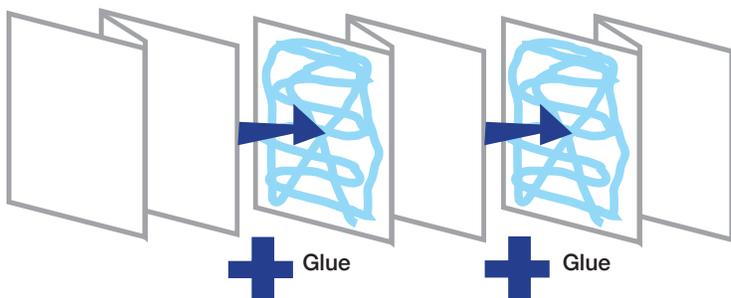
Before you illustrate your poem, you'll need to create an accordion book by combining folded pieces of paper together. You will later use both sides of the folded paper for your illustrations. Fold your paper according to the size recommendations below. Each fold will be accordion-style: alternating the direction each time you fold.

**For letter size paper:** Use 3 pieces of paper, each trimmed to 6" x 11". Fold each piece into 3 equal panels (2 folds). To make a long accordion book, overlap and glue the BACK of the last panel of sheet 1 with the FRONT of the first panel of sheet 2. Then overlap and glue the BACK of the last panel of sheet 2 and the FRONT of the first panel of sheet 3. You will have 7 panels.

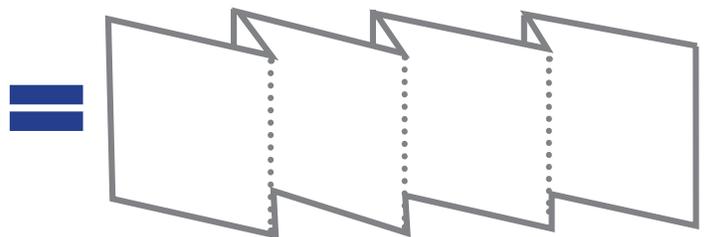
**For legal size paper:** Use 2 pieces of paper, folded into thirds. To make a long accordion book, overlap and glue the BACK of the last panel of sheet 1 with the front of the the first panel of sheet 2. You will have 5 panels.

**For tabloid size paper:** Cut your paper in half so you have two 5.5" x 17" pieces of paper. Fold each piece into 4 equal panels. To make a longer accordion book, overlap and glue the BACK of the last panel of sheet 1 with the FRONT of the first panel of sheet 2. You will have 7 panels.

The process looks like this:



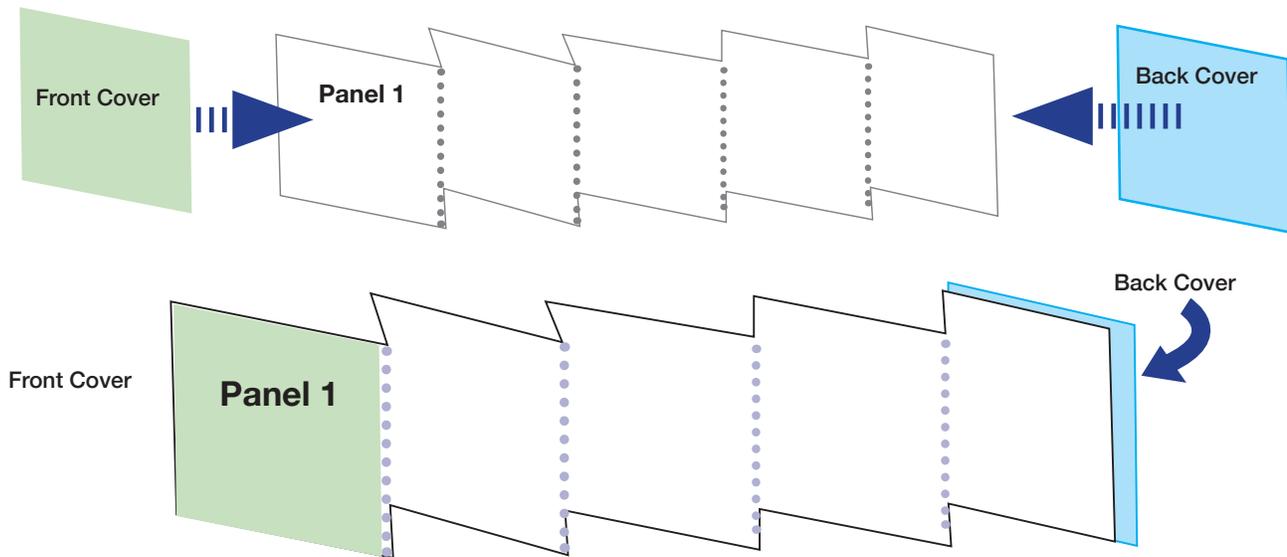
The result looks like this:



### 3 Make covers for the front and back of your book

Make a front cover by choosing any color paper and trimming it to the size of one of your book's pages. Glue it onto panel 1 – the panel on the far left of your long book of pages.

