

Haiku Handout

Traditional Japanese Haiku

Arakida Moritake, 1473-1539

The falling flower
I saw drift back to the branch
Was a butterfly

Basho, 1644-94

This road—
no one goes down it,
autumn evening.

Seifu, 1650-1721

The faces of the dolls.
In unavoidable ways
I must have grown old.

The departing year:
my grey hair I needn't hide
from parents now gone.

Chiyojo, 1703-1775

Bearing no flowers
I am free to toss madly
Like the willow tree.

Buson, 1716-83

Coolness—
the sound of the bell
as it leaves the bell.

Issa, 1763-1827

The moon and the flowers,
forty-nine years,
walking around, wasting time.

Haiku Composed in English

Etheridge Knight, 1960

Eastern guard tower
glints in sunset; convicts rest
like lizards on rocks.

Richard Wright, 1960

In the falling snow
A laughing boy holds out his palms
Until they are white.

James A. Emanuel, 1999

Ray Charles

His get-aboard smile,
picnic knees, back-up bounce: JAZZ,
all there, ounce by ounce.

English Poems Inspired by Haiku

Ezra Pound, 1913

In a Station of the Metro

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
Petals on a wet, black bough.

Allen Ginsburg, 1955

Looking over my shoulder
my behind was covered
with cherry blossoms.

H.D., 1914

Oread

Whirl up, sea —
Whirl your pointed pines.
Splash your great pines
On our rocks.
Hurl your green over us —
Cover us with your pools of fir.