

# Writing a tanka

A **tanka** is a poem about an event in nature.

- Read the tanka.
- List some subjects for tankas.

1 a ray of sunlight shining through clouds

2

3

4

5

## Tanka 1

A pool of sunlight  
Bathes the stormy evening bay.  
A lonely heron  
Stands still, a cunning statue,  
Waiting for unwary fish.

John Kitching



A tanka has five lines of syllables in this order:

**five**

**seven**

**five**

**seven**

**seven**

- Make notes for your own tanka.

**Subject:**

**line 1**

**line 2**

**line 3**

**line 4**

**line 5**

A large rectangular area representing a sheet of paper. At the top edge, there is a horizontal line with ten small circles hanging from it, resembling a string of rings or a clothesline. The rest of the area is blank, with a slightly curved bottom right corner.

- From your notes, write a tanka.
  - Read it aloud to a partner.
- Count the syllables and think about the words.**
- Make changes if you need to.**

**Teachers' note** An effective introduction would be to show a short video of natural events such as sunrise, sunset, a duck taking off or landing on water, a bird singing, seeds falling from a flower, birds in a bird bath, a cat stretching or sunlight on a cornfield or on a patch of greenery in a city.

**Developing Literacy**  
**Poetry Year 4**  
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