

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

The Haiku

The haiku is a traditional form of Japanese poetry composed of three lines: one of five syllables, one of seven syllables, and one of five syllables – a total of only seventeen syllables. The haiku has no other requirements – no “complete” sentences, no rhythm pattern. The haiku is often used to:

- Capture a moment.
- Express a feeling.
- Celebrate some phase or element of nature.
- Combine several of the above.

Since the haiku is not usually composed of complete sentences, but of pieces of ideas, the placement of the words and the use of punctuation can be very important in conveying the message. Also important is the omission of “hollow” or useless words (a, an, the) whenever possible and avoiding intransitive verbs (am, is, was, were, etc.) whenever possible in favor of transitive or active ones.

Here are some sample haikus:

*Surf pounding like drums,
Sand warm between my brown toes,
My own beach haven.*

*Dawn through the pear tree,
A lovely way to begin
The joy of summer.*

Now you try one in the space below:
