

## Did you know?

### International Haiku Poetry Day



1      2      3      4      5

Did you know haikus  
1      2      3      4      5      6      7  
Will be celebrated on  
1      2      3      4      5  
April seventeenth?

You may remember having a go at writing a haiku at some point in your English lessons at school; it's the Japanese three-line poem that has a strict 17-syllable count of five syllables in the first line, seven in the second and five in the third. And 17 April is the day for its international celebration.

Haikus were developed from earlier forms of poetry by the seventeenth-century Japanese poet Basho. His work focused on the concept of *karumi* – a feeling of lightness. While haikus have gone through some transformations since that time, haikus are still written to celebrate nature and according to classic haiku poets in Japan, they should represent an observation of a natural commonplace event in the simplest verbal form. They describe something in sparing detail – a glance, a glimpse of a moment captured in 17 syllables.

After the end of the second world war, haikus became popular outside of Japan and were written in a wide variety of languages; in 2007 International Haiku Day was first introduced. Its purpose is to encourage public events including readings, exhibitions and competitions.

If you would like to use **Haikus** as a topic in your lessons, then we have provided you with an activity at A2 level; take a look at the **Teacher's notes** and **Worksheet**.

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# Did you know?

## Teacher's notes

### Haikus (Level A2 and above, 15+ mins)

- Make a copy of the **Worksheet**, one for each student.
- On the board write **haiku** and ask students if they know what this is (see explanation in text above).
- Ensure everyone understands what a syllable is (= *Silbe*).
- Write this haiku on the board:

Oak leaves fall slowly  
dancing to the forest floor  
autumn is coming.

Check understanding (Oak = *Eiche*).

- Ask students to read it aloud and count the syllables.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5  
Oak leaves fall slowly  
1                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7  
dancing to the forest floor  
1                    2                    3                    4                    5  
autumn is coming.

- Read aloud together.
- Handout the worksheet, one for each student and ask them to read the haikus and check the number of syllables. Check for any unknown language.
- Which haiku do they like best?
- Ask students to work together in pairs to create their own haiku. Give plenty of encouragement and let students use the examples as frameworks if they want to.
- Ask students to read their haikus aloud to the class.

## Did you know?

## Worksheet

### Haikus

**Read these examples of Haikus – count the syllables.**

A beautiful day

Snowflakes falling from the sky

Warm winter feeling.

Green grass growing high

Daisies and dandelions

My lovely garden.

She only speaks French

He only speaks Portuguese

But they are in love.

The white moon rises

Slowly, higher and higher

Silver light shining.