

DAY ONE: SHE-Jo

Both: first ten minutes: what do we know about haiku? introduce sijo, as it is the haiku's cousin.

Liz: 15 minutes: read through [directions and discuss](#)

- the form
- the syllables
- read one or two examples
- a twist at the end.

All of below examples were student winners from last year.

Great example of a twist:

Joshua Dieball (12th grade)

paranoia

Arrive at dusk no light in sight.

Lock the doors and check them twice.

No sounds...but shadows of night.

Tapping, hysteria, and fright...

It was my mother, laundry tonight.

Scare me...it might end my life.

Alexandra Kindahl (12th grade)

17321-012

Airplanes arc with contrails like ivory streams through blue ground.

Fearless, I rise towards them, wrap my fingers around their wings.

"Your time's up," the prison guard yells. "Get back inside." Slowly, I do.

Heidi: 15 minutes: discuss theme options:

cosmological

The **cosmological** argument is an argument for the existence of a First Cause (or instead, an Uncaused cause) to the universe, and by extension, is often used as an argument for the existence of an "unconditioned" or "supreme" being, usually then identified as God.

The general form of the cosmological argument:

1. Whatever begins to exist has a cause.
2. The Universe began to exist.
3. Therefore, the Universe had a cause.

There must be something to explain why the Universe exists.

What do we think when we hear the word cosmos? Space, stars, etc. When you look up to the stars, do you wish on them? Do you pray? Where do you look/pray to? Sayings "someone up there" or where is heaven? Popular belief/tradition/stories suggest God resides in the cosmos. We wish on stars.

Example: **Jeanna Qiu** (10th grade)

Lao-Ye (Grandfather)

The moon interrupts, the stars wink—the inky sky is their playfield.
In China, Grandfather climbed mountains to greet the escorts of Night.
Though now in America, he still salutes the moon and stars.

How does this fit with the cosmo theme? How does the sijo feel lyrical/like a song?

metaphysical

Metaphysical poetry is concerned with the whole experience of man. The poetry is about the profound areas of experience - about love; about man's relationship with God - the eternal perspective, and about pleasure, learning and art.

They are brief but intense meditations, characterized by **striking use of wit, irony and wordplay**. That is Josh Dieballs!

Caleb Burton (11th grade)

The Veteran

A man and his rifle, alone in a field of despair.

His destiny speaks to him, as bullets cut through the broken trees.

Fallen brothers cry from graves, he soon joins their eternal darkness.

pastoral themes

"Pastoral" (from *pastor*, Latin for "shepherd") refers to a literary work dealing with shepherds and rustic life. Pastoral poetry is highly **conventionalized; it presents an idealized rather than realistic view of rustic life.**

Common topics of pastoral poetry include:

- love and seduction
- the value of poetry
- death and mourning
- the corruption of the city or court vs. the "purity" of idealized country life
- politics

Hapshiba Kwon (10th grade)

Rustling fabrics, I explore seas of tweed, paisley blouses, and plaid.

Tangible remembrances; your days of youth, have become mine.

Clothed in strength, now you chase no trends. Wrinkled, gray, lovely threads.

What are we noticing about these themes? Anything you write should fit with one of these themes.

Notice how each poem has a story, a character, plot arch, etc. Give students **10 minutes** to brainstorm one story idea for each of the themes.

10 min: Share your story ideas for one of the themes.

With the **last 10 minutes**, students should decide what they will write about. What will your theme/story idea be? Keep in mind that each sijo should have a TWIST at the end.

DAY TWO:

Liz: All poems have story and structure. Sijo has a predetermined structure. Let's review this structure.

You decided last class your theme and story idea. Now, you need to decide are you going to write your poem in three lines or in six?

Review structure: All poems have story and structure. Sijo has a predetermined structure:

- If your sijo is three lines, each line will average 14-16 syllables for a total of 44-46 syllables in the entire poem.
 - First line: 3-4-4-4; Second line: 3-4-4-4; Third line: counter-theme, 3-5, and conclusion of the poem, is written as 4-3.
- If your sijo is six lines, each line will contains two syllable groupings instead of four.
 - Each line will have 6-9 syllables; the last half of the final line may be shorter than the rest, but should contain no fewer than 5 syllables

When you write a sijo, think of the traditional 3-part structure of a narrative (conflict, complication, climax). The sijo may tell a story (as the ballad does), examine an idea (as the sonnet does), or express an emotion (as the lyric does). Whatever the purpose, the structure is the same: line 1 of the 3-line pattern introduces a situation or problem; line 2 develops the idea; and line 3 provides climax and closure.

Remember the three characteristics that make the sijo unique: structure, musical/rhythmic elements, and the twist.

Ancient poets rarely titled sijos.

Heidi reads:

Kim Chang-Up (1658-1721)

The spring breeze melted snow on the hills, then quickly disappeared.
I wish I could borrow it briefly to blow over my hair
and melt away the aging frost forming now about my ears.

Discuss the story. What can you visualize in this poem? Why is it successful? What kind of stylistic devices are present?

Hwang Chin-I (1506-1544)

Green grass covers the valley.
Do you sleep? Are you at rest?
O where is that lovely face?
Can mere bones lie buried here?
I have wine, but no chance to share it.
Alone, I pour it sadly.

Again, notice the twist at the end. Notice how the lines are grouped. How will you create groupings in your poem?

Once you decide on your structure, think about your story. What will be the point of your poem? Notice what's happening in the example poems with punctuation. Notice the titles. What will you title your piece? What effect does the title have?

Make a list of things on the board to think about in your sijo:

- Theme (cosmological, metaphysical or pastoral)?
- What story will you tell?
- What's the point of your story?
- What's your twist?
- Which structure/form will you choose--six or three lines?
- Punctuation--how will you differentiate the groupings in each line?
- How can you use stylistic devices to make your poem sing?
- Title?

Second class period: writing, we will walk around and help students.