



Practitioner submitted task: Prepared for the Project, Teaching to Fish (Build Tasks)
Integrating OALCF Task Development within Ontario's Literacy Programs (2014)

Task Title: Write a Haiku

OALCF Cover Sheet – Learner Copy

Learner Name: _____

Date Started (m/d/yyyy): _____

Date Completed (m/d/yyyy): _____

Task Description: After reviewing examples of both traditional and modern style haiku, and practising breaking words into syllables, learners will write their own haiku.

Competency: A: Find and Use Information, B: Communicate ideas and information

Task Groups: A1: Read continuous text, B2: Write continuous text, B4: Express oneself creatively

Level Indicators:

- A1.3: Read longer texts to connect, evaluate and integrate ideas and information
- B2.2: Write texts to explain and describe information and ideas
- B4: Express oneself creatively, such as by writing journal entries, telling a story and creating art

Materials Required: Haiku handout for learners

Haiku

Haiku is a kind of poetry that started in Japan around the year 1650. Haiku are very short poems; each haiku is only three lines long. Because they are short, haiku usually focus on a single image. In traditional haiku, this is usually an image from nature that can be associated with a particular season. Usually, these images imply a deeper meaning. The following are examples of traditional style haiku:

The grass grows greener;
With each day that passes by,
The world is reborn.

The snow has returned,
Like a shroud upon the world
As nights grow longer.

If you look closely, you will notice that the first line of each poem has five syllables, or distinct units of sound. The second line has seven syllables, and the last line has five. Haiku that are written in the Japanese language follow slightly different rules, but this is the accepted format for writing haiku in English.

Modern Haiku

Modern style haiku use the same format as more traditional haiku, but sometimes use images from outside the world of nature or discuss different types of ideas. Many modern haiku are meant to be funny. Take a look at the following haiku:

She collects dead pens
To recapture the lost ink
Of dreams unwritten.

Opening windows
On an air conditioned bus;
People are stupid.

Work Sheet

Task 1A: Choose one of the Haiku poems (not modern haiku). What season do you think of when you read this poem? Why?

Answer:

Task 1B: How does the poem you chose make you feel? Why?

Answer:

Task 2: Which style of haiku do you prefer, traditional or modern? Why?

Answer:

Task 3: Now that you know what a haiku looks like, and you've seen some examples, try writing a haiku of your own; it can be traditional or modern. Writing haiku takes practice; you may want to write two or three in order to find one that you really like.

Answer:
