

Lesson Plan: Painting with Words - The Art of Haiku

Subject: English (Poetry)

Age Group: 10-12 years (UK Year 5/6)

Lesson Duration: 45-60 minutes

Materials Needed

- Paper or notebook
 - Pen or pencil
 - Whiteboard, large sheet of paper, or digital equivalent
 - Markers or coloured pens
 - (Optional) A window with a view, pictures of nature, or a few interesting objects (e.g., a leaf, a shell, a favourite toy)
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Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Define what a haiku is and describe its key features.
 - Correctly identify the 5-7-5 syllable structure in a poem.
 - Create your own original haiku that captures a specific moment or image.
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Lesson Structure

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

Hook: The 17-Syllable Challenge

Ask the learner(s): **"If you had to paint a picture of this exact moment, but you could only use 17 sounds (syllables), what would you say?"**

Give them a moment to think. They might say something like "Sitting at the desk, learning something new, sun shines on the page." Discuss their ideas briefly. Explain that this is exactly what a special type of poetry does.

Setting the Stage

Educator says: "Today, we're going to become word artists. We're going to explore a very old and cool form of poetry from Japan called a **haiku**. It's like taking a quick photo with words. Our goals today are to figure out the secret recipe for a haiku, practice counting its ingredients (syllables), and then create

our very own haiku masterpiece."

2. Body of the Lesson (25 minutes)

Part A: "I Do" - Modeling the Haiku (10 mins)

Educator explains the concept: "A haiku is a tiny poem with just three lines. It has two simple rules:"

1. **It's all about the syllables.** The first line has 5 syllables, the second has 7, and the third has 5 again. That's the 5-7-5 rule!
2. **It captures a moment.** Haikus usually focus on nature or a single, clear feeling or observation, like freezing a moment in time.

Educator models syllable counting:

"Let's look at a famous haiku and break it down. I'll write it on the board."

Green grass is growing, (5 syllables)

Sunlight warms my happy face, (7 syllables)

Spring is here today. (5 syllables)

"Now, let's check the syllables. The best way is to clap or tap them out as we say the words. Watch me."

- "Green (1) grass (2) is (3) grow (4) - ing (5)." (*Clap for each syllable*). "Perfect, that's 5!"
- "Sun (1) - light (2) warms (3) my (4) hap (5) - py (6) face (7)." (*Clap it out*). "Seven, just right!"
- "Spring (1) is (2) here (3) to (4) - day (5)." (*Clap it out*). "And five to finish. It works!"

Part B: "We Do" - Guided Practice Together (10 mins)

Educator says: "Okay, let's build one together. Our topic is 'a rainy day'. What words or feelings come to mind when you think of rain?"

Brainstorm words on the whiteboard (e.g., wet, drips, grey, puddle, splash, window, cozy, tap-tap-tap). Now, work together to build the haiku line by line.

- **Line 1 (5 syllables):** "Let's try to describe the sound. How about 'Grey clouds start to weep'?" (*Clap it out together: Grey-clouds-start-to-weep. That's 5!*). "Great!"
- **Line 2 (7 syllables):** "Now, what's happening outside? Maybe something about the window? How about 'Tiny droplets race on glass'?" (*Clap it out: Ti-ny-drop-lets-race-on-glass. Nope, that's 8. How can we fix it?*). Guide the student to adjust it. "Maybe 'Small drops race upon the glass'?" (*Clap: Small-drops-race-u-pon-the-glass. Yes, 7!*).
- **Line 3 (5 syllables):** "Let's finish the picture. How about 'A puddle gets deep'?" (*Clap: A-pud-dle-gets-deep. Perfect, 5!*).

Read the finished, co-created poem aloud with satisfaction.

Part C: "You Do" - Independent Creation (5 mins +)

Educator says: "Now it's your turn to be the poet! Your mission is to write one haiku about anything you can see, feel, or imagine right now. You could write about the view from the window, your pet, how you feel today, or even your lunch! Remember the rules: 3 lines, 5-7-5 syllables, and capture a moment."

Provide quiet time for the learner to brainstorm and write. Be available to help with syllable counting if they get stuck.

3. Conclusion (10 minutes)

Share and Celebrate

Invite the learner to share their haiku. Applaud their work and ask a question about it, like "What picture were you trying to paint with that poem?" or "I love the word you chose here, why did you pick it?" The focus is on celebration and positive reinforcement.

Recap and Review

Educator asks quick-fire questions:

- "So, what's the magic syllable recipe for a haiku?" (*Answer: 5-7-5*)
- "How many lines does a haiku have?" (*Answer: Three*)
- "Besides the syllable rule, what is a haiku usually about?" (*Answer: A moment in time, nature, a feeling*)

Reinforce the Takeaway

Educator says: "You did an amazing job today. You learned that poetry doesn't have to be long or complicated to be powerful. With just a few carefully chosen words, you can create a strong image or feeling for a reader. You are officially a haiku poet!"

Assessment

- **Formative (During the lesson):** Observe the learner's participation in the "We Do" brainstorming and syllable counting. Listen to their answers during the final recap questions to check for understanding.
- **Summative (End of lesson):** The original haiku created in the "You Do" section is the main assessment. Does it meet the success criteria below?

Success Criteria

A successful haiku will have:

- Exactly three lines.
- A first line with 5 syllables.
- A second line with 7 syllables.
- A third line with 5 syllables.

- A theme that captures a single moment, image, or feeling.
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Differentiation and Adaptability

- **For Learners Needing More Support (Scaffolding):**

- Provide a "word bank" of interesting words related to a chosen topic (e.g., for "the beach": sand, waves, salty, crash, shells, blue).
- Offer a sentence frame, like:
Line 1 (5 syllables): I can see the _____.
Line 2 (7 syllables): It is _____ and _____.
Line 3 (5 syllables): It makes me feel _____.
- Work one-on-one to clap out every word they suggest, helping them find alternatives if the syllable count is off.

- **For Learners Needing a Challenge (Extension):**

- Challenge them to write a "haiku sequence" - three related haikus that tell a mini-story or show a scene from different angles.
- Ask them to illustrate their haiku, turning it into a piece of visual art.
- Introduce the Japanese concept of *kigo* (a word that hints at the season) and challenge them to include one in their next haiku (e.g., 'blossom' for spring, 'sunburn' for summer).