

Painting with Words

An activity of "Touring with 'new eyes'"

Read **"Touring with 'new eyes'"** (page 8, *What's Up* March 2020). Tony Booth said, "When you are travelling with visually impaired people, what you can see is sometimes of less interest to them. Your other senses become much more important. You become much more aware of what you can hear, what you can smell, what you can feel. You become aware of a different kind of world." Try experiencing this.

- 1) Observe without looking: Choose a safe spot to sit and close your eyes for five minutes. Pay close attention to the sounds, smells, even tastes around you. At the end of five minutes, list as much as you can about what you observed (e.g. watches ticking, humid air, food smells, someone sneezing, etc).
- 2) Write a Haiku: A Haiku is a form of poetry that does not have a rhyme. It is based on a traditional Japanese poetic form. It contains three lines, with 5 syllables in the first line, 7 syllables in the second line, and 5 syllables in the third line. Here is an example written by a very famous Japanese Haiku poet, Matsuo Basho.

Example of a Haiku by Matsuo Basho	Poem Pattern
ふるいけや Fu-ru-i-ke-ya (An old silent pond -)	5 syllables
かわずとびこむ Ka-wa-zu-to-bi-ko-mu (a frog jumps into the pond,)	7 syllables
みずのおと Mi-zu-no-o-to (the sound of water.)	5 syllables

Isn't it amazing how we can almost see, hear or even sense the atmosphere of the place that Basho is describing based on just a few words?

Using this 5-7-5 syllabic structure, write your own Haiku based on your observations when you sat still with your eyes closed.

Example	Poem Pattern
Watches are ticking - My classroom air feels sticky Then the school bell rings!	5 syllables 7 syllables 5 syllables

My Haiku	Poem Pattern
_____	5 syllables
_____	7 syllables
_____	5 syllables

- 3) Illustrate your Haiku: Finally, represent your Haiku in a picture. Use appropriate crayon colors to convey the mood of the poem e.g. warm and bright colors to show happiness, dull colors to show boredom, and so on. Sounds simple? Well, the challenge now is to do this all with your eyes closed. Send *Whats Up* your Haiku and a photo of your artwork by emailing letters@whatsup.sg! Remember to add your full name, class, and school.