

Image and Write...

Poetry

Karin K. Hess

Royal Fireworks Press
Unionville, NY



This book is dedicated to
my mother
who taught me to love the sound
and feel the meanings of words

Acknowledgements

I wish to extend an affectionate thank you to teacher Penny Miller and her students from Pearl River Middle School.

Also a special thanks to my own students of the Knowlton Township School District who never seem to tire of helping me test new ideas.

Last but not least, to my sons, Josh and Dustin, who provided me with the insight that only children seem to possess.

Copyright © 2009, Royal Fireworks Publishing Co., Inc.
All Rights reserved.

Royal Fireworks Press
First Avenue, PO Box 399
Unionville, NY 10988-0399



(845) 726-4444
FAX: (845) 726-3824
email: mail@rfwp.com
website: rfwp.com

ISBN: 978-0-89824-245-4

Printed and bound in the United States of America using vegetable-based inks on acid-free, recycled paper and environmentally-friendly cover coatings by the Royal Fireworks Printing Co. of Unionville, New York.

Table of Contents

The Idea Place.....	1
Concrete Poetry.....	3
Formula Poetry.....	6
I Can't...But I Can.....	12
Acrostic Poetry.....	13
Onomatopoeia.....	15
Haiku.....	16
Modeling.....	18
Ballads.....	22
Rhythm.....	24
Limericks	26
Contrast Poetry.....	27
Diamante.....	29
Emotion Poetry	31
Multi-Sensory Clustering.....	32
Outrageous Themes.....	35
Color Poems.....	37
Images	38
Free Association Imaging	40
Rhyming Couplets	43
Poetry Comics and Cartoons.....	44
Appendix.....	60

To the Reader:

Many of the exercises in this book can also be found in *Enhancing Writing Through Imagery* (1987, Trilium Press). The major difference between those and this book is that these have been modified for use with younger, less-skilled writers. Although these activities incorporate the use of mental imager, this is not meant to be a course in what imagery is and why it works so effectively in the classroom. I encourage teachers using any books in the *Image and Write* series to continue to expand their understanding of the imagery process through further reading and study.

May you and your students enjoy the journey through these pages. Travel is light—you carry all that you need within.

—Karin K. Hess

“...words are relative and limited. Words are boxes which cannot contain entire visions...words involve at least two different sets of connotations and associations—those of the author or speaker and those of the reader or listener...we must attempt to feel the spirit of the words, using words as brush strokes...to paint as clearly as possible a picture of the whole thinking-feeling-being context of the thing or thought at hand.”

—Iona Marsaa Teegarden

The Idea Place

Purpose

To allow students to create a place in their minds where their creativity and self-confidence can grow.

Materials

None

Image

You are going to build a special place, just for you. It is a place where you can always feel safe and relaxed. It is a magical, special place that you're going to build in your mind. Once you have it made, you can go to it at any time. You may change it or add onto it. It is totally yours.

Close your eyes...get comfortable...see yourself beginning to build the floor...make it any color...any shape...any size that you wish...(longer pause)...when you finish the floor, begin to make the walls...make them any color you wish...put things on them that you like to see...(longer pause)...when you've finished the walls and the floors, examine them and make any changes that you want to...now put a ceiling or roof on it...don't forget to have some sort of lighting...(longer pause)...make the ceiling just as interesting as the rest of the place...Now it's time to furnish your idea place...put in furniture that you feel comfortable sitting in...lying on...and looking at...(pause 1 minute)...look all around at what you've built...notice every detail...change anything you think needs changing...now, add a place where you can write down ideas...it may be a desk, but doesn't have to be...(longer pause)...next add a movie screen...you will use it to see your ideas and to solve problems...if it takes up too much room, find a creative way to hide it until you need it...(longer pause)...see a door...notice that it is locked and only you have a key for it...you control who enters your special place...only people or animals who are your friends will enter...they will help you and give you ideas when you need them...open the door now and let someone in for a short visit if you want to...(longer pause)...it's time for your friend to leave...watch the door close...Know that your idea place is safe while you're gone...before you leave, put your special place somewhere so that you can find it easily when you want to return...(longer pause)...remember how wonderful it is and bring these good feelings back with you as I count to 10...1...2...3...wiggle your toes...4...5...6...7...wiggle your fingers...8...9...stretch slowly...10...open your eyes.

