

Tanka Poem

What is a Tanka Poem?

A tanka poem is a form which originates in Japan. This poem can also be known as a waka or uta. The tanka poem is very similar to the structure and organisation of haiku, however the only difference is that a tanka poem has two additional lines.

What is the Structure of a Tanka Poem?

A tanka poem consists of five lines and altogether there are thirty one syllables. Each line has a certain number of syllables, much the same as a haiku poem. Tanka poems do not need to rhyme, however a writer may choose to do so if they wish.

Title

Line 1 – 5 syllables

Line 2 – 7 syllables

Line 3 – 5 syllables

Line 4 – 7 syllables

Line 5 – 7 syllables

An Example of an Tanka Poem

I love my chicken.

He is so fluffy and white.

He has a big beak.

And he is very polite.

He loves when I pat his back.



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Before you begin writing your tanka poem you should start by writing down different ideas that you have about your topic or object. Use the following template to help you with your ideas.

Choose a topic or object for your poem: _____

What are some adjectives that describe your topic or object?

What are some action words that your topic or object can do?

What are some of your feelings and thoughts towards your topic or object?

What are some synonyms (words that mean the same) for your topic or object?

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Write your tanka poem on the five lines below.

Draw pictures below the lines to go with your tanka poem.
