

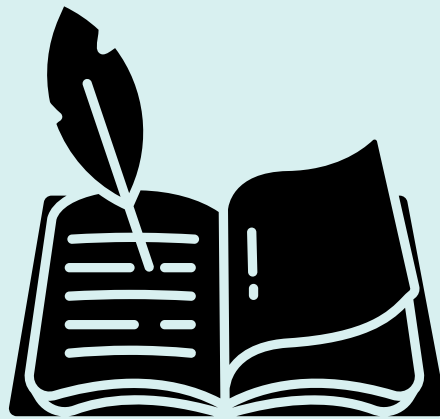
Intro to Poetry

The Poetry Starter Kit

By Tammy Friedman

Welcome to your Poetry Starter Kit - a creative, inspiring guide filled with tips, tools, and prompts to help you find your poetic voice. Whether you're just getting started or ready to explore new forms and styles, this kit is here to support you every step of the way.

Let's begin!



Intro to Poetry



What Is Poetry?

Poetry is more than just words on a page.

It's a feeling you can't quite explain.

A moment caught in rhythm.

A truth wrapped in imagery.

Whether it rhymes or rambles, whispers or shouts - poetry is your voice finding its way into the world.

As Robert Frost once said:

"Poetry is when an emotion has found its thought and the thought has found words."

In other words, poetry is you - your thoughts, your feelings, your observations - turned into something beautiful, honest, and uniquely your own.

Why Write Poetry?

Because you have something to say.

Because sometimes your heart speaks louder than your mouth.

Because your words can move, heal, challenge, or inspire.

Poetry is:

- A place to be bold
- A space to be still
- A way to explore your story
- A chance to make magic out of ordinary things

"Poetry is the rhythmic creation of beauty in words"

- Edgar Allan Poe

Free Verse

Intro to Poetry



Free Verse

Poetry without rules. It doesn't have to rhyme or follow a specific rhythm. It's the most open, expressive form perfect for beginners and deep thinkers alike.

Example:

I walk where the wind tells stories
and the sky listens without interrupting.
I don't need a map.
I just need a moment.

Example:

Time seems to stand so still,
at least it feels like it does.
Quietly contemplating moments,
that frequently visit my mind.

Haiku

A 3-line poem that follows a syllable pattern: 5 / 7 / 5. Haiku often capture a single moment in nature or emotion.

Example: Nature

Raindrops on the roof
tapping out a quiet beat
as the moon looks in.

Example: Nature

A quiet spring rain
Washing the world in soft hues
Nature's sweetest song.

Example: Emotion

My thoughts lost in dreams
Where the ending never arrives
Quiet truths left bare.

Acrostic

Each line starts with a letter from a word going down the page. The lines describe or relate to that word.

Example (POET):

P - Painting pictures with
O - Open hearts and brave voices
E - Every word matters
T - Tell your truth and let it shine

Example (NOTE):

N - Nimble and precise
O - Overwhelming at its best
T - Teaching valuable lessons
E - Every stroke a whimsical mark

Cinquain



Cinquain

A 5-line poem with a specific structure:

Line 1: 1 word (subject)

Line 2: 2 words (describing)

Line 3: 3 words (action)

Line 4: 4 words (feeling or a phrase)

Line 5: 1 word (synonym or conclusion)

Example:

Ocean

deep, wild

roaring, whispering, calling

secrets beneath the surface

mystery

Example:

Fear

vast, untamed

pulsing, alarming, creeping

hidden beneath the shadows

trepidation

Limerick

A funny, 5-line poem with a bouncy rhythm and rhyme. Pattern: AABBA.

Example:

A jellyfish danced in the bay,

with seaweed that got in the way.

It twirled with a snap,

got stuck in a trap,

then wriggled and swam off all day!

Example:

It was yesterday when my pet anteater ran amok.

This caused quite confusion, when he began to cluck.

He then began to bark,

running through the park.

Then crashed into a bush, and there he was stuck!!

Rhyming Couplets

Two lines that rhyme and often go together in pairs throughout a poem.

Example:

I wrote a poem late last night,

the stars above were my only light.

Example:

I sit in quiet reflection once again,

my only solace being found within

Intro to Poetry



Narrative Poetry

A poem that tells a story with characters, a setting, and sometimes a plot twist.

Example:

The storm rolled in at half-past two, the
sky turned green, the thunder grew.
A girl stood still with soaked red shoes,
and knew the wind had brought strange news.

Example:

The daffodils danced as a breeze took hold,
mimicking grand stories left to be told.
The night then slowly began to seep in,
as echoes of forgotten secrets quieted their tune.

Spoken Word / Slam Poetry

Poetry written to be performed out loud. It's full of energy, emotion, and often deals with real-life topics.

Tip:

Use your voice, your rhythm, and your truth. Let it be powerful. Let it be yours.

Example:

I am louder than the silence they gave me.
Braver than the fear they tried to sell.
I write because my voice
is a revolution waiting to be heard.

Stanza

A group of lines in a poem kind of like a paragraph in a story.

Try this:

Group 4 lines together, skip a line, then write 4 more. You just built two stanzas!

Intro to Poetry



Line

A single row of words in a poem. Poems are made up of lines, which can be short, long, or anything in between.

A poems rhythm lives inside its lines.

Rhyme

When two or more words sound the same at the end like night and light or fun and sun.

Try this:

Write a list of rhyming pairs and see if you can build a poem around them!

Rhythm

The beat of the poem like a song without music. Its how the poem moves when read aloud.

Tip:

Clap or tap as you read to hear the rhythm in your own words.

Metaphor & Simile

- Metaphor compares two things without using like or as.
- Simile compares two things using like or as.

Examples:

- Her eyes were twin lanterns in the dark. (metaphor)
- He was fast like a rocket. (simile)

Imagery

Words that create pictures in your mind by using the five senses sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch.

Intro to Poetry



Try this:

Write about your favorite food using all five senses!

Alliteration

The repetition of the same sound or letter at the beginning of words.

Example:

Silver seaweed swayed silently.

Repetition

Repeating words or lines for effect. It adds emotion, drama, or emphasis.

Example:

I waited.

I waited.

I waited

And still silence.

Tone & Mood

- Tone is the poets attitude (serious, playful, angry, hopeful).
- Mood is how the poem makes you feel when you read it.

Try this:

Write two poems about the same thing one with a joyful tone and one with a serious one.

Theres no wrong way to write a poem.

Your voice is yours.

Your thoughts, your feelings, your style they all belong in your poetry.

Intro to Poetry



Read your poem out loud.

Poetry has a rhythm, a heartbeat.

When you read it aloud, you'll hear where it dances and where it might need a little tweak.

Start small.

One word. One line. One feeling.

You don't have to write an epic. A whisper can be just as powerful as a roar.

Play with your words.

Use words that sound fun.

Use made-up words.

Use BIG words. Use small ones.

It's all part of your poetic toolbox.

Let your poem surprise you.

You don't always need a plan.

Sometimes your poem knows where it wants to go - let it take the lead.

Be bold, be soft, be weird, be YOU.

Poetry is where all your colors belong.

"Be yourself. Everyone else is already taken."

-Oscar Wilde

Intro to Poetry



Prompt of the Week

Prompt: Write about a color without naming it.

Describe it using:

- What it feels like
- What it smells or sounds like
- Where you've seen it before
- A memory it reminds you of
- An emotion it brings up

Example Starters:

It's the color of quiet mornings

when everything waits... soft

and slow like a secret.

It smells like sun-warmed stone

and sounds like the hum of honeybees.