

# **Creative Writing Poetry**

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## Section I: Creative Writing for Beginners

There are various types of poetry that are suitable to the foreign language curriculum. This packet introduces you to a few of these literary devices.

- I. **Acrostics (Scott Lubic 1998)** – This is a type of composition, usually in verse, in which sets of letters (usually as the initial or final letters of the lines) taken in order form a word or phrase.

Fruit  
ceRise  
pamplemoUsse  
tangerIne  
daTes

amaNade  
oignOn  
arachIde  
noiX de cajou

broccoLi  
Echalote nouvelle  
OiGnon  
artichaUt  
goMbo  
pomme de tErre  
poiS chiches

These three acrostics would be suitable during a section on foods. I would give them the nuts, for an example, then allow the students to find the vegetables and fruits. After they have filled the letters in, ask for several examples. Then I would compare the number of different types of foods they have used.

This activity would be graded on creativity, neatness, and spelling, since all three are very important to be able to read and understand the acrostic. Neater projects are more attractive. The students can share their acrostics together in class, after drawing and illustrating them on poster board.

II. **Cinquain Poetry**- Directions for writing Cinquain Poetry:

*First verse:* Indicate the theme of the poem in one word.

*Second verse:* Describe the theme... two words

*Third verse:* Describe an action... three words or three short phrases

*Fourth verse:* Describe another action or express the emotion that you feel towards what you have said in the third verse... four words.

*Fifth verse:* Indicate again the theme but with a word that reflects what you have said in verses one to four... one word or a summary phrase.

**Fall  
Brisk mornings  
Orange pumpkins, golden leaves, frosty windows  
How invigorated I feel!  
Energy**

Scott Lubic – 1998

**Pennsylvanie  
Rivieres froides, hautes montagnes, feuilles d'or  
Ma famille, ma jeunesse  
Berceau**

Catie Well- 1996

**Caballo  
Criatura noble  
Relínchando al cielo  
Lleno de espíritu orgulloso  
Regio**

- III. **Concrete Poetry**- Concrete poetry is a poem as a picture. Traditional poems use words often with rhyme and meter. The concrete poem rejects the traditional linear use of the word, and instead uses it to shape a poem. The meaning of the poem is intimately related to the form in a metaphorical relationship.

#### CONCRETE POEMS ARE VISUAL METAPHORS OR METAPHORS IN SPACE

The concrete poem forces us to perceive in a way other than horizontally, as we perceive with the written word. We must see the totality, the *Gestalt*, the poem as a whole.

Concrete poetry is an effective tool in the foreign language classroom. It helps develop vocabulary, the creation of self-esteem and of confidence in the target language. See samples below.

forma  
reforma  
disforma  
transforma  
conforma  
informa  
forma

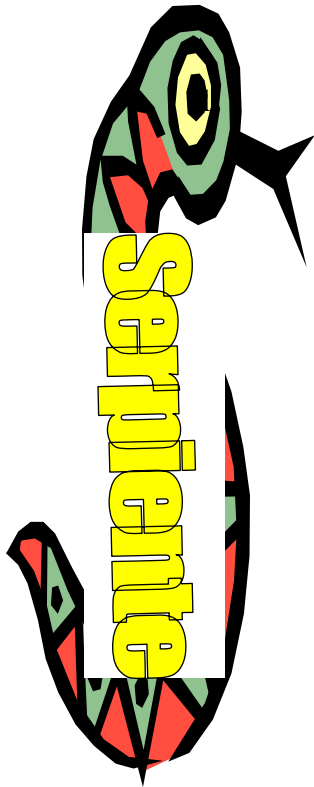
\_\_\_\_COMER\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_CMER\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_CER\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_CR\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_C\_\_\_\_

L L U V I A  
I L U V I A  
I I U V I A  
I I I V I A  
I I I I I A  
I I I I I A  
I I I I I  
I I I I I

ALCOHOL

C A L O R

V O Z



Sombra

*Sombra*

a-r-c-o-i-r-i-s  
a-r-c-o-i-r-i-s

M

E

C E

D R

O A

MECEDORA

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#### IV. Diamond Poem- (Penny Evans)

In this 7-line poem the writer contrasts an item with it's opposite.

Line 1: Subject – one noun

Line 2: Two adjectives describing the subject

Line 3: Three participles (-ing words)telling about the subject

Line 4: Four nouns: First two relate to subject- Last two relate to opposite

Line 5: Three participles telling about the opposite

Line 6: Two adjectives describing the opposite

Line 7: Opposite of subject – one noun

Examples:

**Zorro**  
**Dark, Brave**  
**Fighting, Daring, Escaping**  
**Tornado, Hero, Governor, Coward**  
**Sneaking, Cheating, Deceiving**  
**Cruel, Loathsome**  
**Rafael Montero**

Limpio  
Claro, Brillante  
Barriendo, lavando, fregando  
Pureza sencila, mugre asqueroso  
Derramando, embadurnando, salpicando  
Lúgubre, mugriento  
Sucio

**V.     List Poem- (Penny Evans)**

This is one of the oldest and easiest poetic techniques. Poetic lists appear in Homer's *Illiad*, the *Bible*, and compose most of the well-known song "My Favorite Things" from *The Sound of Music*.

- a. Tips on writing successful list poems.
    - i. Poems are full of surprises, and lists are dull without them.
    - ii. Think of a variety of items, and a variety of kinds of items.
    - iii. Use specific words. Be exact and vivid. (Paint me a picture!)
    - iv. Make a long list.
    - v. After you have all you can think of in your list, study it carefully: eliminate some items and rearrange your list, grouping similar items together.
  - b. Some topics you might consider. (Please feel free to make up your own!)
- i. Things That Make Me Smile
  - ii. What I'm Afraid Of
  - iii. Stuff That Drives Me Crazy
  - iv. My Favorite Things in (name of place)
  - v. Things in a Park
  - vi. Things in a Store

**Example:**

**Cosas que me hacen sonreír**

**Un beso del novio,  
M&M's y amigos  
Un coche nuevo  
Mis padres y regalos**

**VI. Haiku-(Penny Evans)**

The Haiku is a Japanese form of verse that uses three unrhymed lines containing 5 syllables in the first line, 7 in the second line, and 5 again in the third line. The Haiku typically centers around some aspect of nature. The meaning or conclusion to be drawn from the image is not stated explicitly but left for the reader to interpret for himself.

**Examples:**

*Verano*  
El lago suave  
Se mueve por la noche  
Música fresca

*Alma*  
Luna, sol, agua  
Hacen paz, calor, vida  
Un melodía

**VII. W-Poem- (Penny Evans) (Question poem)**

Write a poem using a specific letter of the alphabet to answer the following questions:

Line 1 **Who?** (the subject)  
Line 2 **What?** (what happened)  
Line 3 **Where?** (where it happened)  
Line 4 **When?** (when it happened)  
Line 5 **Why?** (why it happened)

**Examples:**

**Claudia**  
**C**ome los churros  
En la **c**ocina  
A las **c**inco de la mañana  
**P**orque **Claudia** tiene hambre.

**Gregorio**  
Hace un **g**ol  
En el partido con los “**G**orrillas”  
Un **g**ran día de Julio, y  
**G**ana el campeonato.



## Section II: Writing Activities for Intermediate and Advanced

### Collective Impression Poems:

#### I. Sheperd's Calendar – (Sue Barry)

Assign each student a month of the year. Tell them to write a narrative poem that illustrates their month and to include what they see, smell, taste, and touch. You are teaching specification.

I had the month of June:

Children laughing, water splashing  
Building castles in the sand  
Salty water, fishy smells  
Seaweed sticks between your toes  
Rubbing lotion on children's backs  
Sandy bodies, gleeful shouts  
Time for lunch and sandy treats

#### II. Seasons – Melyn Roberson's students

After Ms. Roberson taught the poem *Casita de cañas*, four boys in the class decided to write about seasons in a college dorm.

Chauncey Smith 10<sup>th</sup> grade - *La residencia en otoño*

La residencia es nueva y ya sucia  
Estamos estudiantes de una universidad  
Hay cuatro camas y cuatro escritorios  
Hay muchas cajas en el suelo  
Mis compañeros de cuarto y yo no sabemos nada de nuestras vidas  
Pensamos cambiar las paredes aburridas blancas  
Y empezar una vida nueva  
La residencia empieza formar  
Y cuatro hombres hablando de su futuro

### III. Le Poèm Biographique – (Cory Easley)

This is a poem where the writer analyzes him/herself using descriptive traits and characteristics.

After students have learned descriptive vocabulary, both physical and behavioral, they write a poem about themselves.

