

# POETRY TIPS

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TURNING YOUR SHEET INTO SILK

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# Writing & Editing Poetry

## Read Aloud

- Look for the rhythm: Can you discern any patterns?
- What words and lines stumble over your tongue?
- See where you pause naturally: Does this signal a potential line or stanza break, or missing punctuation?
- Where is there tension in a line, in an image?
- How can I create tension?
- Which lines feel crowded? Too many words? Too many images?
- Examine each word: Is it the best one?
- LISTEN

## Read slowly

- Read slowly, carefully, with attention. Ask questions.
- Poems pull readers back into the poem, asking them to contemplate the words. What is pulling you back into the poem?
- What elements of the craft is the poet using?
- What images emerge or have potential?

# Writing & Editing Poetry

## Check Line Breaks

- The line break is a unit of meaning.
- Every line should stand on its own.
- Every line is linked.
- Consider white space.

## Scan the lines

*Look for:*

- Spelling and grammar errors.
- Opportunities to add phonetic techniques like alliteration and assonance.
- Common and over-used words or phrases.
- Interesting and unique words and phrases.
- Images that stand out and could be expanded further.
- Places to insert a metaphor or fresh detail, or develop existing ones.
- Lines that don't contribute enough.

If you can't pinpoint any of these prompts, or answer them in the affirmative, then go back in and add these elements.