24th March

Tanka

Copy and paste this web address into the Google search engine. Be sure that an adult helps you when you do this. I know it is very long. It will take you to a video clip of a Tanka poem. Answer the questions about the poem and then think about an experience you have had in the past, a day at school, at a theme park, going to someone’s birthday party and try to describe it in a Tanka using the same number of syllables. There are examples of Tanka below you can take ideas from.

Here are some things to think about:

What's something that made you really happy?

What's something that made you really excited?

Have you ever had a surprise encounter with an animal, or visited a fascinating place?

Have you ever felt close to another person, an animal or place?

What's the most wonderful or strangest thing you've ever seen?

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=tanka+petry+audio&ru=%2fvideos%2fsearch%3fq%3dtanka%2bpetry%2baudio%26qpvt%3dtanka%2bpetry%2baudio%26FORM%3dVDRE&qpvt=tanka+petry+audio&view=detail&mid=087974C687DE9860AAA6087974C687DE9860AAA6&&FORM=VDRVRV>

1. How many syllables in a Tanka poem?
2. What is a muskrat? Wait until the end of the video clip and you will find out!
3. What does it mean the muskrat cares less?

**How to Write a Tanka Poem**

Tanka, which means “short song,” has been an important literary form in Japanese culture for nearly a thousand years. The original Japanese form of tanka had only one line of poetry containing 31 speech sounds—what we would call syllables. However, most tanka poems that are written in English today are broken into five poetic lines with a certain number of syllables in each line.

The basic structure of a tanka poem is 5 – 7 – 5 – 7 – 7. In other words, there are 5 syllables in line 1, 7 syllables in line 2, 5 syllables in line 3, and 7 syllables in lines 4 and 5. If you have ever written a haiku, you will notice that tanka is kind of like a longer version of haiku that gives you a little more room to tell a story. We have already written haiku in class.

Examples

the pink pearly shell

half buried in the brown sand

I bend to pick up

the clammy foot inching out

I give it back to the sea

I called her softly

to the old fence where I stood

she answered in kind

liquid brown eyes spoke beauty

the velvet muzzle caressed

we wait for the bell

watching the clock all day long

to reach magic three

it rings the bell of freedom

eternity of summer

Crash at two A.M.

I opened my bedroom door

A white cat ran by

Startled by the clanging fall

Of the treat jar’s metal lid