Verse 1	Votre prénom	Claudine
Verse 2	Four descriptive traits	jolie, sympathique, curieuse, honnête
Verse 3	Sibling of	frère de Jean-Paul
Verse 4	Lover of (People, ideas)	chantant, le musique, l'art
Verse 5	Who feels	triste quand je suis seule
Verse 6	Who needs	Le soleil chaque jour
Verse 7	Who gives	L'amour est l'amitié
Verse 8	Who fears	Le douleur, le mort, et les examens
Verse 9	Who would like to see	Paris, une nouvelle voiture, etc.
Verse 10	Resident	Nice, France
Verse 11	Your last name	Beauvoir

#### **Analytical Rubric**

Does the student have all 11 lines?	33
Did the student include three responses for:	
Traits	6
Love of	6
Feels	6
Needs	6
Fears	6
Is residence, first name, last name correct?	6
Spelling, grammatical errors	10
Creativity	10
Image included with a picture?	10
Bonus	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

#### IV. Simile Lesson – Annie’s Song by John Denver

##### a. **Pre-Listening & Pre-Reading Activity-**

Review similes. Explain that this is a poem set to music which John Denver wrote for his wife Annie. He uses many similes in this song. Listen to the song and follow along with the poem. Play the song several times. Encourage students to sing along.

##### b. **Listening and Reading Activities-**

###### Activity 1:

*Step 1*- Listen to the song as you read it. Underline all the similes.

*Step 2*- Draw a picture of your favorite simile.

*Step 3*- Explain to the class what a simile is. Show them your drawings and let them guess which simile it represents.

###### Activity 2:

*Step 1*: Listen to the song as you read it. Underline all the similes.

*Step 2*: Replace two similes with ones you made up.

*Step 3*: Record yourself singing it with the new words.

*Step 4*: Play your tape to the group. Have them write down the similes you added. Discuss how well they fit into the song.

###### Activity 3:

*Step 1*: Listen to the song as you read it. Underline all the similes.

*Step 2*: With a partner, learn the song on an instrument that you play. While you play have your partner sing.

*Step 3*: You and your partner play the song for the group.

###### Activity 4:

*Step 1*: Listen to the song as you read it. Underline all the similes.

*Step 2*: Make a model of one of the similes. Try to show how it would “fill up your senses”.

*Step 3*: Show your model to the group. Have them guess which simile it represents.

###### Activity 5:

*Step 1*: Listen to the song as you read it. Underline all the similes.

*Step 2*: Cut out pictures from magazines that represent the similes in the song. On a small strip of paper write the simile your picture represents and glue it to the back of the picture.

*Step 3*: Have students guess which pictures go with which similes. Check the back of the picture for simile.

# **Annie's Song**

by John Denver

You fill up my senses  
Like a night in the forest  
Like the mountains in springtime  
Like a walk in the rain  
Like a storm in the desert  
Like a sleepy blue ocean  
You fill up my senses  
Come fill me again.

Come let me love you  
Let me give my life to you  
Let me drown in your laughter  
Let me die in your arms  
Let me lay down beside you  
Let me always be with you  
Come let me love you  
Come love me again.

You fill up my senses  
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Like the mountains in springtime  
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Come fill me again.

c. **Writing Activities**

Activity 1:

Writers often compare things to help the reader understand their messages. For example, if a writer wants you to really see – in your mind’s eye – the blue of the sea being described in a poem or story, then comparing these two may help:

Blue seas – sapphires

Blue seas and sapphires are quite a bit different, but they share “blueness”. The writer uses linking words such as *like*, *as*, *similar to*, *resembles*, *etc.* in order to paint this picture in your mind. These comparisons are called similes.