Write

Without speaking, quietly begin to map a floor plan of your special place. Label special things in it. Don't worry about spelling. After you finish, write about your special place. You don't have to describe everything—just some of the most interesting things about it.

Variations

Younger children can each tell a little about their places and the teacher can print that on their drawings. Modify the vocabulary to fit the age of the child.

Follow up

Display the floor plans and writings.

Read them aloud to the rest of the class.

Build a three-dimensional model of the Idea Place.

Take them back to the special places:

- before a test to see themselves on the screen as calm and confident while taking the test
- when they need to calm down
- before a guided fantasy or to get ideas for a project or assignment.

They can use the screen to view any idea.

Samples

Although drawings won't reproduce very well, here are some descriptions written by students about their Idea Places:

My Special Place

My special place is away from all
High on a hill in a tree
An occasional bird flutters overhead and
catches my attention, but then is gone
All alone in the damp bark
Looking over the jagged edge on the plains below
See the children, romping about
I come here often, but now I must leave

Matthew Eapen, grade 6

My Idea Place

My Idea Place is located in the sky above my house. I go to my climbing tree and climb to the top. At the top is a long hallway. The hallway leads to my Idea Place. When you get inside you will see my swimming pool, space door and fish tank. When you leave that room you can go two different ways. You can either go to my study room or you can go to my time portal. In my study room is a fun closet, computer and a desk. I have a drawer and a movie screen pops out of it. My Idea Place's walls are made of sand. The ceiling is made of Legos. Here is a map of my Idea Place.

Ryan Kooi, grade 4

My Secret Room

I have a secret room in a trunk of a tree in my yard. You get there by going down a laundry chute under the ground to this tree. When you're going in through the laundry chute you shrink to about 6 inches tall. You do this so you can fit in the trunk of the tree.

You unlock the door with a special code. First you see some bookshelves with pictures of my family and books. Then you will see my Cabbage Patch Kids and a circular table on the right. On the left you will see a bunk bed with a desk and art-cabinet below it. Straight ahead you will see a huge tinted window. I use this to see if anyone is about to come in. There are pictures of my family on the walls and laser lights on the ceiling. My secret room has a TV, VCR, a pullout movie screen. I like to sit and think in my secret room.

Cathy Pappas, grade 4

My Idea Place

My Idea Place is made up of 21 walls. All the walls have something on them. All the rooms have something in them. There are 6 rooms in my place. One room is for my desk. My desk is a goldish-reddish color and is oval. I use this desk to put down formulas. Right across from my desk is another room. That room is a laboratory. There I find cures for deadly diseases. Next to my laboratory is a bathroom. Next to the bathroom is a doorway. The door can only be opened from the inside. The kitchen is next to my desk. The only thing that lives there all the time is my cat. Out of the whole place, I like the ceiling the best, it is made out of glass.

Asma Abbasi, grade 6

Concrete Poetry

CONCRETE POETRY is the use of words and their physical formation to convey meaning. This may be done with color, the shape of the letters, and/or the arrangement of words. Samples below show some of the many variations possible.

Purpose

To call attention to the concrete idea that the words represent. To encourage use of evocative language.

Materials

Pens/markers and paper.

Procedure

Ask students to graphically create a scene using only words. From a distance this will look like a picture but up close, it will consist only of words and phrases. No extra lines or shapes should be used. You may wish to suggest that a light pencil line be drawn first as a guide. Encourage the use of colors, shapes and sizes that will enhance the meaning of words.

Samples

Using single words to convey meaning.

