

Haiku

A Haiku is a traditional Japanese poetic form. It is an unrhymed three-line poem - sounds easy? To make things a little more of a challenge, each line has a set number of syllables.

Line 1 has 5 syllables - For example, Waves crash on the shore

Line 2 has 7 syllables - For example, Sand sparkles in the sunlight

Line 3 has 5 syllables - For example, Seagulls swooping past

So our Haiku looks like this:



Waves crash on the shore
Sand sparkles in the sunlight
Seagulls swooping past

As a Haiku uses syllables for its strict poetic form, giving it rhythm and structure, what are syllables and how do we count them?

What is a syllable?

A syllable is how many sounds are in a word. Every word can be broken up into a group of sounds, these are called syllables.

WATER has two syllables 'WA' and 'TER'.

There is a trick to help find out the number of syllables in a word: Put your fist close under your chin and then say a word. Then count how many times your fist touches your chin.

See if you can count the syllables in these words. Use the trick to help you.

A1. Shore =

2. Sunlight =

3. Danger =

4. Tomorrow =

5. Mum =

6. Sand =

Can you count the syllables in each line of this poem? Is it a Haiku? Why

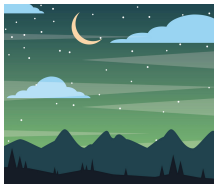
B1. Yellow heads swaying

2. Leaves dancing in the soft breeze

3. Sunbeams kiss the grass

Answers

A1. one 2. two 3. two 4. three 5. one 6. one B1.5 , B2. 7, B3. 5, Yes it is a Haiku as it has three lines with 5,7 and 5 syllables respectively.



Haiku poems are often about seasons or nature,
though you can write your own haiku about anything you like.

Your poem could be about:

An animal or pet, the beach, your favourite food, playing in the park,
your favourite holiday spot, your back garden, the night sky, even
the weather.....



One more thing to keep in mind is that the last line of a haiku
usually makes an observation - it points out something about
the subject you are writing about.



‘What am I’ Haiku

Haikus can act like a riddle. Try writing a haiku riddle about a
certain animal but don't mention the animal's name. See if your
friends and family can guess what you were writing about.

Can you guess the animal in these Haikus?

Green and speckled legs,
Hop on logs and lily pads
Splash in cool water.

1. What am I? _____

Hunt in the dark night
Swoop on wings, with eyes so wide
Home to nest by day

2. What am I? _____

Now you have a go but don't forget to count those syllables!