**Example:** The blue sea gleamed *like* a field of sapphires in the sun.

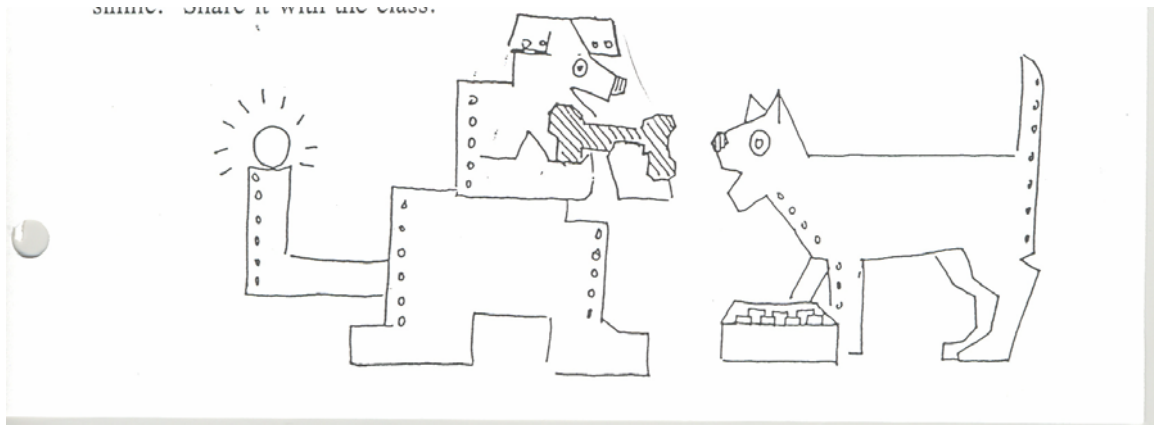
*Step 1:* Try to write some of your own similes by completing the chart below.

<u>Nouns</u>	<u>Action Words</u>	<u>Comparing Words</u>	<u>Similes</u>
1.dog	ate	machine	The dog ate like a machine.
2.ear			
3. mosquito			
4.shark			
5. night			
6. hamburger			
7. school			

*Step 2:* Now try three of your own NOUN words.

8.		
9.		
10.		

*Step 3:* Draw a picture to illustrate one of your own similes. Label your picture with your simile. Share it with the class.



Activity 2:

*Step I:* Starting with the words “ You fill up my senses...” write another verse for the song. Include five similes.

## **Annie’s Song**

by John Denver

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Like the mountains in springtime  
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Let me give my life to you  
Let me drown in your laughter  
Let me die in your arms  
Let me lay down beside you  
Let me always be with you  
Come let me love you  
Come love me again.

You fill up my senses

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You fill up my senses  
Come fill me again.

## V. Metaphor Poetry

### **Purpose: Understanding of metaphors**

The word “metaphor” is used in two different ways. A metaphor may be a particular word, phrase, or sentence which suggests a similarity between two things. The comparison between two objects is only suggested. (This comparison is different from a simile in which the words *like, as than, similar to, resembles, etc* are used)

### Activity 1:

*Estar enamorado* by Raphael is a love song that was popular back in the sixties. Listen to the song and underline all the metaphors. If you have ever been in love, tell us which of these metaphors best describes how you felt.

### **Estar Enamorado**

*Artista: Raphael*

### **Coro:**

Si confundes tu cuerpo con tu alma,  
Es que estás enamorado,  
Es que estás enamorado.  
Si recuerdas los versos de tu infancia,  
Es que estás enamorado,  
Es que estás enamorado.  
Si percibes el llanto más callado,  
Si percibes el roce de unas manos,  
Es que estás enamorado, enamorado.

Estar enamorado es  
Descubrir lo bella que es la vida.  
Estar enamorado es  
Confundir la noche con los días.  
Estar enamorado es  
Caminar con alas por el mundo.  
Estar enamorado es  
Vivir con el corazón desnudo.  
Estar enamorado es  
Ignorar el tiempo y su medida.  
Estar enamorado es  
Contemplar la vida desde arriba.  
Estar enamorado es  
Olvidar la muerte y la tristeza.  
Estar enamorado es  
Ver al mar con árboles y rosas.  
Estar enamorado es  
Escuchar tu voz en otra boca.  
Estar enamorado es  
Respirar el aire más profundo.  
Estar enamorado es  
Confundir lo mío con lo tuyo.

### **Repetir La Canción**

**VI. Metaphor – (Chris Wyckoff 1999)**

**Ma tête**

**Ma tête, c'est comme ma maison.  
Là, je joue comme je veux.  
Là, je suis libre en toutes façons.  
J'imagine quelquefois que je  
Puisse fuir les entraves  
De mon corps.  
Que j'aille dans un monde parfait  
Où tout le monde est heureux et content!  
"Mais c'est impossible," Dieu me dit,  
ainsi toujours je rentre chez moi.**

I would use this after the students have learned the subjunctive tense of verbs, asking them to compare something in their lives that is tangible to something that they want (an ideal, etc) that is intangible. This would be a good activity for students who have a rich vocabulary. Reading metaphorical poems would also be a good means of new vocabulary acquisition.

Creativity is the most important feature of this activity, and students would be graded heavily on their imagination, provided that they have the vocabulary to properly express themselves.