Concrete Poetry by Alice Trachtenbroit



Formula Poetry

FORMULA POETRY uses a set of instructions for each line of the poem to be written. Formulas may include very specific instructions, such as, “3 adverbs” or very general, “describe the action.” Formulas make it very easy to put ideas down on paper and should be used when you first introduce poetry with the understanding that at any time, they may be modified. No one should feel locked into the formula. It is only a guide.

Procedure

As a general rule, when I introduce a new formula, I give directions for only one line at a time and wait for everyone to finish before I go on. This eliminates the possibility of anyone rushing to get done and the extra time encourages more elaboration of ideas. It is also much less threatening to students to be asked to write three or four words than three or four lines. Once the formula has been shared, I suggest that they try writing other poems using the same formula.

Eventually students will have acquired many different formulas. It is then time to do two things: Show them how to find formulas in other poems and show them how to create their own formulas. If you do not do these things, they will never feel that they are in control of their own writing, but rather depend upon you for the “magic formula.”

Below is the formula for CINQUAIN POETRY, and a sample poem which uses Buck, the dog from *Call of the Wild*, as the subject. This formula also works well after a GUIDED FANTASY, while listening to music that evokes images, after observing something in nature, or with Word Cards or pictures from the Picture File. All of the formulas provided in this book can be used in a variety of ways. Sometimes it is interesting to write about the same topic using several different formulas, compare them and select the one that works best. Formulas are also great for CONTENT AREA writing and provide excellent review of parts of speech.

Samples:

Line #1: One word (noun) subject of the poem	Buck—
Line #2: Two words that describe (adjectives)	Alert, Tense;
Line #3: Three words showing action (verbs)	Snarling, wrangling, raging
Line #4: Four words relating to a feeling	Earning life through battle,
Line #5: One word that repeats or refers to the subject in line #1.	Wolf. <i>by Margaret Giles</i>

You need not look further than your classroom for formulas. Have students divide into groups and devise some of their own *with a sample poem to go with it*. The sample is important because it proves that the formula works. Some groups will begin with a formula and then try to write a sample; others will begin with a topic and vacillate between sample and formula; still others will write a poem and then figure out what the formula is. There is no right or wrong way. Let them go and you will be surprised with what they come up with.

Below are some formulas with sample poems which were written by groups of teachers taking my Creative Writing course. Remember...modify the formula if it doesn't work for you.

Formula Samples:

Line #1: participle, participle, participle	Leaping, soaring, flying
Line #2: noun	The superhero
Line #3: adverb (how)	Nonchalantly
Line #4: verb	Crashed
Line #5: where or when	Into the wall.

Title: PICK A COLOR

Line #1: describe something associated with it

Line #2: simile/metaphor

Line #3: where

*Title: PICK A COLOR

Line #1: color + noun

Line #2: verb + color

Line #3: adverb + color

Line #4: superlative

*The above formula also works if you substitute an *adjective* for the color.

Line #1: a place

Line #2: sounds heard there

Line #3: when

Line #4: describe some action

Line #5: describe mood

Title: EMOTION

Line #1: two or three colors associated with it

Line #2: It happens when

Line #3: I feel like

Line #4: three sensory words

Title: FEELING

Line #1: three verbs

Line #2: where

Line #3: who has the feeling

Title: NOUN

Line #1: verb

Line #2: verb phrase

Line #3: three adjectives

Title: PARTICIPLE

Line #1: three nouns that do it

Line #2: two adjectives (how)

Line #3: simile

Title: EARLIEST MEMORY

Line #1: where

Line #2: doing what

Line #3: two or three words that show emotion

Line #4: detail from the setting

Line #5: skip a line

Line #6: tell how you feel

Green

Makes me think of Spring

Like a tree covered with leaves
in a wooded forest.

Blue

Blue sky

Running blue

Cloudy blue

Bluest!

School

Crashing lockers

Before homeroom

Scurrying to beat the bell

Worried about a test.

Jealousy

Green, yellow, black

It happens when I can't have it.

