

Types of
Poetry:

Haiku



*Brimming with conceit,
Hiding unpleasant branches,
The proud sakura.*

Study***ladder***

Haiku

Haiku originated in Japan. It is an ancient form of poetry writing with strict rules regarding its structure.

Haiku is a three line poem with seventeen syllables:

The first line has 5 syllables.

The second line has 7 syllables.

The third line has 5 syllables.

1 2 3 4 5
I walk across sand

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
And find myself blistering

1 2 3 4 5
In the hot, hot heat



Other Features of Traditional Haiku Poetry

Haiku poems traditionally have a seasonal reference. In Japanese this is called 'kigo'. This reference can be anything that links the poem to a certain time of the year.

The second important feature of traditional haiku poems is a technique called 'kiryū' which means cutting. The words of the poem evoke two separate images. These images are divided by a word (the 'kireji' in Japanese.)

The first image may describe a place or an object. The second image will often bring more depth and emotion to the poem.

In the city fields
Contemplating cherry-trees...
Strangers are like friends

Kobayashi Issa (1763 - 1828)

