

## IDEA-TRY: Poetry You Might Actually Want to Write

Type of Poem	Characteristics of Poem	Example
<a href="#">Abecedarian</a>	<p>Related to acrostic, a poem in which the first letter of each line or stanza follows sequentially through the alphabet.</p>	<p><b><i>Abecedary</i></b> <b><i>By Tom Disch</i></b></p> <p>A is an Apple, as everyone knows.            But B is a ... What do you suppose?            A Bible? A Barber? A Banquet? A Bank?            No, B is this Boat, the night that it sank.            C is its Captain, and D is its Dory,            While E – But first let me tell you a story.            There once was an Eagle exceedingly proud            Who thought it would fly, in the Form of a cloud —            Yes, E is for Eagle, and F is for Form,            And G is the Grass that got wet in the storm            When the cloud that the Eagle unwisely became            Sprinkled our hero and all of his fame            Over ten acres of upland plateau.            So much for that story. Now H. Do you know?            H is the Hay that was made from the Grass,            And I's the Idea of going to Mass,            Which is something that only a Catholic would do.            Jews go to Synagogue. J is a Jew.            K is for Kitchen as well as for Kiss,            While L is for all of the black Licorice            You can eat in an hour without feeling ill.            M is for Millipede, Millet, and Mill.</p>

The first is an insect, the second a grain,  
The third grinds the second: it's hard to explain  
Such a process to children who never have seen it —  
So let's go to the country right now! Yes, I mean it.  
We're leaving already, and N is the Night  
We race through to reach it, while P is the Plight  
Of the people (Remember?) who sailed in that Boat  
That is still, by a miracle, somehow afloat!  
(Oh dear, I've just noticed I've overlooked O:  
O's an Omission and really should go  
In that hole – do you see it? – between N and P.  
No? It's not there now? Dear O, pardon me.)  
Q is the Question of how far away  
A person can travel in one single day,  
And whether it's worth it, or might it be better  
To just stay at home and write someone a letter?  
R's are Relations, a regular swarm.  
Now get out of the car – we've arrived at their farm!  
S is the Sight of a Thanksgiving feast,  
And T is the Turkey, which must weight at least  
Thirty pounds. U is Utopia. V ...  
V simply Vanishes – where, we can't see –  
While W Waves from its Westernmost isle  
And X lies exhausted, attempting to smile.  
There are no letters left now but Y and then Z.  
Y is for You, dear, and Z is for me.

N+7	Replace every noun (or verb) in an existing poem with the seventh noun after it in a dictionary. Since dictionaries are hard to find these days use this link to the <a href="#">N+7 generator</a>	See Mrs. Bestor's "Part of My Heart Lives" poem here:  <a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KolezWOG0taTearA7UKlwkwgPTnwhClp-Hw2ABGmpJ0/edit?usp=sharing">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KolezWOG0taTearA7UKlwkwgPTnwhClp-Hw2ABGmpJ0/edit?usp=sharing</a>
My Life in ___ Words	Students write the story of their life using only the same number of words as their age.	
Kenning	Derived from Old Norse verse, they are poetic compounds used in place of a single noun. The compound will relate to the characteristics of the original noun itself. Deconstruct your understanding of the given noun and build two-word phrases that describe the thing in all its roles.	<p><b>Who Am I?</b></p> <p>Chimney-climber  Present-giver  Sleigh-rider  Girth-grower  Reindeer-owner  South-poler  Bread-groomer</p>

<p>Fairy Tale Poetry</p>	<p>Rewrite a fairy tale as a poem. Alter the outcome of the fairy tale or the perspective from which the fairy tale is told, or alter a character or an event to change the mood, tone, or plot.</p>	<p><b><i>Fairy-tale Logic</i></b> <b><i>BY A.E. STALLINGS</i></b></p> <p>Fairy tales are full of impossible tasks: Gather the chin hairs of a man-eating goat, Or cross a sulphuric lake in a leaky boat, Select the prince from a row of identical masks, Tiptoe up to a dragon where it basks And snatch its bone; count dust specks, mote by mote, Or learn the phone directory by rote. Always it's impossible what someone asks— You have to fight magic with magic. You have to believe That you have something impossible up your sleeve, The language of snakes, perhaps, an invisible cloak, An army of ants at your beck, or a lethal joke, The will to do whatever must be done: Marry a monster. Hand over your firstborn son.</p> <p>NOTE: See Cinderella in <a href="#">Poetry Speaks Who I Am</a> for more inspiration.</p>
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Self-Portrait  
Poem

We can see what you look like on the outside, but what do you look like on the inside? Figuratively, not all bones, guts, and blood. A self-portrait poem explores who we are and what we want in life.

***Self-Portrait by Rita Dove***

I'm dangerous; there's little left

inside this body —

that hasn't wanted not to subtract

from the world.

I can divide a man into men. This

isn't a warning

or confession. Call me what

you'd like;

in my own mind I'm a mirror.

I see everything

except myself. This way I can't

lose: even when

broken, a polished surface reflects

whatever looks in.

**More Self Portrait Poems:**

[“Self Portrait With No Flag” by Safia Elhillo](#)

[Self-Portrait as Kendrick Lamar, Laughing to the Bank](#)

[Self-Portrait by Robert Creeley](#)

Imagism

This approach involves three aims: to write about the subject of your poem directly, making use of metaphor; to make sure absolutely every word is necessary to the poem (so these poems tend to be short); and to write more in the irregular style of musical rhythm than a completely regular beat.

**Church**

by [Yulia Titova](#)

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Rush hour: sunlit  
Heads shift halos  
In the specks of dust.

**Fireworks**

by [Raffi Pollitt](#)

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On this dark November night:  
Flaming stallions,  
Scorching steeds ignite the heavens  
With their fiery feud.

**Dawn**

by Jade Cuttle

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the sky opens up, yawns,  
spits out the sun, spews light  
like skimmed stones, delicate  
as elephant's breath

**Bleach**

by Jake Reynolds

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She took a glug  
Of bleach. Exhaled as  
Hell's treacle drooled like honey  
Down her throat. Her vomit  
And coughs  
And cries  
Were clean.