

Class Slave Poems

American History

Overview

Your assignment will be to complete one or two of the following poems to create a class poetry book. I will assign the poem type and number of poems to be written by you. Be sure that you follow all instruction for each poem so all is complete when you turn everything in. The Ransom Note Poem is the only one that does not need to be typed. Add images or artwork to your poem. Extra points will be given to students for creativity.

Format

In the top left corner, write your name, class period, and type of poem. Title of Poem should be centered. Skip two lines and start your poem. Label each poem by type and create a title for it.

Poem will be typed unless you choose to write it CREATIVELY / ARTISTICALLY.

For Example (in the top left corner)

R. Rhodes

1st Period

Haiku

Title of Poem

Poem

Types of Poems

Ransom Note Poem

Cut out 25 words that you find interesting from some magazines. With a partner, trade words and create a poem with the words that you were given. You may not add additional words or discard any of the words. Arrange the words into five lines of five words each and create a poster of your poem. To add a final touch, create a title and your name out of letters that you cut out.

Where I'm From Poem (write from a slave's perspective)

Use the following poem by George Ella Lyon as a template for your "Where I'm From" poem. In this poem it's important to not mention specific places but to create an image from things you remember about your childhood ... AS A SLAVE.

I am from clothespins,
From Clorox and carbon-tetrachloride.
I am from the dirt under the back porch.
(Black, glistening
it tasted like beets.)
I am from the forsythia bush
The Dutch elm
Whose long one limbs I remember
As if they were my own.

I'm from fudge and eyeglasses,
From Imogene and Alafair
I'm from the know-it-alls
And the pass-it-ons,
From perk up and pipe down
I'm from He resoreth my soul
With a cottonball lamb
And ten verses I can say myself.

I'm from Artemus and Billie's Branch,
Fried corn and strong coffee.
From the finger my grandfather lost
To the auger
The eye my father shut to keep his sight.
Under my bed was a dress box
Spilling old pictures,
A sift of lost faces
To drift beneath my dreams.
I am from those moments –
Snapped before I budded –
Leaf-fall from the family tree.

"I Am" Poem (write from a slave's perspective)

Follow the format below to create your "I Am" poem.

I am (2 special characteristics you have)
I wonder (something you are actually curious about)
I hear (an imaginary sound)
I see (an imaginary sight)
I want (an actual desire)
I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

I understand (something you know is true)
I say (something you believe in)
I dream (something you actually dream about)
I try (something you really make an effort about)
I hope (something you actually hope for)
I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

I pretend (something you actually pretend to do)
I feel (a feeling about something imaginary)
I touch (an imaginary touch)
I worry (something that really bothers you)
I cry (something that makes you very sad)
I am (the first line of the poem repeated)

Cinquain

Write 2 cinquain poems.

A cinquain is a five-line unrhymed poem. It is easy to write and can be used in a variety of subject areas. Here is the formula.

Line One: One noun that introduces the poem's subject.

Line Two: Two adjectives that describe the subject.

Line Three: Three verbs (or verbals) related to the subject.

Line Four: Four-word phrase telling feelings of the writer or describing the subject.

Line Five: One noun (different from line one) that sums up the previous four lines.

Examples

Spiders

Tiny, busy

Spinning, moving, floating

Building Fragile wispy nests

Artists

Heron

White, long-necked

Watching, wading, eating

Segregated from the others

Fisherman

Limerick

Write 3 limerick poems.

A limerick is a five-line poem, usually humorous in nature, arranged in an A-A-B-B-A rhyme pattern. Lines one and two consist of eight or nine syllables. Lines three and four consist of five or six syllables. The last line (which rhymes with the first two) consist of from eight to ten syllables.

Examples

A chameleon when he's feeling blue,

Can alter his glum point of view.

By changing his hue

To a color that's new:

I'd like to do that, wouldn't you?

There was a young lady named Bright

Whose speed was much faster than light.

She went out one day

In a relative way

And returned on the previous night.

Diamante

Write 2 diamante poems.

The diamante is a perfect poem form to illustrate the contrast between two different subjects. The seven lines of this poem are in the shape of a diamond, with the different subject acting as top and bottom points of the diamond.

Line One: Noun "A."

Line Two: Two adjectives describing the noun "A."

Line Three: Three "ing" or "ed" words describing noun "A."

Line Four: Four nouns. Two describing the noun "A." Two describing noun "B."

Line Five: Three "ing" or "ed" words describing noun "B."

Line Two: Two adjectives describing the noun "B."

Line One: Noun "B."

