

How To Write Your First Poem:

A Beginner's Guide

By Peter Quinn

A Brief Introduction...

Poetry is the most popular art form in the world.

It's one that almost anyone can do - all you need is your imagination. You can even write a poem on the back of your bus ticket while you're on your way to work.

Also poetry is great therapy – it helps us to express ourselves.

So here is a quick guide to get you started.

A Couple of Reasons to Write Poetry...

A hundred years ago poetry was the preserve of the gentry. Now it's more popular than ever. More people write poetry now than ever before.

There are many reasons for this but mainly it's because we have more leisure time, we have better education and we're living longer. All this gives us more opportunity to think about life and the world around us and analyse both ourselves and our environment.

So it's only natural that we want to write this down.

And of course – writing poetry leads to many other things. It helps us to develop our writing skills and talents of self-expression and communication. Poetry is also popular because of the media. People submit poems to newspapers and magazines. They publish books of poetry and they write lyrics for songs.

Many songwriters started out as poets before they thought about submitting their work to people in the music industry.

Poetry opens up a whole new world of opportunities to you – so why not get going right now.

Write Your First Poem – Now...

The following guide assumes that you have never written a poem before and that you want to write one right now.

Step 1 – Choose a Topic...

First of all think of a subject to write about. One of the most common subjects is love. It doesn't have to be someone you are romantically involved with; it could be one of your parents, a sibling or a friend.

The most common subject for beginners and seasoned poets alike is "a mother's love", so let's begin with this as your title.

Step 2 – Ask Questions...

Now what do you want to say about your mother and her love for you? Hopefully it's something positive!

So why not think about those positive feelings and try and put them down in writing.

Ask yourself these questions:

What does it take to be a mum?

What does your mum mean to you?

What things has your mum done for you that you appreciate?

What singles out your mum from the others?

What do you particularly love about your mum?

How do the answers to these questions make you feel?

Now write down the answers to these questions and the emotions you attach to them, and start thinking about putting them into an attractive poem.

Step 3 – Start Writing Your Poem...

You could say something like:

My mum means so much to me,
She's made so many sacrifices,
A greater love there could never be.

See – you've already managed to rhyme the first and third line.

Step 4 – Finish Your First Draft...

It's important to get your first draft written down as quickly as possible. There's plenty of time to rewrite later!

Step 5 – Review and Rewrite...

When you've got your first draft written down, you can now review what you've written and begin to form it into a finished poem.

Remember that poetry – especially modern poetry – does not have to rhyme. Here's where poetry becomes even more wonderful – because *you* get to choose. You decide whether you want your poetry to rhyme – all the time – or you want it to rhyme none of the time.

For a punchier effect you could even use rhyme at the parts of the poem that are most important. These may be the last couple of lines.

Again, the choice is yours. With a poem you can do what you like and make it as individual as you like.

There are no two poems the same – they are as individual as our fingerprints and our personalities.

That's the beauty of poetry. You will find that once you get into it, it becomes more and more enjoyable and you get more and more out of it.

And just think what your mum will feel when she sees your poem. That's right – poetry is not just an individual occupation. When other people read your poetry they can feel as you feel and understand a lot more about you and what makes you tick.

This is one of the great rewards of becoming a poet. It helps you to express yourself and helps others to understand you.

Step 6 – Continue the Journey...

So now that you have written your first poem, you can think about other subjects to write about. The list is limitless. You can write about yourself, your friends, about incidents from your past and your hopes for the future.

With poetry you can create a whole new world and a whole new extension of yourself. You can go wherever you want without having to travel. You don't need a set of paints, you don't need a musical instrument, and you don't need a block of stone and a chisel. You don't need anything except a pen, a sheet of paper and your imagination.

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For a more in-depth overview of poetry, visit <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poetry>