

# A Poppy Blooms

## A haiku about writing

### About the Poem

**Learning Objective:** Students will analyze a haiku's form and meaning. Then they will write a haiku of their own.

**Key Skills:** repetition, imagery, metaphor, theme

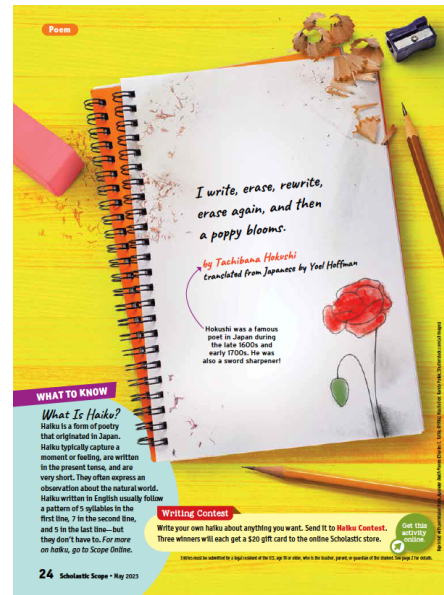
**Essential Question:**

- How can poetry help us understand ourselves, others, and the world?

**Standards:**

The article and lesson support these Common Core anchor standards: R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.5, W.4, W.5, SL.1

For more standards information—including TEKS—go to Scope Online.



## Your Teaching Support Package

Find your full suite of support materials at [scope.scholastic.com](https://scope.scholastic.com).

**Audio:**

- Poem read-aloud
- Text-to-speech

**Skill Building Activities to print, project, or share digitally:**

- Poetry Analysis
- Poetry Planner

**Slideshow:** What Is Haiku?

**Connected readings from the Scope archives:**

- "I Grow a White Rose"
- "Mistake"
- "Characters"
- "Gratitude"

# Step-by-Step Lesson

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

## 1. Prepare to Read

10 minutes

### Do-Now: Journal and Discuss (5 minutes)

- Project the following prompt on your whiteboard for students to respond to in their journal or on a piece of paper. Alternatively, have students respond on a sticky note and place it on the board.

*Fill in the blank: Writing is \_\_\_\_\_. (Be honest!)*

*How do you feel about writing? Is it a process you like/dislike? What is it you like/dislike about it?*

- Share and discuss responses. Tell students that today they will read a short and thoughtful poem about writing that expresses some of the same ideas they have just shared.

### View a Slideshow (5 minutes)

- Project the “**What Is Haiku?**” **slideshow** on your whiteboard to build knowledge about the haiku form and haiku’s history.

## 2. Read and Discuss

30 minutes

- Read the **What to Know** box on page 24 or at the top of the digital story page.
- Have students follow along as they listen to the **audio read-aloud**, located in the Resources tab in Teacher View and at the top of the story page in Student View.
- Have a volunteer read the poem aloud, and then have students read it silently to themselves. Then discuss the following questions.

### Poetry Analysis

(25 minutes)

*The close-reading questions can be shared in printable or interactive form.*

- In the haiku, what process is the speaker describing?** *The speaker is describing the writing process.*

2. **Based on the first two lines, what is the writing process like for the speaker?** *Writing is a difficult process. There is a lot of trying, scrapping, redoing—struggling and dissatisfaction. It is a process of creation and destruction.*
3. **Based on this poem, what is a quality a writer must have?** *A writer must have perseverance, or stick-to-itiveness.*
4. **Which part of the poem feels like a cliffhanger? How does the poet create this feeling?** *The end of line 2 feels like a cliffhanger. The sentence breaks at the end of line 2 on the words “and then.” These particular words and the natural pause at the end of a line create a feeling of suspense. What comes before “and then” is about struggling. What comes after is a thing of beauty. It’s a dramatic and sudden change.*
5. **What is a poppy? What does the poppy represent?** *A poppy is a bright, beautiful flower. It represents writing that is beautiful and the joy that comes with creative expression. (You may want to share with students that the Japanese word keshi has two meanings: “poppy” and “to erase.” This is a great example of wordplay, a literary technique in which words are used in clever and playful ways.)*
6. **State the poem’s central idea or theme in one sentence.** *Answers will vary but should be similar to “The act of writing is difficult but can result in great beauty” or “It is through revision—trying, starting over, and trying again—that something extraordinary happens.”*
7. **How can the idea expressed in this poem about writing apply to life in general?** *Answers will vary. Students might offer that this poem reminds us that hard work pays off—whether it’s learning how to ride a skateboard, practicing a new math skill, or working through a conflict with a friend, persevering through imperfections and failure is the path to excellence and success.*

### 3. Write

30 minutes

- Have students complete the **Poetry Planner**. This brainstorming and guided writing activity will help them write their own haiku.

**Connected readings from the *Scope* archives:**

Keep the poetry love going with these short, simple poems that overflow with meaning.

**Another poem that uses a flower as a metaphor:**

[“I Grow a White Rose” by José Martí](#) (October 2022)

**A poem that demonstrates another poetic form, diamante:**

[“Mistake” by Linda Mitchell](#) (February 2023)

**A poem that uses haiku as a metaphor:**

[“Characters” by Jason Reynolds](#) (December 2021/January 2022)

**A poem that includes repetition:**

[“Gratitude” by Jennifer Dignan](#) (March 2019)