

# Tanka

Tanka is a form of Japanese poetry, which translates to "short song," written in five lines, with a 5/7/5/7/7 syllable count form. Tanka employs a **turn**, which marks the pivot from an image to a personal response to that image. This turn is located on the third line, connecting the *kami-no-ku*, or upper poem, with the *shimo-no-ku*, or lower poem. Modern Tanka often include figurative language, such as metaphors, similes, personification of hyperbole.

I chose to write my Tanka about \_\_\_\_\_, because \_\_\_\_\_ . For the turn, I wanted to \_\_\_\_\_. I used (insert figurative language).

東海の Tōkai no 小島の磯の kojima no iso no 白砂に shirasuna ni われ泣きぬれて ware naki nurete 蟹とたわむる kani to tawamuru	On the white sand Of the beach of a small island In the Eastern Sea. I, my face streaked with tears, Am playing with a crab
	— Ishikawa Takuboku

## **Tanka for Language Arts Class** (from *The Crossover*, by Kwame Alexander)

This Christmas was not  
Merry, and I have not found  
joy in the new year  
with Dad in the hospital  
for nineteen days and counting.