For the back cover, trim another piece of colored paper to match your book page size. Glue it onto the back of your very last page – so that the covers are on the outside of the book when it is closed. Let the cover papers dry.



### 4 Write your poem in your book

Place your book **flat open** on the table with the **front cover facing up**. Use a pencil to lightly write the first two lines of your poem across your pages, but **DO NOT** write on your front or back covers. Be sure to write large enough so that the poem lines stretch across multiple pages. Remember that accordion books are not read like a traditional book, where you have to turn individual pages over. The accordion folds allow the pages to be spread out so you see them all at once.

Keeping your book flat, turn it over and **write your third line on the back side**.

Once you have “penciled in” all three lines of the poem, go back and make the words darker by tracing over your lines with a black Sharpie or marker.

**TIPS:** You can use fun lettering like bubble or curly letters, write some words or letters bigger than the others, or write in different styles. You can write the words in straight or wavy lines.

**Alternatives:** If you have a set of alphabet stamps, you can use those instead of writing. You can also cut out words and letters from magazines to use in your poem.

# 5 Illustrate your poem

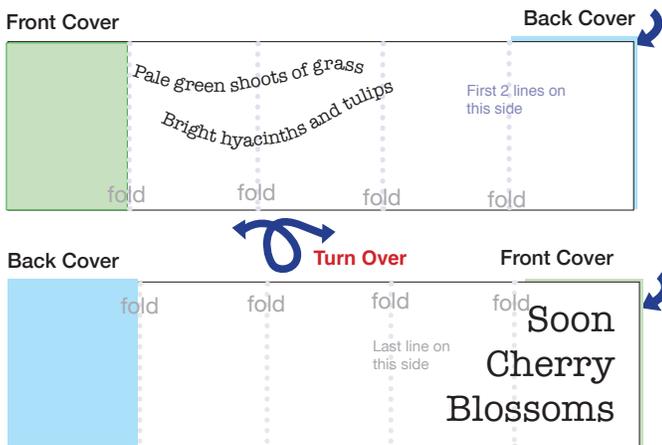
If you couldn't fit in everything you wanted to say in your haiku because of the limited amount of words allowed, illustrations can help! They can add more information about what you wanted to say – but in pictures. Fill both sides of your book with illustrations that help your reader better understand your poem.

Draw pictures to illustrate the poem and to add more imagery about your subject. Use colored pencils, markers, or your other media of choice to add color and complete your designs.

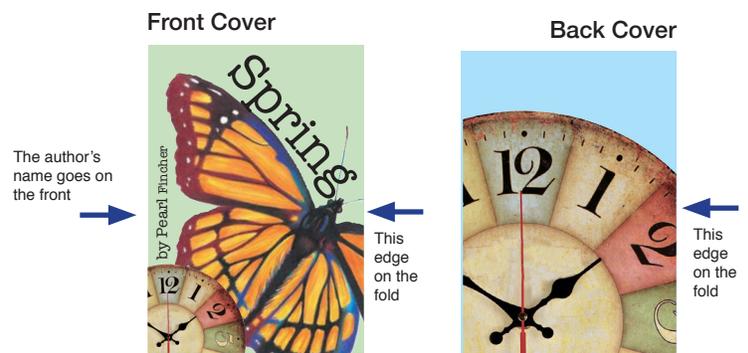
Draw some things **LARGE**. Artists change the scale or size of things to add emphasis or to make a statement with an unexpected size relationship. For example, if you are drawing a butterfly, we can see more of its beauty if the wings are drawn as big as possible. If you add a tiny car to that illustration, the butterfly will seem more important than the car because of its larger size.

**Be sure to decorate your front and back covers.** They can be separate from your “inside” illustrations, or they can be part of them.

## Step 4:



Example of what you'll see when your book is closed:



Example of a book when it is open:

## Step 5:

