

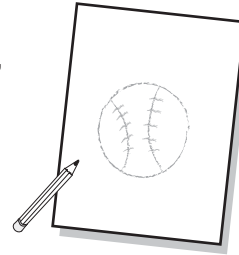
POETRY WITH A TWIST

A concrete/shape poem is one that's shaped like its subject matter. In the book, *Love that Dog*, Jack writes a poem called, *My Yellow Dog* and it is shaped like a dog. Also, in the back of the book a poem called, *The Apple*, is in the shape of an apple. Using the steps below write your own shape poem.

1. Make a list of objects that have simple or distinctive shapes, like a baseball or an umbrella:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. Pick the object that appeals to you the most and sketch the shape, making it as large as possible, on a separate sheet of paper.



3. What can you say about this shape? What specific qualities does the object have? Remember to use your senses...How does it sound, taste, smell, feel, look? Write your ideas:

4. What are some things that it does or that are done with it? Write your ideas:

5. Think of some things that you associate with the object. For example, a baseball might make you think of a game you played in or saw with your family, the ballpark, hot dogs, or star players.

Write your ideas:

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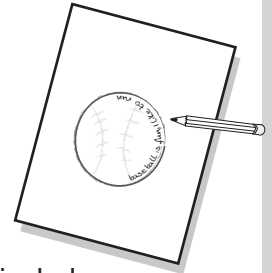
NOW COMES THE FUN PART PUTTING YOUR CONCRETE POEM TOGETHER!

First, reread the ideas you wrote in the above questions. Without thinking about it too much, quickly circle the words and ideas you like best. Read them aloud to yourself.

Second, with a pencil, lightly outline the object, on your sheet of paper. This is the basic shape of your poem. Start writing words along the outline of the object. Think of additional words that describe the subject or are related to it.

Things to think about as you continue to revise and refine your poem:

- Do you want to hand write your poem?
- Do you want to use a computer to set your words? What font will you use?
- Would your poem stand out with colorful letters?
- Try cutting letters or words out of magazines to make the words you want to include
- Should your words be in the center of the poem or fill the shape?
- Should you repeat words or perhaps one important word throughout?



Since you have spent so much time on this poem, you will want to make it extra special. Perhaps you can mount it on a piece of construction paper. Either use a regular shape or cut the construction paper in the same shape as your poem only slightly bigger. Then paste your poem onto that piece of paper.

Above lesson adapted from: Teaching 10 Fabulous Forms of Poetry by Paul B. Janeczko

Bonus Activities:

1. There are lots of other styles of poetry, such as haiku, acrostics, limerick, cinquain, alliteration, or list poems. Research what these different forms look like and what makes them unique - and try to find a poem that is an example of each. Then choose one of the forms to write about the same subject as your shape poem. How does the different poetry form change the way your poem sounds...does the different poetry form express a different feeling about the subject? Which poetry form is your favorite? Least favorite? Easiest or hardest to write?

2. Start a poetry journal like Jack's. When you come across a poem you like write it in your journal.... or even better, start writing your own poems.



This activity is based on *Love That Dog*
by Sharon Creech.

Find more activities at <http://teacher.scholastic.com/fairs>