## Start Making Sense
Write a poem about something you love, such as a sport, walking your dog, or a special memory. Try using all five senses to create imagery. Describe what you see, hear, feel, smell, and taste - whether you are playing football with your friends or geocaching with your family.

## Happy Holidays/Hateful Holidays
Holidays make great topics for poetry. We get dressed up, sing and dance together, and have good things to eat. Write a poem about a holiday, but make sure it’s specific. Tell a best or worst birthday story, or write a poem listing all the costumes you’ve ever worn on Halloween.

Sometimes holidays are a drag. There might be rules or traditions that you don’t understand. People in your family might expect you to act a certain way. Write a poem about a holiday that wasn’t so great, or one that was.

## This or That?
Try writing an opposites poem with two stanzas. Your poem can describe “Before and After” or “Then and Now.” It could also be about opposites like “Summer and Winter” or “Home and School.”

**Challenge:** Use rhyme to make your poem funny.

## You Are What You Wear
Write about your favorite piece of clothing - a lucky shirt, a pair of jeans you’ve graffitied with colored pens, or your favorite fuzzy socks. What makes that thing special to you?

**Challenge:** Try a concrete poem. Shape your poem so it looks like the piece of clothing you’re writing about.

## Food for Thought
Everybody eats! There are many ways to write a food poem. You can write a list poem about your favorite food using your five senses. You can write a recipe poem, describing how to make your favorite food. Or you can write a poem about a food tradition - a dish that your family shares on special occasions.

## A Sound Riddle
What if you wrote about a place using only the sounds you hear there? Would readers be able to guess where your poem is set? Imagine going to that place with a blindfold on (or go there for real and close your eyes for a few minutes). Focus on what you hear, then write it all down. To help your readers guess your place correctly, use onomatopoeia words - words that sound like the noise they describe.

## Parody
Something funny happened to you at school today and you want to write about it. But simply telling the story feels a little ho-hum. Try a parody! Take a few lines from a favorite book or song. Rewrite the words to fit your story. This might not look like a poem when you are done. That’s okay. Dramatic - or comedic - dialogue has a lot in common with poetry.

Taken from Laura Shovan’s *The Last Fifth Grade of Emerson Elementary*
Recess
Describe your favorite thing to do at recess. A game, a sport, or talking with friends? Try using short lines for this poem. Short lines give a poem a fast rhythm, and we all know recess goes by too fast.

The Story of My (Nick)Name
Have you ever asked where your name comes from? Names are part of who we are. They can connect us with our family history. What’s the story of your name or nickname? Was there ever a time when you didn’t like your name? What do you like about it? Tell the story of your name.

Paint a Portrait
We usually think about portraits as works of art, such as paintings or photographs. But we can also make portraits of people with words. Write a poem describing your favorite teacher or coach or your oldest friend. Include details to show what made - or makes - that person so great. Did she play flag football with you at recess? Did he shake your hand every morning or help you learn your favorite pop song on the piano?

Routine Description
Think about something you do every day. Do you rush out the door every morning, or wake up early and get things done? Write a free verse poem describing a routine. Brainstorm by listing everything you do before school, or while getting ready to play a sport. Once you have a list, pick a few things that seem interesting. Spend a few lines describing each item.

Mirror, Mirror
Write an “I Am” self-portrait poem. Think of each stanza as a paragraph with its own main idea. Begin each stanza with the phrase “I am”: “I am shoulder pads and a football helmet,” “I am hands that sign words,” “I am recipes of my own invention.” The more detailed images your poem has, the better your readers will get to know who you are.

“Stream-of-Consciousness” Poem
In stream-of-consciousness writing, the author writes down everything that comes into her mind. Sit down and write whatever pops into your brain, no matter how wacky it is. Don’t try to fix or edit as you write. After a page or a paragraph of writing, put your poem away for a few days. When it’s time to revise, read what you wrote and highlight parts you like. See if you can build a poem from those highlighted bits.

 Taken from Laura Shovan’s The Last Fifth Grade of Emerson Elementary