



Tanka (Japan):

A good one to do with young writers!

A Tanka is an unrhymed poem consisting of five lines. When writing in English it is usual for the first line to have 5 syllables, the second line to have 7, and the third line to have 5—as in an English haiku. The last two lines have 7 each. It is very similar to haiku but tanka has two more lines and it uses simile, metaphor and personification. My poem came about from watching a kingfisher fledgling shrilly crying for food from a sandy hillside by our farm.

EXAMPLE:

KINGFISHER FLEDGLING

Oh, squalling child, hush!
And just look at your feathers—
Disheveled, dusty.
 Your shrill cries from the cliff face
 will not hasten your dinner.

by Shutta