I feel like a snake hiding in the grass

Hissing, lurking, malicious.

Silly

Tickle, wiggle, giggle

Lying on the floor

My baby sister.

Giraffes

Munching

Loping in the grass

Stately, long-necked, silent.

Jumping

Frogs, kangaroos, Mexican beans

Happy, playful

Like a singing heart.

Earliest Memory

At the easel

Painting a sailboat

Intense, quiet, relaxed

Too much water on the brush

Frustrated.

PAPA VINC
Can your students
guess what the eight
letters of PAPA VINC
stand for?
Write eight lines, beginning
each one with a different
part of speech.

Wow!
Clouds
are floating
across the blue sky
anxiously reminding
all of us
to smile
by Joe Mastropolo

Note

These formulas can be adapted to prose writing very easily in any of the following ways:

- (1) First write a poem using the formula, then write a short story, each poem line being the main idea of each paragraph in the story. This encourages elaboration.
- (2) Use the formula to determine how each sentence in a paragraph will begin. This encourages a variety of sentence structures.
- (3) Since more expository writing also follows a formula, have students try using those to write poetry. (See formulas below).

Feature Story Formula:

Headline	(Title)
By-line	(Author)
Lead	(First paragraph/main idea—captures interest)
Body	(Gives facts not in Lead—short, well-organized paragraphs)
Conclusion	(May refer back to Lead—ties up loose ends)

Essay Formula

Introduction	(States opinion—goes from broad statement to specific point)
Body	(Reasons for opinion—does away with objections—saves best for last)
Conclusion	(Restates opinion—makes broad general statement)

Suggested Formulas For Writing About Yourself & Others

Someday...

Begin each line with the word *Someday*...and complete it with a wish that you have. Make the first two or three say something about your everyday wishes and slowly move away from yourself to the world in general. End the writing with the word *Someday*...

ONE WINDOW IS ALL I NEED...

Begin your poem or essay with the line, One window is all I need, and continue to write about this imaginary window in a personal way. For example:

One window is all I need
To revolve in and out of myself
To pass through adventures
With people and life
To return to myself
And grow.

—K.K. Hess

THE IMPORTANT THING ABOUT...

This formula is great to use when writing about another person. I've also used it to write about holidays (e.g. Thanksgiving), abstract concepts (e.g. Democracy, Faith, etc.), book characters, and famous people and events. It can even serve as an outline for a longer essay.

Line #1: The important thing about (name) is (most striking attribute) .

Line #2: He/she is also (list other attributes)

and

Last Line: But the most important thing about (name) is (repeat what was said in line #1 or say the same thing in another way.)

CAPTURING THE MOMENT

This formula freezes an instant and examines various aspects of it.

Line #1: Adverb or Adjective	Asleep
Line #2: I was _____	I was dreaming
Line #3: Verb or Adjective	Content
Line #4: I am _____	I am not alone
Line #5: Verb or Adjective	Comforted
Line #6: I will _____	I will try again
Line #7: Verb or Adjective	Refreshed
Line #8: Now _____	Now I can.

Emotions & Actions

Line #1: Write three *ing* words
Line #2: I am _____
Line #3: Write three adjectives
Line #4: I feel _____

Examining, studying, testing,
I am searching for a cure
Tired, tense, drained
I feel so close...



Line #1: What if _____
Line #2: I might _____
(leave a space between lines 2 & 3)
Line #3: What if _____
Line #4: I could _____
Line #5: What if _____
Line #6: I would _____
(leave a space between lines 6 & 7)
Line #7: Ask a question



Line #1: When I _____ (describe action)
Line #2: _____ (describe where action takes place)
Line #3: Write 2 or 3 words that describe how you feel
Line #4: I wish I could _____ (describe action)
Line #5: Tell reason why



Title: EMOTION

Line #1: I _____ (describe what you did to show how you were feeling)
Line #2: Write 3 words that describe how you felt
Line #3: Make a statement or ask a question with regard to what is written in the first two lines



