FORMS OF POETRY
(sample)

Object Poem
There is no standard format for an object poem. Typically, the writer brainstorms a list of words and phrases that he or she associates with the subject, then writes the poem by incorporating as many of these words as possible. The poem usually rhymes, but not always.

Cinquain Poem
This is a five-line poem that can be written in one of two ways: by counting words (1/2/3/4/1), or by counting syllables (2/4/6/8/2). Either way, the same basic structure applies. This type of poem does not have to rhyme.

Synonym Poem
In a synonym poem, the writer thinks of words that are similar to the subject. The last two lines should rhyme.

Diamante Poem
Taking its name from the diamond shape, this poem is more flexible than it appears. Some diamantes focus solely on one subject, while others may show the differences between two opposing subjects.

Formula Poem
In this type of poem, the writer chooses words that relate to the subject of the poem. Other variations of the formula poem may devote one line each to how the subject looks, feels, tastes, smells, and sounds.

Haiku
This type of poem does not rhyme or use figurative language. The most common form is three lines, the first and third being the same length and the middle one being a little longer. In English-speaking countries, this has been translated into a 5/7/5 syllable structure, but this is not set in stone.

Tanka Poem
Similar to a haiku, but this type of poem uses figurative language such as similes, metaphors, and personification.

Acrostic Poem
Also called an alphabet poem, this poem has the subject written vertically, with each letter as the start of each line. The poem may or may not rhyme.

Free Verse
Typically patterned by speech rather than meter, this form of poetry is very open to the author’s discretion and usually does not rhyme. Visual and sound effects are often employed.