

sci-ku



Birds flying sky high
Insects crawling down below
Earth is our home

Create a Sci-Ku for Edinburgh Science Festival 2025!

This teaching pack links with the experiences and outcomes of English and Literacy at the 1st and 2nd levels of the Curriculum for Excellence.

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Sci-Ku Competition

Edinburgh Science Festival 2025

Edinburgh Science is an educational charity which aims to encourage people to discover the wonder of the world around them. We are best known for running the annual Edinburgh Science Festival.



In our 2025 Festival, we will be running a major exhibition in the National Museum of Scotland. *Spaceship Earth* will delve into the realms of science fiction and explore solutions to build a more sustainable existence. As part of this, Edinburgh Science is running a Sci-Ku Competition, inviting you to imagine a thriving, sustainable Earth 100 years from now. We're challenging you to write a Sci-Ku about what this future looks like to you.

The winning entries will be featured in the *Spaceship Earth* exhibition, on display to around 57,000 visitors from 5-20 April 2025.

Here are some examples from the Edinburgh Science team – we are sure you can do much better!

*Lush, green horizons
Living simply but thriving
A challenge to greed*

EMILY RAEMAEKERS

*Birds flying sky high
Insects crawling down below
Earth is our home*

AUGUSTA MACDONALD

*Wind pushing on blades
Meters gone from building walls
Now we breathe easy*

SHAWN HOULT

*Birds and bees and trees
Green and clean no grey and smoke
Everyone plays outside*

CHARLIE PIKE

What is a Sci-Ku?

A Sci-Ku is a 3-line poem about science. It's supposed to have a syllable pattern that goes 5-7-5, but it's ok if it doesn't quite fit. Just keep it short and snappy and give the reader something to think about.

How to Enter

The competition closes on Monday 30 September 2024. Submit entries through our website form edinburghscience.co.uk/sci-ku-competition or by email to: sciku@scifest.co.uk

Aims and Learning Objectives

This teaching pack can be used to achieve many experiences and outcomes in the English and Literacy section of the Curriculum for Excellence at 1st and 2nd level.

KEY LINKS AT 1ST LEVEL ARE:

- Listening and Talking LIT 1-06a and LIT 1-10a, Writing LIT 1-20a and ENG 1-31a

KEY LINKS AT 2ND LEVEL ARE:

- Listening and Talking LIT 2-06a and LIT 2-10a, Writing LIT 2-20a and ENG 2-31a

ENTERING THE EDINBURGH SCIENCE FESTIVAL SCI-KU COMPETITION WILL ENABLE PUPILS TO:

- Select their own ideas and organise them for a purpose
- Build their confidence and communication skills when engaging others
- Enjoy creating a new piece of writing
- Explore and practice a new genre

What is a Haiku?

Haiku is a type of poetry from Japan. In these short 3-line poems the lines fall naturally into a 5-7-5 syllable pattern. Haikus are appealing because they make us think about what we see and feel in the world around us. What makes a syllable is different in English and Japanese. In Japanese, syllables are counted as sounds. For example, the word 'haiku' is 2 syllables in English (hai-ku) and 3 syllables in Japanese (ha-i-ku)! But the exact number of syllables is not too important as long as the second line of the poem is the longest: the most important thing in haiku is how the poem sounds. Haikus do not have to rhyme.

Haiku Writing Guidelines

- Find moments in everyday life you would like to write about, remember that reality often has a magical side.
- Think about the message you want to get across.
- Use simple words and remove any words you don't need, for example, the ~~dark green amazing huge thick~~ forest.
- The best haikus have a surprise or twist at the end.
- Read your poem out loud to test how it sounds.
- Aim for the 5-7-5 syllable pattern but don't worry if it doesn't fit.

Teaching Plan

Resources required: you may wish to print the following activity sheets or display them electronically.

1. Explain haiku poetry and where it comes from. Add any background information you think your class will find interesting. (5 minutes)
2. Breaking words into syllables (optional), Activity Card 1. (10 minutes)
3. Describe the haiku structure using Activity Card 2. It is a 3-line poem with a 5-7-5 syllable structure. Make it clear that it is ok if it is not exactly 5-7-5 as long as the second line of the poem is the longest. (5 minutes)
4. Look at some examples using Activity Cards 3-6. These are written by some of the great Japanese masters of haiku. Encourage group discussion about what they like/dislike in the poems, what the poems are about and words they like. (10 minutes)
5. Make a haiku using the template in Activity Card 7. (15 minutes)
6. Create a Sci-Ku for the Edinburgh Science Festival competition using Activity Card 8 as a guide. (15 minutes)

Time Required

This teaching pack has been developed for completion within one lesson and can be adapted as required.

When Should I Use This Teaching Pack?

This teaching pack can be used any time and is also available to download from our website. However, we would like to encourage you to make the most of these resources when the Sci-Ku Competition is open, from Monday 2 September - Monday 30 September 2024.

