

Landscape Haiku

Ages: 6–18 (Grades 1–12)

Duration: 20–30 minutes

Materials needed:

- Pencils
- Paper

Introduction:

Visual artists and writers have always used nature as inspiration for their works. For example, a haiku is a traditional form of Japanese poetry that focuses on the natural world as a subject. Haiku traditionally is written in three lines, and uses a 5-7-5-syllable format in its construction.

First Line: 5 syllables

Second Line: 7 syllables

Third Line: 5 syllables

Procedure:

1. Visit our Google Arts & Culture online exhibition, [Hudson River Art](#), and take a look at our [Collection Highlights](#). Choose a landscape to write about.
2. Think about the words and emotions that come to mind as you look at your chosen landscape.
3. Make a list of adjectives, or descriptive words; verbs, or action words; and nouns, or people/animals/places/objects in your chosen landscape to help you with forming a haiku.
4. Take it a step further: what word or phrase can you add so that your reader knows what season you are describing? In a traditional haiku, these specific words are known as kigo.
5. Draft your lines and count your syllables. You can write as many haiku as you like!
6. You can also experiment with writing a shorter, nontraditional haiku, using *fewer than* the 5-7-5 limit per line.

Share your work:

Take a photo of your haiku and post it to Instagram using the hashtags #MuseumFromHome and #NaturalistsJourney, and tag the Museum.



Image: Bayard H. Tyler (American, 1855-1931). *Looking North from Alpine*, 1895.

Example of a classic haiku:

Bend in the river
Cooling on a shaded beach
Water rippling

Example of an experimental haiku:

A steamy walk
We hide along the cliffs
By cooling waters