



1. What is a Sestina?

A sestina is a 39-line poem made of six 6-line stanzas and a 3-line envoi.

It doesn't use rhyme, but repeats six end-words in a set pattern throughout the poem.

2. Choose a Theme and Six End Words

Start with a theme—like change, seasons, love, or memory.

Then choose six end-words that support your theme. Make sure they're versatile and can appear in different contexts.

3. Understand the Pattern

Each stanza ends with one of your chosen words in a rotating order:

Stanza 1: A B C D E F

Stanza 2: F A E B D C

Stanza 3: C F D A B E

Stanza 4: E C B F A D

Stanza 5: D E A C F B

Stanza 6: B D C E A F

Envoi: All six words used across three lines (two per line).

4. Use a Template to Start Writing

Use the provided Sestina Template to place your words in the correct order, then begin writing each stanza.

Focus on imagery, emotion, or story. Vary sentence structure to keep your poem engaging.

5. Write the Envoi

The final 3-line stanza ties everything together. Use all six of your words—two per line. It can reflect your theme, add closure, or offer a twist.

6. Revise and Reflect

Read your sestina aloud. Ensure your repeated words support your theme.

Polish your lines for rhythm, clarity, and meaning.

Tips to Remember:

- sestina doesn't rhyme.
- The pattern is strict, but your style is flexible.
- Practice different themes to build skill.
- You can write a 'Mini Sestina' (3 stanzas + envoi) to warm up!

Next Step:

Download the template, fill in your chosen words, and begin your poetic adventure!