Activity Card 1

Breaking Words into Syllables

All together, you are going to break words into syllables using the actions from “Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes”. Gather in a space, making sure that everyone has room to move around. This is a repeat after me exercise – the teacher will read a word, repeat it in syllables whilst doing the actions and the class will repeat. The teacher then asks, “how many?” and the class calls out the number of syllables. Once they are getting the hang of it, the teacher can say the word and the class can break it down and do the actions themselves. As pupils build their confidence, the teacher can go around the room saying words and asking individuals to say it back with the actions.

One syllable – hand on head – “One!”

Two syllables – hands on head then shoulders – “Two!”

Three syllables – hands on head, shoulders, knees – “Three!”

Four syllables – hands on head, shoulders, knees and toes – “Four!”

FOR EXAMPLE:

Play: “Play” (hands on head) – “One!”

Teacher: “Teach” (hands on head) – “er” (shoulders) – “Two!”

Pussy cat: “Puss” (head) – “see” (shoulders) – “cat” (knees) – “Three!”

Primary school: “Pri” (head) – “mar” (shoulders) – “ee” (knees) – “school” (toes) – “Four!”

Here are some words you can use, but feel free to add your own or even use picture cards if you have them:

House	Frog	Explorer	Body
Heart	Science	Flamingo	Yellow
Rainbow	Summer	Discovery	Ship
Book	Birthday	Cake	Table
School	Sofa	Purple	Swimming
Painter	Grass	Swan	Chicken
Umbrella	Musical	Noisy	Television

Activity Card 2

*Petal by petal
Yellow mountain roses fall
Sound of rapids*

JAPANESE HAIKU MASTER MATSUO BASHŌ
1644–1694

Activity Card 3

*A kite that floats
At the place in the sky
Where it floated yesterday*

JAPANESE HAIKU MASTER YOSA BUSON
1716–1784

Activity Card 4

*Now and again
It turns to hail
The wind is strong*

JAPANESE HAIKU MASTER MASAOKA SHIKI, 1867–1902

Activity Card 5

*Step by step
Up summer mountain
Suddenly at sea*

JAPANESE HAIKU MASTER KOBAYASHI ISSA
1763–1827

Activity Card 6

*Fresh young leaves
The sound of a waterfall
Both far and near*

JAPANESE HAIKU MASTER YOSA BUSON
1716–1784

Activity Card 7

Pick Your Own Haiku!

1. Choose the word that you like best from each box below. The words in Set 1 will give you line 1 of your haiku, those in Set 2 will give you line 2 and those in Set 3 will give you line 3.
2. When you have chosen the words you like, write the whole haiku out and say it in your head. Do you like it? If not, you can change some of the words and see what you like best.
3. Get ready to read your haiku to the class.

Set 1	swimming	in the	woods	Line 1...
	floating		city	
	running		pond	
	flying		sky	
	spying		house	

Set 2	an eye	sparkles in	moonlight	Line 2...
	a wing		sunlight	
	a claw		twilight	
	a tooth		darkness	
	a leaf		starshine	

Set 3	lost	into the	mud	Line 3
	sinks		sand	
	slips		night	
	darts		crowd	
	glides		trees	

Activity Card 8

Sci-Ku Competition

Edinburgh Science Festival is running a Sci-Ku competition as part of the 2025 Festival.

Imagine a healthy planet Earth 100 years from now, where humans are looking after the environment. We're challenging you to write a Sci-Ku about what you imagine this future looks like.

The winning entries will be on display in Edinburgh Science Festival's major exhibition, *Spaceship Earth* in the National Museum of Scotland from 5–20 April 2025. The exhibition will explore ideas and solutions to look after our planet in the future.

Winners will be picked from 3 categories: primary school, secondary school and an open category for all ages, so you can even get your friends and family to enter as well!

Looking after our world and understanding how humans can affect it is really important. We need to buy fewer things, waste less and use less energy to help protect the environment. Think about what changes might need to happen to make sure planet Earth is healthy 100 years into the future. How might people live? What might landscapes and seas look like? What sorts of technology and inventions might be built to help us protect the environment?

We don't want to tell you exactly what to do because your own ideas are really important, but if you get stuck try thinking about:

- Something you see or do in everyday life
- An invention
- Something you find interesting
- Air, soil, water, rubbish, energy or outer space
- Other countries
- Animals and plants

To enter the competition, give your Sci-Ku to your teacher or enter at home on our website: edinburghscience.co.uk/sci-ku-competition

The deadline for entries is Monday 30 September 2024. Winners will be contacted by email or through your teacher.

Edinburgh Science Festival runs from 5–20 April 2025. Find out more about events and activities happening at this year's Festival at edinburghscience.co.uk

Activity Card 9

Illustrate your Sci-Ku

Draw a picture to illustrate what your Sci-Ku is about.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a student to draw a picture illustrating their Sci-Ku.

My Sci-Ku:

By:

My school is: