



# HAIKU IN BLOOM: A LESSON FOR HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH STUDENTS



Assignment: Collaborative Lesson Plan

Course Title: PAWLP Literacy in Bloom

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## HAIKU IN BLOOM: A LESSON FOR HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH STUDENTS

- At a Glance:** After studying the symbolism and historical significance of the chrysanthemum as well form of the haiku, students will apply this knowledge to the composition of haiku poetry at Longwood.
- Target Grades:** High school core literature and writing courses, as well as elective composition and writing courses
- Materials Needed:**
- Attached handouts and lesson plans
  - Access to Longwood Gardens
  - Articles from Longwood Garden on the Chrysanthemum Festival (<http://www.longwoodgardens.org/autumnscolors.html> and <http://longwoodgardens.wordpress.com/2010/09/07/the-art-of-cascade-chrysanthemums-at-longwood-gardens/>)
  - Optional resources could include digital cameras, computer access, art supplies
- Goals:** Students will demonstrate understanding of the structure and history of haiku as well as the mum's significance to Japanese culture by constructing an original haiku.
- Objectives:** To apply the rules of the haiku to an original poem, which reflects the Japanese culture and its respect for the chrysanthemum.
- Nat. Standards:** This lesson strives to engage students in the following core standards
- National Standards - <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/english-language-arts-standards/>*

### Writing

#### W.11-12.3.

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

- Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
- Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).
- Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
- Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.

## Reading

### *Key Ideas and Details*

- RL.11-12.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- RL.11-12.2. Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RL.11-12.3. Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

### *Craft and Structure*

- RL.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
- RL.11-12.5. Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
- RL.11-12.6. Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

### *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- RL.11-12.7. Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)

### *Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity*

- RL.11-12.10. By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

## Speaking and Listening

### *Comprehension and Collaboration*

- SL.11-12.1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
  - Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.
  - Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.



- Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.
- SL.11-12.2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
- SL.11-12.3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

### *Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas*

- SL.11-12.4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.
- SL.11-12.5. Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
- SL.11-12.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

PA Standards: This lesson strives to engage students in the following PA standards

- 1.2.11.A: Evaluate and critique text organization and content to determine the author's purpose and effectiveness according to the author's theses, accuracy, thoroughness, logic, and reasoning.
- 1.2.11.E: Examine and respond to essential content of text and documents in all academic areas.
- 1.3.11.A: Examine the impact of diverse cultures and writers on the development and growth of literature. Describe how an author conveys intent and perspective in contemporary and historical writings.
- 1.4.11.A: Write poems, short stories, and plays.
  - Apply various organizational methods.
  - Include literary elements and devices.
  - Construct a strong story line with illustrative details.
  - Include elements of style in writing to develop a personal style
- 1.8.11.B: Conduct inquiry and research on self-selected or assigned topics, issues, or problems using a wide variety of appropriate media sources and strategies. Demonstrate that sources have been evaluated for accuracy, bias, and credibility. Synthesize information gathered from a variety of sources, including technology and one's own research, and evaluate information for its relevance to the research question. Demonstrate the distinction between one's own ideas from the ideas of others, and includes a reference page.
- 1.8.11.C: Analyze, synthesize, and integrate data, creating a reasoned product that supports and appropriately illustrates inferences and conclusions drawn from research.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF HAIKU

The haiku began many years ago in Japan, where poets used to get together for parties to write long poems, called *renga*, made up of many short stanzas that they took turns writing. Poets going to a renga party hoped that they would have the honor of giving the first stanza, and often made up one or two on the way. Usually only one renga would be written at a party; this meant a lot of “starting verses,” or *hokku*, were never used. About five hundred years ago, poets began publishing their unused starting verses in collections, along with their renga they had helped to write. By 1900 the Japanese recognized these detached hokku as fully independent poems, and began calling them “haiku.”

### CHARACTERISTICS OF HAIKU:

- **has three lines**
- **involves nature in content**
- **must contain a *kigo*, a season word, which indicates or suggests in which season the haiku is set**
- **uses simple words and expressions, relating to things directly, without metaphors and similes, and almost no adjectives**

### MYTH OF HAIKU:

- must have seventeen syllables arranged 5/7/5 in lines 1, 2 and 3\*
- \* The fact is that traditional Japanese haiku poets count “sounds,” not syllables. The seventeen sounds of a traditional Japanese haiku take about the same length of time to say as twelve to fifteen English syllables. That’s why most North American haiku poets write haiku in English with fewer than seventeen syllables. Today, many poets simply write haiku in three short lines.

### FUN FACTS ABOUT HAIKU:

- In Japanese *haiku* means “play verse.”
- Matsuo Basho (1644-1694) is one of Japan’s most respected poets.
- The best-known poem in Japan is by Matsuo Basho. See translation below:  
 Old pond...  
 A frog leaps in  
 Water’s sound

### OTHER HAIKUS BY BASHO

No one travels  
 Along this way but I,  
 This autumn evening

In all the rains of May  
 There is one thing not hidden—  
 The bridge at Seta Bay  
 Harvest Moon:  
 Around the pond I wander  
 And the night is gone

Temple bells die out.  
 The fragrant blossoms remain.  
 A perfect evening!



## HAIKU IN BLOOM

In the space below, brainstorm words that you associate with each season. Think beyond the obvious. For example, there are words besides *cold* that relate to winter. List at least 5 words per season, and feel free to list more. From these 20 or more words you will choose 3 to include in your own haiku.

Here is a list for one season, autumn:

Bright, crisp, leaves, glitter, gold, crimson, gaudy

After you have completed your list of seasonal words, share with the student beside you. Notice words that you have in common and words that you don't. With your partner's permission, add words of hers/his to your own list.

Independently, compose your own haiku, using at least three words from your list. However, all three words should relate to one season. You only have three lines, and your haiku should address only one season, as Basho does in the examples above. You don't even have to mention the season; you can suggest it by using words that you associate with that season.

Note: If you wish to adhere to the 5/7/5 syllabic haiku pattern, feel free to do so. However, you are not required to stick to this pattern. Brevity is key, so keep your lines relatively short, using simple, straightforward language. In haiku, you are not trying to impress your reader with heavy description or fancy figurative language such as metaphor, simile, personification, etc. Less is always more in haiku, but you still need to locate your reader in a moment in nature. Make your reader see, hear, feel, smell or taste the moment without the distraction of abstraction. Here, you want to be concrete and literal.

Remember: *Haiku* means "play verse" in Japanese, so have fun "playing" with the words and structure!

### Sources:

*The Teachers & Writers Handbook of Poetic Forms*, ed. Ron Padgett, New York: Teachers & Writers Collaborative, 1987. Print.

Higginson, William J., "Japanese Poems for American School Kids? Or Why and How to Not Teach Haiku," *Teachers & Writers Collaborative The Whole Word Catalogue*2, eds. Bill Zavatsky and Ron Padgett, New York: Teachers & Writers Collaborative, 1977. Print

## HISTORY AND SYMBOLISM OF THE CHRYSANTHEMUM

### HISTORY:

Chrysanthemums were being cultivated in China over 2000 years ago. In fact, Confucius, born in 550 B.C.E, wrote of the chrysanthemum's "yellow glory." The Chinese Chrysanthemum Association idealizes the bloom for having reputed powers, stating that when the flower grew wild by streams and ponds, "most people who drank of the clear waters enjoyed a long life." Centuries later in China, the flower grew in its culture significance, peaking in popularity between 355 and 417 C.E. Tao Yuanming, great poet of the Eastern Jin dynasty, was so entranced by the chrysanthemum that he composed many poems about the blooms. One of them runs:

Chrysanthemums brighten the forests,  
Green pines crown the clifftops,  
Noble and chaste of character,  
They stand undaunted by frosts.

Exploring the art of China reveals that the chrysanthemum was often used by the Chinese during meditation, with their image often reproduced on vases and in paintings. However, much of the chrysanthemum's symbolic import rose when the flower hit Japanese shores. Chrysanthemums are believed to have first reached Japan as seeds somewhere around 386 C.E. as gifts to Japanese Emperor Kintoku. Since that time, the Japanese have revered the flower's showy blooms, claiming it reflects their natural temperament. In Japanese culture, the flower is thought to symbolize peace, nobility, and long life. Used to represent cultural and historically important figures, the chrysanthemum is also most recognizable as one of the Emperor's imperial symbols. It appeared as the crest and official seal of Japan's Emperor. The flower is often alluded to in all forms of Japanese literature, one of the oldest being an ancient proverb:

In the second month the Peach tree blooms  
But not till the ninth Chrysanthemums  
So each must wait till his own time comes.

### Sources:

Cumming, Roderick W. *The Chrysanthemum Book*. Princeton, New Jersey: D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc., 1964. Print.

Nakajima, Tameji. *The Art of the Chrysanthemum*. New York: Harper and Row, 1965. Print.

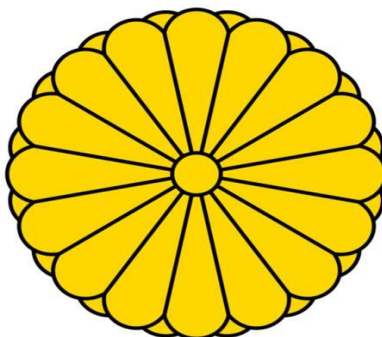
Chinese Chrysanthemums. Beijing: Zhaohua Publishing House, 1981. Print.



# CULTURAL AND SYMBOLIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHRYSANTHEMUM

## Activity Worksheet

Directions: Analyze the visual representations of the Chrysanthemum below and respond to the writing prompts beneath each image.



Consider what you know about the Chrysanthemum's symbolic association with the sun; identify 3 features of this image that demonstrate the "sun status" of this flower (color, symmetry, shape, etc.). Write three sentences about each feature.

1.

2.

3.

What other plants or flowers have you seen at Longwood that could be associated with the sun?







## HAIKU IN BLOOM

In Japan, Chrysanthemum cultivation is a popular activity; “trained” mums are often displayed in prominent places like outdoor entrances to the home (steps, doorway, etc.). In one paragraph, discuss how the common cultivation of this flower could symbolize specific cultural imperatives and/or desires Japanese society seeks to cultivate within its members?

Now try to distill the paragraph you wrote above into 3 sentences.

Take these three sentences and construct a haiku.

## HAIKU IN BLOOM



The image above depicts a rigorous, 18-month growing technique which involves meticulous watering, pinching and tying of the chrysanthemum to a customized wire frame to train the plant to grow into the desired form. The blooms are painstakingly arranged in a dome shape, with the goal of achieving as many uniform blooms as possible.

What are the symbolic implications of this training method?

How does the sheer enormity of 1,000 bloom mum connect with cultural consciousness?

How do the ideas of order and discipline represented in this flower rearing technique correspond to the cultural ideals of the Japanese people?

## A LESSON IN POETRY AT LONGWOOD GARDENS

As you know, both **haiku** and **the chrysanthemum** represent artistic form in the Japanese culture. Your task is to demonstrate your understanding of the two by composing a haiku that “paints” a mental image of the chrysanthemum.

### PART I: REVIEW

First, review the structure and purpose of haiku by answering the following:

A commonly held belief about haiku is that it has \_\_\_\_\_ syllables, that the first line has \_\_\_\_\_ syllables, the second line \_\_\_\_\_ syllables and the third line \_\_\_\_\_ syllables.

Haiku is like a \_\_\_\_\_

- a. novel                      b. mural                      c. snapshot                      d. symphony

Haiku poets write about (circle one)

- a. complex issues such as philosophy, politics and religion  
b. everyday things such as experiences, emotions and nature  
c. scientific things such as astronomy, medicine and physics  
d. silly things such as jokes, riddles and nursery rhymes

Haiku poets reveal a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ significance in a detail of nature or human life.

- a. comical                      b. dependable                      c. trustworthy                      d. unsuspected

Haiku poets use **simple/complex** words and grammar (circle one).

The trick is to paint a *mental* and *meaningful* image in the reader’s mind using a compact form of expression. You will accomplish this task by using one of the chrysanthemums at LONGWOOD GARDENS as your inspiration.

