

PLUGGED IN

FUN FOR KIDS

A COOPERATIVE PROJECT OF THE SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS AND THE EDUCATORS' ROUNDTABLE, PUBLISHED MONTHLY TO PROMOTE LEARNING AMONG YOUNG READERS IN NATURAL SCIENCE, HISTORY, TECHNOLOGY AND ART

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Theme: It's National Poetry Month

Poetry Is Motion

Poetry is always moving – visually on the page, spoken out loud by a voice, whispering quietly in the mind. Poets are people who are capable of taking everyday life experiences and changing them into beautiful, universal messages.

Poetic Training

By Gary Coombs, South Coast Railroad Museum

Poetry is a wonderful way of communicating one's feelings. Joy, excitement, sadness, hope, love, pride, fear, anticipation, or any other emotion can all be expressed using the versatile medium of the poem.

Consider the following two poems. Both are about trains, but that's where the similarities end. Each writer uses a contrasting style to convey a very different message.

In the first poem, the author expresses her love of travel and the adventure of riding on trains.

"Travel" by Edna St. Vincent Millay

The railroad track is miles away,
And the day is loud with voices speaking,
Yet there isn't a train goes by all day
But I hear its whistle shrieking.



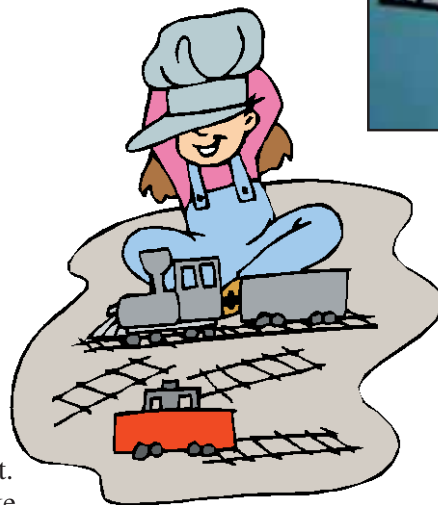
All night there isn't a train goes by,
Though the night is still for sleep and dreaming,
But I see its cinders red on the sky,
And hear its engine steaming.

My heart is warm with friends I make,
And better friends I'll not be knowing;
Yet there isn't a train I wouldn't take,
No matter where it's going.

The poet in our second example explains why he'll never be bored as long as he has his toy train to keep him busy.

"The Engineer" by A.A. Milne

Let it rain!
Who cares?
I've a train
Upstairs,
With a brake
Which I make
From a string
Sort of thing,
Which works
In jerks,
'Cos it drops
In the spring,
Which stops
With the string,
And the wheels
All stick
So quick
That it feels
Like a thing
That you make
With a brake,
Not string....



So that's what I make,
When the day's all wet.
It's a good sort of brake
But it hasn't worked yet.

Double Beauty

By Niki Dewart, University Art Museum, UCSB

Hundreds of years ago, a special form of poetry became popular in China. A couplet is a two-line poem with a matching number of Chinese characters in each line. In a couplet, the poem is combined with the art of calligraphy. Calligraphy literally means "beautiful writing." Long ago and still today, Chinese poets and calligraphers have enjoyed blending beautiful words and beautiful writing to create works that offer the best of both literature and art.