DEMOCRACY

Many, representative

Self-governed, elected, tolerating

Legislature, constitution / despotism, absolutism

Inherited, exploiting, oppressing

Machiavellian, single

AUTOCRACY

POLLUTION

foul, noisy

stripping, exhausting, contaminating

clear cutting, dumping poisonous chemicals / treating wastes, banning dioxin

recycling, replenishing, preserving

clear, unspoiled

CONSERVATION

Haiku

Write 4 haiku poems.

Haiku is one of the most important form of traditional Japanese poetry. Haiku is, today, a 17-syllable verse form consisting of three metrical units of 5, 7, and 5 syllables. Each Haiku must also contain a kigo, a season word, which indicates in which season the Haiku is set. This can be an obvious reference to a specific season (ex. snow, sun, winter, etc.) or it can be more subtle (ex. mosquito representing summer).

Example

Temple bells die out.

The fragrant blossoms remain.

A perfect evening!

English Sonnet (also known as Shakespearean Sonnet)

An English sonnet has 14 lines, and the lines are always iambic pentameter. The rhyme scheme for an English sonnet is abab, cdcd, efef, and gg. We indicate rhyme schemes in poetry by assigning a letter of the alphabet to each rhyme sound. An English sonnet has three quatrains (stanzas of four lines) followed by a couplet (two lines in iambic pentameter ended with the same sound). In each quatrain, normally a question will be raised, and the couplet usually draws a conclusion or presents a solution to the problems outlined earlier in the poem.

Example:

Sonnet 18 by William Shakespeare

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? (a)
Thou art more lovely and more temperate: (b)
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May, (a)
And summer's lease hath all too short a date: (b)

Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines, (c)
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd; (d)
And every fair from fair sometime declines, (c)
By chance, or nature's changing course untrimm'd; (d)

But thy eternal summer shall not fade, (e)
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st; (f)
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade, (e)
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st: (f)

So long as man can breath, or eyes can see, (g)
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee. (g)

Petrarchan Sonnet (also known as the Italian sonnet)

A Petrarchan Sonnet is a fourteen line poem that has a pivot. The Petrarchan or Italian sonnet is broken into the octave and the sestet. There is a pivot, a change of meaning or direction, that occurs in a sonnet at the beginning of the sestet. This type of sonnet is also in iambic pentameter with the rhyme scheme abbaabba cdecde.

Example:

On His Being Arrived to the Age of Twenty-three by Milton

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth, (a)
Stolen on his wing my three and twentieth year! (b)
My hasting days fly on with full career, (b)
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th. (a)
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth, (a)

That I to manhood am arrived so near, (b)
And inward ripeness doth much less appear, (b)
That some more timely-happy spirits indu'th. (a)

Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow, (c)
It shall be still in strictest measure even (d)
To that same lot, however mean or high, (e)
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven. (d)
All is, if I have grace to use it so, (c)
As ever in my great Task-master's eye. (e)

Blank Verse

Blank Verse is any verse comprised of unrhymed lines all in the same meter, usually iambic pentameter. It was developed in Italy and became widely used during the Renaissance because it resembled classical, unrhymed poetry. Follow the example below and create your own blank verse poem of 4 stanzas with 5 lines each.

Example:

The Road Not Taken by Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Free Verse

Free verse has few distinct rules or boundaries. It is similar to blank verse in that it does not rhyme, but unlike blank verse, it is not written in iambic pentameter. The rhythm or cadence of free verse varies throughout the poem. Though the words don't rhyme, they flow along their own uneven pattern. Your free verse poem should have at least 15 lines.

Example:

Winter Poem by Nikki Giovanni
once a snowflake fell
on my brow and i loved
it so much and i kissed
it and it was happy and called its cousins
and brothers and a web
of snow engulfed me then
i reached to love them all
and i squeezed them and they became
a spring rain and i stood perfectly
still and was a flower

Rhyming Couplet

Write a Rhyming Couplet poem of at least 14 lines.

A couplet [CUP-let] is the simplest form of poetry. A couplet is a poem made of two lines of rhyming poetry that usually have the same meter. There are no rules about length or rhythm, but the rhyme scheme will be aabbccddeeffgghh etc.

Example:

Excerpt from the *Prologue to Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer

When April with his showers sweet with fruit (a)
The drought of March has pierced unto the root (a)
And bathed each vein with liquor that has power (b)
To generate therein and sire the flower; (b)
When Zephyr also has, with his sweet breath, (c)
Quickened again, in every holt and heath, (c)
The tender shoots and buds, and the young sun (d)
Into the Ram one half his course has run, (d)
And many little birds make melody (e)
That sleep through all the night with open eye (e)
(So Nature pricks them on to ramp and rage)- (f)
Then do folk long to go on pilgrimage, (f)
And palmers to go seeking out strange strands, (g)
To distant shrines well known in sundry lands. (g)