



URL: www.readwritethink.org/materials/shape/

By creating a shape poem, children will learn the basic steps involved in writing a poem: finding a topic, brainstorming for ideas, coming up with a title, writing, revising, and publishing. From basketballs to balloons, children can choose from a variety of shapes. Building the poem inside the shape helps to focus children's attention on the topic. Best of all, this activity teaches children that poetry can be fun and is something everyone can do.

Here's What to Do

Children can select a shape from four themes: nature, sports, celebrations, and school. To title the poem, children put the cursor in the title space. They move the cursor to the body of the shape to write the poem. Remind children that rhyming isn't required and to print before exiting.

More Ideas to Try

- Give poems as gifts. Encourage children to write a shape poem in honor of someone who's having a birthday soon or as a gift for an upcoming holiday. Which shape would the recipient like best?
- Look for alternate shapes. Try an outline of a child's hand or foot. Also consider letters with accommodating shapes, such as V or O. Other possibilities include outlines of cars, CDs, or favorite foods.
- Hunt for examples of "shape poems" in the real world. What shapes hold words or phrases? Keep an eye out for signs, T-shirts, blimps, and birthday cakes.
- Look for everyday items that children can use as canvases for their shape poems. Try a plain T-shirt, a rock, the sole of a sneaker, or a paper plate. And if a child wants to write a skinny ode to that favorite yellow fruit, offer a banana.

*This tool uses the free Flash browser plug-in (version 8 or later), which can be downloaded from the ReadWriteThink [Site Tools](#) page.

To view this tip sheet online, go to www.readwritethink.org/materials/shape/ShapePoems.pdf.

**Intended for: Grades K-5
Ages 4-11**

Technical requirements: Flash 8*

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