



AMERICAN BLUES POEM

Traditionally, the African American blues stanzas were sung, but a number of writers have sprung up writing blues poems. This form is usually written in 3-line stanzas. (Sometimes 4 lines.) The first two lines either repeat or include some repetition and set up a problem. The third line in each stanza clarifies, extends, or includes a punch or a twist. It can be funny or tragic—but always full of feeling.

EXAMPLE:

UMBRELLA BLUES

Day after day and what do I get?
Closed-up in a closet, that's what I get.
Unless there's a storm comin', wild and wet.

Then I get used, and these ribs push and strain.
Wind lashed, abused, my frame takes the strain.
I'm not loved at all, except in the rain.

One of these days, gonna set myself free.
One stormy day, I'll set myself free.
I'll flip upside down, and float to the sea

Shutta

RESOURCES:

<https://folkways.si.edu/poetry-ballad-blues-stanzas/music/article/smithsonian>