

JAPANESE HAIKU by Jan Shillum

The Haiku is a traditional Japanese unrhymed poem consisting of three phrases, the first of five syllables, the second of seven syllables and the third of five again. They often focus on nature and/or evoke a moment in time.

It is a wonderful medium for distilling the mind and the poem down to the very essence of what you want to say. I was inspired to write my first attempt after reading STATE/BANQUET — a poem written by former Poet Laureate, Carol Ann Duffy DBE after the banquet given by the King for President Trump during his recent State visit. Here's what I was compelled to write:

Kings feast victims starve.
War benefits rich, not poor
who die in despair.

I read it at our Creative writing meeting and several members came back next time with their own Haiku about anything and everything. Warning: It can get addictive... You can add more triple 575 lines, some have been known to write a whole book using the same format.

Here's my next attempt after inspiration struck in the shower...

Small things on my mind
Shower not draining out well
Light bulb needs changing.

Now I'm on my own,
These things become important
Silly but too true

I miss you a lot
For so many reasons but
Practical I'm not.

...And here are some brilliant mini masterpieces crafted by other members of the group.

Jackie's Haiku

The Blues

In bed with 'Black Dog'
Contemplating dry bones
Anne phones, pooch scarpers.

Drought

No rain, sun burnt grass
The pond's a dried-up hollow
Moorhens peck at dust

Fun, no Fun

Fireworks flash and bang
A brief moment's spectacle
Greyhounds quake in fear

War

Gaza is flattened
Who makes the biggest killing?
The real-estate king

Apprehension

Fear of showing Age
Had me tossing and turning
But Keep Fit was GREAT!

Fall Back

Putting the clocks back
Makes the nights draw in sooner
Does Nature know this?

90th Birthday

The Dalai Lama's
Preaching compassion and love
Will no one listen?

Royalty

Privilege of birth
Means kings can pray with popes
Why? Princes merely prey.

Buried

In Highgate's graveyard
Marx, Eliot, Sillitoe
Inspire us after death

Ghosts

The trouble with ghosts:
They never come and haunt you
When you need them most

The Third Age

Rock on, U3A
Keep us oldies in the groove
Before we spin off

Demography

Migrants come and go
Good, bad and indifferent
Like the rest of us

Can't Paint

Brush dry canvas blank
Paints lie drying in their tubes
Bereft of a muse

Sue M's Haiku

Rainy day

Pitter Patter, Plop,
Puddles fill, Umbrellas up
Later it will stop.

Clean bed

Crispy white starched sheets,
Fluffy duvet, puffed pillows,
I love bed change day.

He's out

Asylum seeker.
Now free to attack again,
Prison service fails.

Prince Andrew

Oh dear Prince Andrew,
Bang to rights with trousers down,
Lies, lies and more lies.

Labour

Labour fails again,
Another politician,
Tumbles heavily

London

London, London town ,
Vibrant, noisy, colourful,
China town is best.

Autumn

Autumn leaves float down,
Ripe apples for picking soon.
I love autumn time.

Bills

Bills, bills and more bills,
How am I going to pay.
Chancellor please stop!

Time

Tick, tock goes the clock,
Breakfast, lunch, tea, dinner time,
Time passes quickly.

Nature

Nature, beautiful
Bright Colours, bob and shimmy,
As a new day dawns

Carol's Haiku

Creative Writing
What do I like about it
It isn't easy

Sometimes things go well
I get some inspiration
Sometimes I'm rubbish

Jan makes us some tea
And we settle down to chat
Not for too long though

Is it a story,
One we have improved upon,
Or completely new?

It is interesting
and often amusing too
to hear our friends read

Some tales are witty
Others are clever or sad
I love all of them

When I have to read
I wonder if they'll like it
Have to wait and see.