

Haiku and You

Grades 5-12

Goals of the lesson plan:

1. Understand the Japanese influence on Frank Lloyd Wright and his architecture.
2. Understand the sentence structure of a Haiku and demonstrate knowledge by creating a Haiku.

When Frank Lloyd Wright designed buildings like the Martin House, he looked to the country of *Japan* for inspiration and often used *nature* as his muse. If you find examples of traditional Japanese *architecture*, you can see similarities to the Martin House.



Many art forms in Japan also used nature as their muse. One such art form is the *Haiku*. A Haiku is a poem that uses very direct and simple sentences to describe something. While there are many different styles of a Haiku, most time English versions use the following sentence structure

Line 1: 5 syllables

Line 2: 7 syllables

Line 3: 5 syllables

Here is an example of a Haiku written about a flower:

A rose so pretty
red petals blooming so bright
sweet smell fills the air

Part I

Go on a walk to discover things in nature. Look around and look up! There are clouds, the sun, and maybe you feel a raindrop on your head. Or, head to the park. Pick up items you may find in a park, such as a leaf, a stone, or maybe a stick. If the weather is bad, research inspiring nature images online for inspiration.

Part II

With a piece of paper and pencil, write down all the words that come to mind when looking at your nature inspired subject. A rock? Is it smooth, bumpy, round? Think of as many words as you can. Now take those words and see if you can describe your subject in a Haiku. It may take a few tries.

If there are too many words, which can you take away and still make the reader understand what you are talking about? Here are some examples from the Martin House:

- The pergola is very long and pretty - replace with - Pergola, long and pretty
- The gardens are so beautiful - replace with - Beautiful gardens

- The Martin House looks flat and wide - replace with - Horizontal lines

Note to parents: There are many examples of Haikus online. If your child wants/needs more examples, research Haikus, read them to your child (or have them read them), and see if your child can guess what the Haiku is about.

Extra challenge?

If you have nice paper, write your finished Haiku in your best handwriting. Or, type it on the computer, print, and color your paper. Did you write a Haiku about the sun? Draw a sun behind your haiku. If you have black paper, use it as a backing and glue the haiku paper on top to give it a black border.

Parents: This is a great way to talk about adverbs, adjectives, and nouns. Write down words, and then what type of words they are. Afterward, pull from the list to make the haiku.

For older kids, see if they can write multiple haikus about the same subject. They can also research famous haikus from Japan.

Vocabulary

Architecture	Haiku	Nature
Adjective	Japan	Noun
Adverb		

Materials

Haiku poem examples - online

White paper and special paper

Pencils and markers

Black backing to paste haiku (optional)

Haiku books for inspiration (optional)