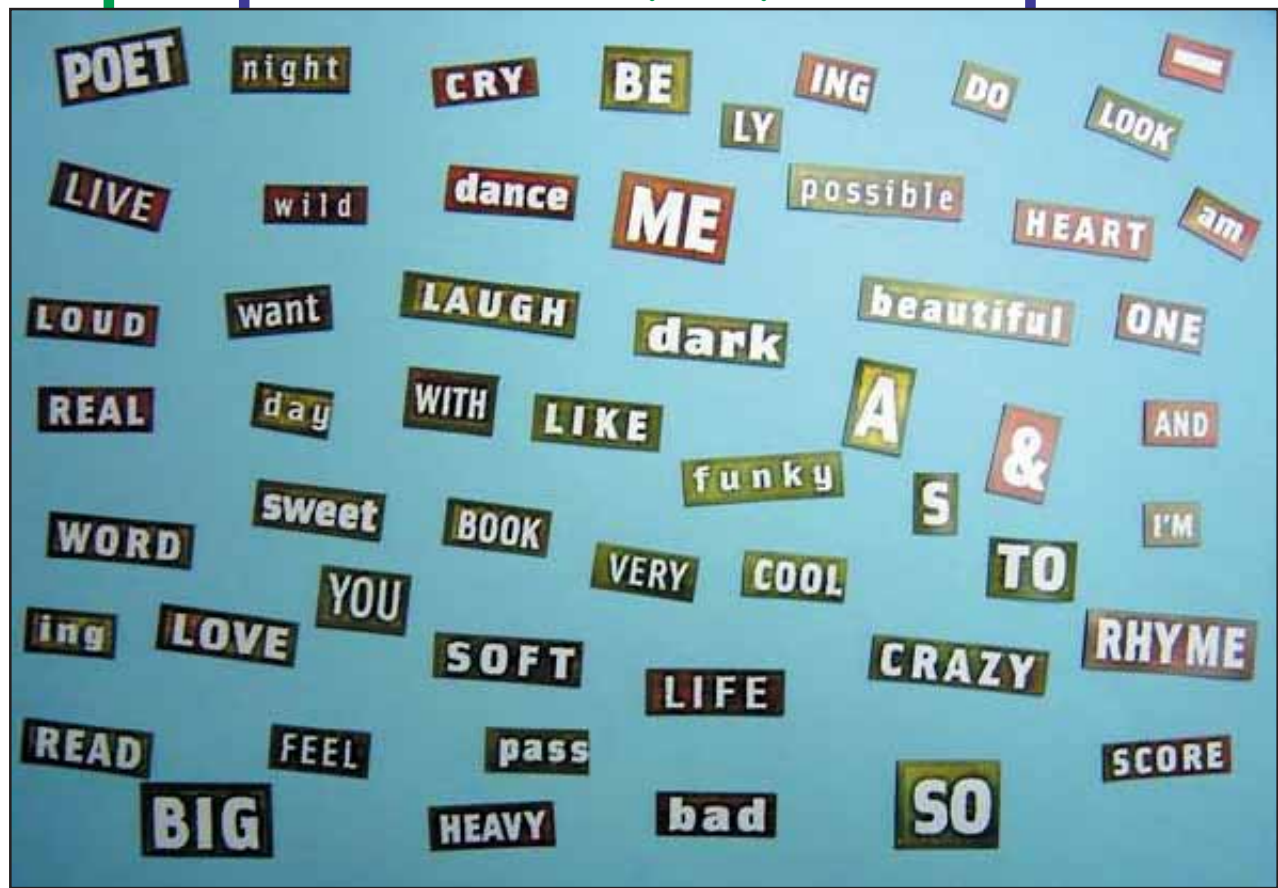
The illustrations on the left and right are an example of a couplet. It was created by Liu Yong, who lived from 1718 to 1804. The couplet is on view at the University Art Museum at UCSB. This is the English translation of the couplet:

*From the tall pavilion among the bamboo—a parade of jade-like greenness.
Through the small window by the plum blossoms—ten thousand round pearls.*

Can you create a poem that is doubly beautiful? For inspiration, come and see the Chinese couplets on view in the *Double Beauty* exhibition at the University Art Museum at UCSB until May 16.



Create your own poems using the words from this poetry board.



POETRY EXHIBITION

There will be an exhibit of the winning entries from the recent Santa Barbara Teen Poetry contest throughout the month of May at the Central Library, 40 E. Anapamu St. Visit the library and see what local teen poets are creating.

Page by Janice Rorick, Santa Barbara Public Library System, Niki Dewart, University Art Museum, and Gary Coombs, South Coast Railroad Museum.

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