Title: A WORD ENDING IN *ING*

Line #1: I am _____ (describe where you are)
Line #2: Write a simile telling how you feel
Line #3: I would like _____
Line #4: Write a statement that describes a detail of something that is happening around you while you are feeling this way. This should be something removed from your immediate situation. (e.g. *A bird's cry can be heard in the distance* or *Children finish the tower of their sand castle* or *A crab darts along the water's edge.*)



Line #1: If I had _____
Line #2: I'd feel _____
Line #3: I would _____
Line #4: I wouldn't _____
Line #5: Fortunately _____
Line #6: Unfortunately _____



- Line #1: If I could be I'd _____
- Line #2: I'd _____ (describe what you'd do)
- Line #3: _____ (describe how you'd do it)
- Line #4: _____ (describe where you'd do it)
- Line #5: Exclamation that shows how you'd feel

Suggested Formulas For Content Area Writing

Title: Famous Person or Who Am I?

- Line #1: Three adjectives that describe the person (physically)
- Line #2: Person's claim to fame
- Line #3: Three or four words that describe personality
- Line #4: Detail about early life



(Speak as a person seeing an event or as a famous person)

- Line #1: I saw _____
- Line #2: (where) _____
- Line #3: (when) _____
- Line #4: (what was happening) _____
- Line #5: Two words that describe the action _____ and _____
- Line #6: Making me feel _____



- Line #1: I could be (object) _____
- Line #2: I would _____ (describe appearance)
- Line #3: Three action words that describe what you would do as the object _____,
_____, _____.
- Line #4: People who saw me would _____
- Line #5: Because _____



- Line #1: Concept (e.g. slavery, mitosis)
- Line #2: Verb
- Line #3: Adverb
- Line #4: Reason why
- Line #5: Adjective *or* Synonym *or* Antonym *or* Exclamation that refers back to the concept in Line #1.



(To describe cause and effect)

- Line #1: If I were _____
- Line #2: I would _____
- Line #3: And (tell result) _____

I Can't...But I Can

Purpose

To encourage students to use both memory and imagination in writing.

Materials

None

Procedure

There are many things that a person cannot do because he or she is not allowed to, does not know how to, is not old enough to, or is not able to do. We are going to write about some of these things but we're going to balance them with things that we can do. Let's first think of something that you can't do—like flying. (Allow time for thinking and brainstorming. You may wish to write them on the board or have students write them. Begin each one with "I can't..." and leave space after each one listed.) Now let's see if we can balance each one with something like it that you can do—like swimming (e.g. "I can't fly, but I can swim." Complete the statements on the board. Don't forget to use "but." Point out to students that there are many possible endings). Now that we've done some together you'll do some on your own papers.

Image

*Close your eyes and see yourself doing something that you are **not** allowed to do...now see something like it that you **are** allowed to do...when you get an idea, open your eyes and write it down just like we did at the board.*

Write

When students finish writing, have them close their eyes and do it again. Change the wording to: "things that are impossible" and "things you're not old enough to do" as well. If students write ten statements, they can then select their favorite one or two to illustrate.

Publishing Ideas

Use all ideas listed to make a personal or class booklet. For class booklets, each student may write and illustrate one set of "I can't's." Make class mobiles—one side being for "can" and one for "can't," connecting them together with strings. They may even be classified by the type they are (e.g. one color for impossible, another color for too young, etc.).

Variations

Write some "I can't's" for famous people or animals and have others guess the riddle of "Who am I?" For younger children I use the words can and cannot. They illustrate while I move about the room and do the writing for them.

Some other formulas that can be used in the same way as the above activity are:

I use to be...but now...

I never...but I might...

I always...but I never...

If I could...I would...

Acrostic Poetry

ACROSTIC, or name poetry, is simple and fun to write. The name of the person (or animal, object, story character, place, event, etc.) is written vertically on the left side of the page. Each letter is capitalized and becomes the first letter of the word in that line. The words written should describe the person in a positive way. Each line may be a single word, phrase, or a thought that is continued on the next line.

