

What is poetry?	
<b>P</b>	Putting the best words in the best order (and playing with words)
<b>O</b>	Opening your heart and sharing your feelings
<b>E</b>	Engaging as many senses as possible
<b>T</b>	Treating the reader to a surprise
<b>R</b>	Rules? What rules? There are no rules.
<b>Y</b>	You - <i>your</i> story-- the one only you can tell

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The above acrostic poem applies to *ALL* poetry!

**Here are some additional things to be thinking about in terms of HAIKU poetry. Your Haiku should:**

- be nature-based
- consist of three short lines (American haiku has 5 syllables for first and third line; 7 syllables for middle line)
- create an image in the reader's mind
- use nature words
- be written in present tense
- be about something that really happens (not fantasy)
- not rhyme
- have no title
- include minimal or no punctuation (dashes are sometimes used to assist with creating pauses)
- offer surprise or understanding

**A Simple Formula for Your First Haiku**

Don't worry about syllable count!

**Line 1: where**

**Line 2: what**

**Line 3: when**

*\*Often haiku is about what you SEE, but it can also be about what you HEAR, SMELL, TASTE, TOUCH.*

**Ways to Revise & Improve Your Haiku:**

Play with words and order! Read aloud. What sounds/looks better? Switch out words to make the most vivid movie in the reader's mind. Strive for words that will transport the reader to the exact moment in space and time that you are writing about.

Questions? Contact me via email: [irene@irenelatham.com](mailto:irene@irenelatham.com) or text 205-999-8167  
Read hundreds of free poems and learn about my books at [irenelatham.com](http://irenelatham.com).

## HAIKU EXAMPLES

in tickly-toe grass,  
a buttercup offers up  
yellow nose kisses  
—Betsy Snider

The old pond  
The sound  
of a frog jumping into the water  
—Basho, trs. Byth

I, the hoverer,  
Sip the nasturtium's nectar  
And sing with my wings.  
—Jack Prelutsky [hummingbird]

I'm red, delicious—  
with a quick twist of your wrist,  
I'm free from the tree  
—Laura Purdie Salas [apple]

the snow is melting  
and the village is flooded  
with children  
—Issa, trs. Robert Haas

spring rain  
fallen blossoms paint  
my face  
—Jane Reichhold

going  
where the river goes  
first day of spring  
—John Wills

called by light  
and the scent of tomorrow  
bee climbs inside  
—Irene Latham

O snail  
Climb Mount Fuji,  
But slowly, slowly!  
—Buson

the mystery is  
how owl so round and ruffled  
learned to drink starlight  
—Irene Latham