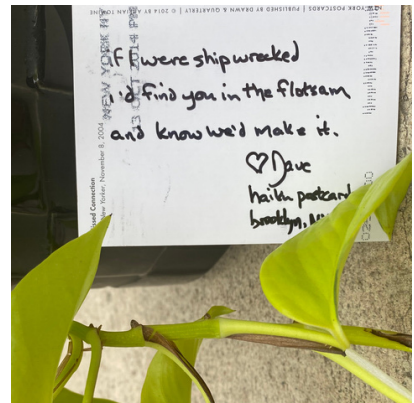
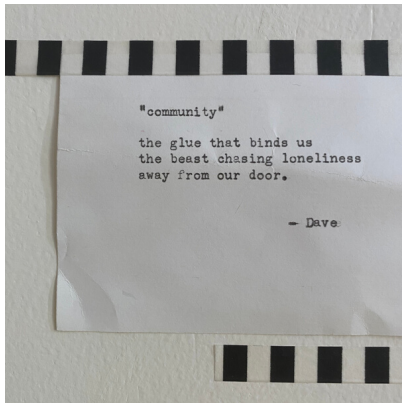


COMMON WEAL COMMUNITY ARTS

Artful Isolation Activities

Week Six: Haiku Postcards

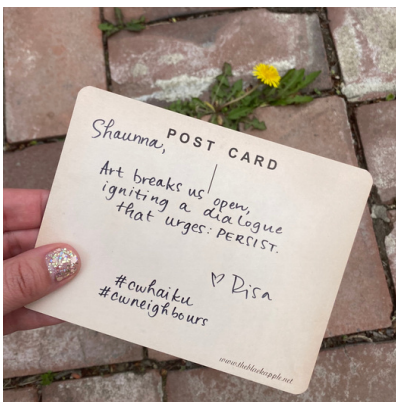
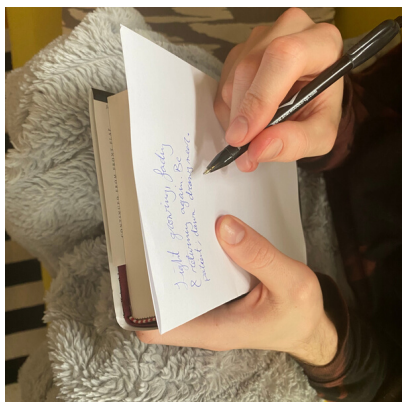


Surprise your friends, family, and neighbours with a haiku postcard just for them!

What is a Haiku? Haiku is a form of poetry that originated in Japan. Haikus consist of seventeen syllables, formatted in three lines of five, seven, and five syllables respectively. Traditionally, haikus evoke images of the natural world; however, they have been adapted to explore a range of topics for contemporary use.*

Why Haiku Postcards? Our Executive Director, Risa Payant, became interested in haiku after being inspired by Dave Mitchell, a global activist and dear pal. While travelling the world, Dave stayed connected to friends and family by sending postcards featuring personalized haikus he wrote specifically for the recipient. "His postcards were a welcome moment of connection across distance, reminding me that we carry our loved ones with us, whether they are physically present or not," says Risa. "This notion feels especially important right now." Of the form, Risa says, "I found myself experimenting with haiku because I was drawn to how much depth Dave could convey within so few words. Brevity is not my strength, but the practice of haiku has helped me drill down on the use of language and work on articulating complex ideas with a sense of focus."

*Adapted from the definition found on GoogleDictionary.

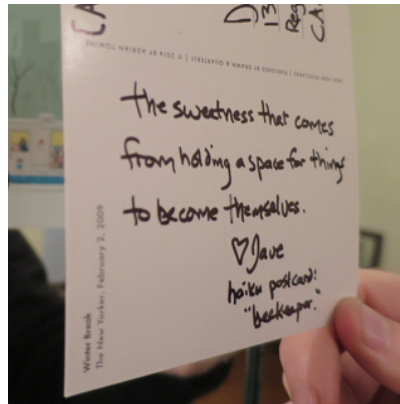


Suitable For: Ages 7+ (note that younger elementary aged children will need support).

What You'll Need: Journal, writing implements, cardboard, paper, tape, and glue—anything your heart desires to create a keepsake haiku postcard to share.

Getting Ready:

- Explore the haiku examples on this page and online [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#). What do you notice about these poems? Are you excited to experiment with this form? What elements do you want to borrow from the examples and what will you choose to do differently?
- What is a syllable? Watch [this fun video](#) to learn about syllables and how to determine the syllable structure of words. You can also use a clapping activity like [this](#) to help wee ones embody this concept.
- Consider who you would like to connect with. Choose a person to receive your haiku postcard. This may be someone you know or someone in your community you want to do something special for.



Activity:

- Begin brainstorming. Think about the recipient of your haiku postcard. What do you want to tell them? How can you bring positivity and connection to their day? Will your message be funny or serious? Take a moment to write some of your thoughts down.
- Look at your writing. Are there certain words that come up over and over? A clear theme you can work with? Pull out the strongest elements of your writing to use in your haiku.
- Write your haiku! Remember, haiku consists of three lines of five, seven, and five syllables each. The lines may be standalone sentences or a continuous thought. Don't forget to use punctuation to help clarify your poem. Take your time to consider each word; it's not a race! Having a [thesaurus](#) on hand may help.
- Once you've finished your haiku, get it down on a shareable postcard. If you have postcards at home, great! If not, make your own with art supplies or recyclables! Don't forget to sign your haiku and add hashtags below.
- Now, get your creation to the intended recipient. Drop it off on their doorstep or pop it in the mail. How far can your haiku postcard travel?

Reflection:

- Consider the activity. Did you find it difficult to write a haiku? Did focusing on the recipient help or hinder your process? Did you feel frustrated with the limitations of the form or was it fun to follow the rules?
- Consider other forms of inspiration for a future haiku project. Could you write about what you see out your window? Your favourite colour? A pet? The most delicious taco you've ever eaten? The possibilities are endless!
- Share photos of your postcards with us via Facebook or Instagram, tagging [@skcommonweal](#) and using the hashtags [#cwhaiku](#) and [#cwneighbours](#).

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY RISA PAYANT AND DAVE MITCHELL

ACTIVITY SHEET CREATED BY COMMON WEAL COMMUNITY ARTS IN SASKATCHEWAN

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