

GREEN POETRY

In addition to celebrating Earth Day and Arbor Day, April is also the month we celebrate poetry. In honor of these three, the Forest Preserves of Cook County encourages people to write their own poetry inspired by nature.

Many poets use nature as a theme. Carl Sandburg was the Poet Laureate for Illinois. Here is one of his nature-inspired poems.

SUMMER GRASS

by *Carl Sandburg*

Summer grass aches and whispers
It wants something; it calls and it sings; it pours
Out wishes to the overhead stars.
The rain hears; the rain answers; the rain is slow
Coming; the rain wets the face of the grass.

We hope you are inspired by nature too! This year help us celebrate Earth Day by writing poetry inspired by nature. Send us your poems and we'll post some of them for others to enjoy.

Here are some ideas for writing your own green poetry.

1. Write a Haiku about water without using the word "water."

Haiku poems consist of three lines, with using five syllables in the first line, seven syllables in the second line and five syllables in the last line.

The animal lives	(5 syllables)
Inside of all of us now	(7 syllables)
So let it outside	(5 syllables)

2. Write a five-lined poem about a natural place you have visited in person or through pictures. Each line should describe the place using your five senses: see, hear, smell, touch, taste. The title is the name of the place.

The North Pole	
White is everywhere	(see)
Whistling Wind	(hear)
The scent of icicles is cold	(smell)
Salty air hangs around	(taste)
Cold wind bites my skin	(touch)



3. Write a rhyming poem about the different sounds you would hear around you when you are outside, under a tree. Shel Silverstein wrote this rhyming poem specifically about poetry and a tree.

THE POET TREE

by *Shel Silverstein*

Underneath the poet tree
Come and rest awhile with me
And watch the word web weaves
Between the shady story leaves.
The branches of the poet tree
Reach from the mountains to the sea.
So come and sit ... and dream ... and climb—
Just don't get hit by falling rhymes.

4. Write a concrete poem about your favorite animal that lives in the Forest Preserves of Cook County without using the name of the animal. A concrete poem uses the words of the poem to make a picture of what the poem is about.

For an example of a concrete poem check out this web page:
tinyurl.com/rebeccajgomez

5. Write a poem about nature and how it makes you feel when you're in it.

- Choose your favorite nature noun
- Write that word at the top of your paper
- Write two words that describe that word (adjectives)
- Write three action words that relate to that word (verbs)
- Write a short "I" statement connecting that word to one of your senses without using the word itself
- End the poem with one word about how that word makes you feel
- Read your poem out loud

Sun
Yellow, Bright
Shining, Heating, Melting
I see its rays through the leaves
Warmth

6. Describe your favorite thing to do outdoors without using the word "like." Use your favorite poetry style.

Visit this website for inspiration. tinyurl.com/ybfqw8cl