Before you do that, review the history and meaning of the chrysanthemum by answering the following:

In Japan, the chrysanthemum is the crest and official seal of the \_\_\_\_\_.

The chrysanthemum is a symbol of (circle one)

- a. the galaxy                      b. the moon                      c. the stars                      d. the sun

The orderly unfolding of its petals represent (circle one)

- a. obsession                      b. orderliness                      c. perfection                      d. resignation

Japanese custom says that a chrysanthemum petal will encourage a long and healthy life when dropped into the bottom of a (circle one)

- a. hat                      b. lake                      c. wine glass                      d. wishing well

In October each year, Japan holds a “Festival of \_\_\_\_\_” to celebrate the flower.

## PART II: TASK

LONGWOOD GARDENS boasts more than 20,000 blooming chrysanthemums during the CHRYSANTHEMUM FESTIVAL each November. As a group, we will go into the Conservatory where the chrysanthemums are on display. Individually, you will select *one* chrysanthemum plant as your inspiration for your haiku. Try to spread out in the Conservatory. With 20,000 plants, there are plenty to choose from!

### Gathering inspiration

Once you've chosen a chrysanthemum, have a seat before it. Take it in. Below, write some *objective sensory descriptions* that come to your mind – avoid abstract and subjective descriptions. Examples of objective descriptions: warm rain, falling leaves, falling snow.

Images:

### Playing around with words

Begin playing around with the haiku form. See if you can format your impressions into 17 syllables – Hint: rearrange and rethink word choices to match the syllable pattern. For instance, if a chosen phrase has four syllables, think of a synonym for one of the words or try rearranging words to make it five syllables. Your work should not sound stilted or contrived but should flow smoothly.

My practice space:





## HAIKU IN BLOOM

### Best effort

Below, write your haiku, trying not to exceed 17 syllables.

First line: \_\_\_\_\_

Second line: \_\_\_\_\_

Third line: \_\_\_\_\_

Read it aloud, clapping out the syllables to make sure that you got it right!

### PART III: CRITIQUE

Get feedback on your poem by sharing it with a classmate or two (while they're critiquing your work, take a photo of your chrysanthemum).

Note to classmate, please answer the following questions

#### *Critic #1*

Does the poem follow the three-line format?    Yes    No

Is the haiku successful? Is it compact yet meaningful?            Yes            No

What is the impression/image you take away after reading this poem?

#### *Critic #2*

Does the poem follow the three-line format?    Yes    No

Is the haiku successful? Is it compact yet meaningful?            Yes            No

What is the impression/image you take away after reading this poem?

Please give this paper back to its original poet.

## PART IV: THE FINISHED PRODUCT

1. Revise your poem if necessary.
2. Make sure you have a photo of the chrysanthemum that inspired your words.
3. On a separate sheet of paper, handwrite or type your haiku. Play around with fonts and colors if you'd like. Just so you know, typically each line of a haiku begins with a capital letter.
4. Finish the page by illustrating your poem any way you wish. And be sure to place the photo somewhere on the page!

All of your poems will be combined into a class book of haiku.

Due date: \_\_\_\_\_

## EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY: MAKING IT METAPHORICAL

Take the haiku you wrote about the chrysanthemum, and challenge yourself to write a new haiku in which you use metaphorical language instead of the literal language which you used in your first chrysanthemum haiku that follows the conventions of the haiku form. In the example below, Hosai's haiku uses simple, literal language that allows the reader to see the nail box and its contents of bent nails and nothing more. In the second haiku, however, I have responded to the nail box with its contents of bent nails as though it were a metaphor for writer's block. Just as bent nails prevent a carpenter from doing his/her job, paralyzed fingers prevent a writer from doing her/his job.

When you write your second haiku, you will start by looking at the symbolic or metaphorical possibilities for the chrysanthemum in your first haiku that allows the reader to see it in the literal sense. While your second haiku will not be adhering to traditional haiku conventions, it will allow you and the reader to see it in a different light.

Example:

**the nail box:  
every nail  
is bent**

Hosai  
(1885-1926)

**writer's block:  
every finger  
is paralyzed**

(fresh poem)