Be a Nature Poet

Poetry takes SO many shapes and forms! Here are some examples of a few types of poems to get you started creating poetry. Use these templates to create your own nature poetry and as you continue to practice, you may want to branch out to other types or create your own! Note: There can be many different ways to create the same type of poem.

SHARE YOUR POEMS WITH YOUR COMMUNITY! Visit Community Exhibit - REACH Museum (visitthereach.org) for details on how to submit your poetry to the REACH’s Community Poetry Exhibit, starting in May 2021.

Hello, Goodbye Poem
Write a poem about the seasons in the Columbia Basin by considering what you enjoy about one season and what you look forward to about the next season.

Hello Winter
Goodbye Autumn
Hello gray skies and white snow
Goodbye colorful leaves
Hello shortest day of the year
Goodbye apple orchards and pumpkin patches
Hello long, star-filled nights
Goodbye animals, off to migrate or hibernate

Cinquain (version 2)
This is a five line poem that follows a specific syllable count:

2 syllables/4 syllables/6 syllables/8 syllables/2 syllables

A rock
Never moving
Until I pick it up
Toss it into the river, then
A splash!

I Am Poem
Pick something from nature that you enjoy and imagine being that thing. Spend some time describing that thing before telling the reader what the thing is in the last line.

I am a smooth and silent observer
I love the cold flow of water on my back
I want to see the world
I play with otters and salmon
I see floods and droughts
I am full of secret, ancient, stories
I am happy on my endless journey
I am anxious to see what comes next
I am excited about the cycles of nature
I am a river rock

Cinquain (version 1)
This is a five line poem that follows a specific word count:

1 noun/2 adjectives/3 –ing words/a phrase/a synonym or another noun related to the first noun.

Granite
Large, lonely
Sitting, waiting, watching
It is evidence of a powerful flood.
Erratic
5 Senses Poem

These poems are all about the 5 senses (sight, smell, hearing, touch, taste) and can be written and organized however you’d like.

Nature Finds Me

Nature finds me, Everywhere.
When I retreat inside to hide from the world, Angry at reality.
I notice it. Sprouting, From the cracks in the sidewalks.
I see it. Perched, Feathers fluffed on a light post.
I feel it. Blasting my cheeks With fine, airborne sand
As I wander to the mailbox.
I feel it. Warm and constant. A burning heat on the backs of my legs, My feet cooling in the swirling river.
I smell it. French fries, onions, And when I am really lucky, Petrichor, The sweet smell of earth and plants After rain.
I hear it. Deafening, flowing, hushed. A jumbled tumble of pebbles Pulled by river currents, Skipping through deep channels.
I taste it. Sweet and bitter. Fruits of the floods, Food grown in fertile, sun drenched soil, Created from catastrophe.
Yes, nature finds me. It stops me short, shouting Look! Listen! Taste! Touch! Smell! I always welcome it. It pulls me urgently, blissfully, Back to here and now.

5 Senses (Color) Poem

Write a poem about how you experience a color in nature through your five senses (sight, smell, hearing, touch, taste)

Gray looks like rain
It sounds like pebbles skipping along the river’s bottom
The color gray smells like burning wood
It tastes like smoke
Gray feels like winter

Collaborative Poem

Write this poem with a group! Each group member writes a line and then all the lines are organized into a group poem. The poem below was written by the students of the REACH Museum’s Nature Journaling Class.

Ice Age Floods
Impressive
Dangerous
A cold catastrophe waiting to happen
Were things living under the ice?
Glaciers floating like ice cubes in a water glass
Cold
Explosive floods
Fast
Tearing boulders from cliffs
Dirty
Carving the landscape
Mammoths floating like bobbers
Scars on the land
Coulees, ripples, channels, potholes, erratics
Sharp rocks
Limerick
In its simplest form, limerick is five lines long with a set rhyme scheme of AABBA. Lines 1, 2, and 5 are often longer than 3 and 4. Line 5 often serves as a punch line, as limericks are often funny!

With the past year we have had,
Times were sometimes good and sometimes bad,
We stayed home and stayed safe,
We had reasons to chafe.
It’s no wonder we often felt sad.

When you’re at home feeling mellow
Just take a look out your window,
Do you see trees?
Do you see bees?
You have front row seats to the show!

Tanka
This is another form of Japanese poetry that is 5 lines long follows a specific syllable count of 5 syllables/7 syllables/5 syllables/7 syllables/7 syllables.

I see signs of spring.
Buds appearing on branches,
Birds singing in trees,
Earth is now stretching awake,
After its long winter’s sleep

Haiku
This is a form of Japanese poetry that is three lines long and follows a specific syllable count of 5 syllables/7 syllables/5 syllables.

Under star-filled skies
Bats swoop, owls hoot. They are
Heroes of the night.

Diamante
This is a seven lined poem which can be shaped like a diamond and has the following word count: 1/2/3/4/3/2/1. It progresses from one subject at the top and near the middle changes to describe a different subject at the end.

Squirrel
Tail flicking
Scurrying, gathering, chattering
Lungs, whiskers sensing, gills
Waiting, swimming, lurking
Tail swishing
Catfish

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INIWIRMO Poem
(I Notice, I Wonder, It Reminds Me Of)
Use the prompts “I Notice”, “I Wonder” and “It Reminds Me Of” to create a unique poem about something you observe in nature. This can be done anywhere you can observe nature – even while looking out a window!

I notice an American Coot
Lying snug and still in the grass
In the middle of the park.
   Eyes blinking, but
   Unmoving.
Dark feathers reflecting the sunlight.
   I wonder about this.
   How did it get here?
   Why choose this spot?
Because Coots, as you may know
   Are water birds
With feet and legs made for swimming
   Not strolling in a grassy park.
   So why is it here?
It reminds me of a rabbit
   Still, like a statue
   In the sagebrush.
   Is it hiding?
Then I notice two eagles
   Perched in the trees above.
   Smart Coot.

Letter Poem
Choose two things are connected in a strong way, such as a rock and the Columbia River, or a sagebrush and the sun, or a pocket mouse and the grass. Imagine you are one of those things, and you are writing a letter to the other thing. What would you say? Write a short poem that is a letter between them. Here’s an example:

From the Rabbitbrush to the Blister Beetle
I don’t really mind so much
   That you invite all your friends
   To a big party in my branches.
I do mind a little
   That you and your friends
Are munching on my flowers.
   At least some of the pollen
   That clings to your feet
   Gets to the right place.
   And if a cow tries to chew my leaves
   They get a taste of you
   And never try it again!

There are lots of other types of poems out there! Some other types of poems and poetry techniques that you can look up for inspiration include (but are certainly not limited to):

Nonnet, Sonnet, Villanelle, Palindrome, Free Verse, Alliteration, Calligram, Couplet, Listing Poem, Elegy, Ballad, Narrative and Ode