Purpose

To provide a simple formula for writing about self or others.

Materials

Acrostic Poetry Word List and Descriptive Words List

Procedure

You are going to use the letters of your name to write something about yourself. This is a poem, but doesn't have to rhyme. Each line will say one idea and does not have to, but may connect to the rest. (Do a sample at the board, using your name, before proceeding.)

Write

Write the letters of your name along the left side of your paper, capitalizing each one. Use each letter to begin a word or phrase that describes you. *All descriptions must be positive* ways of seeing yourself. Tell about things you're good at, things you like to do, things you'd like to be, etc. Do them in any order. (The lists provided may be of help with tricky letters. Also encourage using dictionaries and other people's ideas.)

Publishing Ideas

Use computer graphics for a border and first letter of each line. Students write in the rest of the words/lines. Illustrate with photos of students, cartoon characters, and cut pictures. Make mobiles—one letter/line on each part, connected vertically to spell the name.

Variations

Write about pets, famous people, places, book characters, etc. in this way. For pets, I suggest closing the eyes and seeing the pet doing something typical for it to do. Then describe it in the poem.

Write nonsense poems.

With younger children, use the "Acrostic Poetry Word List" ahead of time to write a beginning for each line. Leave enough room between lines for students to draw something to complete each line or do a letter/page and make it into a book. Dittos of each letter could be run off ahead of time and students could select the pages that spell their names.

Student Samples

Copies what I say

Happy

Inside the house at all times

Really loud

Pecking carefully at his cage

Yearns for candy

Tara Williams, grade 3

Chris' room

Has

Rats

In

Storage

Chris Schick, grade 5

Nicole
Is
Cool
Outstanding
Loves animals
Eats little food
Good
Likable
Young
Never late (some of this is not true)
Nicole Glyn, grade 6

Rusty looking
Utterly fabulous senses
Scratching and killing the coon
Tiring from the flight
Yawning and slowly walking home
Paul Jeges, grade 6
Cuckoo-
Looking
Awesome
We think he's
Something!
Justin Clinton-Reilly, grade 3

Onomatopoeia

ONOMATOPOEIA is the imitation of natural sounds that produce an auditory image to the reader. (Such words as: hiss, rumble, flop, etc., evoke auditory images of the objects producing them.)

Preparation

Distribute pictures from the Picture File to each student. Allow students to become familiar with an object in the picture.

Image

Close your eyes and see the object of your picture...notice colors...shapes and sizes...watch it doing something typical for it to do...listen for the sounds that it makes...make the picture become black, as if you have turned out the lights...but continue to listen...notice how acute your hearing has become...you know exactly what is happening...focus on each sound...each rhythm...each movement...when you have a clear understanding of what's happening, open your eyes and prepare to write.

Write

Make a list of words that describe the actions of the object when heard in the dark. Try to be as evocative as possible (i.e., rather than “walk” use “shuffle,” or “step-step-step”). Keep your list in the sequence that the sounds were heard. Begin a new line to indicate a pause in the action (i.e., “hop, hop, hop” indicates three quick hops while “hop” on the first, second, and third lines shows that time passed between each hop).

Sample

Purrrrrr*
Purrrrrr
Scratch, scratch, scratch, scratch, scratch, scratch,
Purrrrrr

*The repetition of a letter at the end stretches both the sound and action for a clearer image.

The results of the writing can be called “Sound Poems” and left as is, or later be developed into vignettes.

Variations

Focus only on words that evoke tactile images (fluffy, scratchy, etc.) or olfactory images (putrid, salt-scented, etc.)

Make word cards from the Onomatopoeia Word List (see Appendix), distribute several to each student and suggest that all words be used to describe a setting or character. In doing so, the underlying mood should emerge. You may wish to have them use one of the formulas given earlier.

Use the Onomatopoeia Word List for Concrete Poems.