Overview

Have you ever wanted to attend a poetry writing workshop, but felt intimidated or apprehensive? Do you enjoy reading poetry and sometimes wonder if you could create some lines of your own? Or do you read poems and wonder what the poet really meant by them? Poetry—introspective, profound, fun, and creative—has inspired and enchanted humankind throughout the ages. It can be subjective and at the same time universal, and can appeal on many levels. This course engages you in reading and writing poetry.

The goal of this course is to enable you to write poetry. The information needed to achieve this goal is presented in the textbook entitled *Writing Poetry* and this study guide. The second edition of the textbook, written by Barbara Drake, was published by Harcourt Brace College Publishers.

Study guides are a popular component of distance education courses. They identify what you should be able to do after completing each chapter of the
textbook. They summarize and occasionally clarify or supplement the material in the textbook. They also include the assignments that enable your instructor to evaluate your progress throughout the course. To benefit the most from this type of distance learning, follow the directions in this study guide, which explain how to proceed through each chapter of the textbook.

The study guide for this course divides the textbook into four units. Unit 1, which covers Chapters 1 through 4 in your textbook, defines poetry and identifies sources of poetic material. Unit 2, which includes Chapters 5 through 7, describes some poetic strategies. Unit 3, which includes Chapters 8 through 11, covers content, meaning, and medium. Unit 4, which covers Chapters 12 through 14, deals with inspiration.

To complete this course you need the materials that The Hadley School for the Blind has provided and writing materials in the medium of your choice. If you are taking the audiocassette version of this course, you will also need your own cassette
player.

The questions in the Reading Directions section of this study guide are for your personal development only. Therefore, do not send your answers to your Hadley instructor. You are required, however, to submit the assignments included in Chapters 1–14. Assignments must be either typed, brailled, or printed from a computer. As you complete each one, send it to your instructor at The Hadley School for the Blind, 700 Elm Street, Winnetka, IL, 60093-0299. For your convenience, mailing labels are included with your course materials.
Chapter 13: Games and Experiments

By now you know that poetry is not completely serious—laughter and fun are familiar components in many poems. Chapter 12 illustrated the use of recurring, or universal, images and themes. Chapter 13 explains how games, puzzles, and riddles can challenge your creativity.

Although any poetry writing challenges your creativity, in this chapter you will experiment with direct riddles, puzzles, and games. Such tactics are fun, and poetry should include playfulness. Some of the tactics for introducing fun and play into your poetry include creating one-line poems, using a collage of words, creating concrete poetry, collaborating with one or more other poets, and manipulating the content. This chapter ends with some more inventive ways to play with words, many of which are worthwhile activities for writing workshops. Following the games and experiments in this chapter will enable you to add challenge and
fun to your poetry writing.

Objectives

After completing this chapter, you will be able to

a. explain how games, puzzles, and riddles can challenge your creativity
b. use various games and experiments to enhance your poetic creativity

Key Terms

The following terms appear in this chapter.
Familiarize yourself with their meanings so that you can use them in your course work or in your own creative writing.

*Aleatory*: accidental; in poetry this could refer to picking words at random, or incorporating spontaneous audience remarks as part of a reading

*Onomatopoeia*: a word or group of words that imitates an actual sound, such as *swish, bang, and bubble*

*Riddle poem*: a poem making use of a puzzling statement that becomes clear after the answer to
the riddle is discovered

**Reading Directions**

Now read Chapter 13 in your textbook, “Games and Experiments,” which starts on print page 295. As you read, answer the following questions:

1. Describe a manipulated poem.
2. Describe the process of using *thought line* to create a poem.
3. Suggest some word games and puzzles that poets can use.

Once you have finished reading the chapter, return to this study guide to compare your answers with those that follow and to complete the assignment.

**Suggested Answers**

1. Describe a manipulated poem. A manipulated poem is created by following a set of requirements, or steps.
2. Describe the process of using *thought line* to create a poem. You begin with an abstraction, such as *life*, *love*, or *death*, and free-associate, or write whatever words come immediately to
mind, one after the other.

3. Suggest some word games and puzzles that poets can use. Poets can create poems using
a. flip books
b. lipograms
c. palindromes
d. permutations
e. isogrammatic poems
f. snowball sentences
g. hidden-structure poems

If you answered these questions correctly, you are prepared to complete the assignment. If you found the questions difficult, however, review the material before moving on.

**Assignment 13**

Complete the following assignment in print or braille. Begin by giving your full name, address, and phone number. Also mention the name of this course, Assignment 13, your instructor’s name, and the date. Then provide your responses. Be sure to indicate the exercise number along with your answer. Instructions for sending your assignment are included in the Overview to this course.
Apply what you have learned from this chapter by completing two items of your choice from the section entitled “Suggestions for Writing.” Since the suggestions for writing have been explained in the chapter itself, here is simply a review of the possibilities covered. Refer to the chapter for explanations.

1. Riddles
2. One-line poems
3. Collaborations
4. Manipulated poems
5. Color associations
6. Thought lines
7. Concrete and visual poetry
8. Poetry written inside shapes
9. Sound poetry
10. Posters, postcards, and other display forms
11. Mixed-media poetry
12. Recreational linguistics: scrambled poems, snowballs, alphabetic sentences, flip books, lipograms, palindromes, exercises in randomness, Möbius construction, hidden structure poems, permutations
13. Poems out of letters from a polysyllabic word
Once you have completed this assignment, send it to your instructor. Then proceed to Chapter 14 of this unit, “Then and Now.”