



# Complete Idiot's Guide to Writing Poetry

By Nikki Moustaki

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Discover the poet within! You've read poetry that has touched your heart, and you'd like to improve your own writing technique. But even though you have loads of inspiration, you're discovering that good instruction can be as elusive as a good metaphor. The Complete Idiot's Guide to Writing Poetry will help you compose powerful, emotion-packed poems that you can be proud of. You'll learn simple explanations of poetry building blocks such as metaphor, imagery, symbolism and stanzas; steps to the poetic process; easy-to-follow guidelines for writing sonnets, sestinas, narrative poems and more; fun exercises to help you master the basics of poetry writing; cliches and other poetry pitfalls to avoid; advice on writers' conferences and workshops; tips on getting your poetry published; good poems that will inspire your own work; strategies to beat writer's block.

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### Editorial Review

#### From the Author

Remember the excitement of writing that first haiku in fourth grade, how proud you were of counting those syllables, 5-7-5, and having the poem come out just right? I do. I also remember writing a term paper on the poet Robert Frost in 11th grade – I fell in love with his language and found myself intrigued with his tragic history. I've been hooked on poetry ever since. I've made it a big part of my life.

If you're reading this letter, chances are that you share a similar feeling. Once it gets into you, poetry has a way of staying put. Poetry is an art whose fans and critics are also practitioners as well. Rarely does a fan of classical music take up composing, or an art critic take up sculpting. But poetry is special. You can practice it anywhere – at home, work, in prison, on a deserted island – provided you have a pencil and a scrap of paper.

I believe that beginners first come to poetry as an art partly because they already own the tools to make it. If you can read and write, chances are you also can pen a poem. But there's a misconception that a pen and paper is all you need. A great poem takes more than just the ability to form legible words with a ballpoint. Much more.

This book will take you through the skills you require to become a good poet. I can't promise you greatness and fame, but I can promise you that you'll learn the parts and pieces that make up a poem – the feeling and inspiration are between you and your muse. You'll also get practical advice on journaling, revision, workshops, reading in public, poetry exercises, and the recognition most poets desire – publishing.

Are you going to find everything you need to know about poetry here? Well, no. But you'll find more than a start – this book will take you far beyond novice status if you practice along with the exercises and suggestions – you may even find some great successes along the way.

#### From the Inside Flap

Discover the poet within!

You're no idiot, of course. You've read poetry that has touched your heart, and you'd like to improve your own writing technique. But even though you have loads of inspiration, you're discovering that good instruction can be as elusive as a good metaphor...

Don't let your muse leave you! With loads of smart advice and helpful exercises, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Writing Poetry* will help you compose powerful, emotion-packed poems that you can be proud of. In this Complete Idiot's Guide, you get:

Simple explanations of the building blocks of poetry metaphor, imagery, symbolism, stanzas and more.

A step-by-step guide to the poetic process—from your first inspiration to your poem's last stanza.

Easy-to-follow guidelines for writing sonnets, sestinas, narrative poems, and more!

Straightforward descriptions of getting the most out of your creative process

Fun exercises to help you master the basics of poetry writing Idiot-proof advice on how to use many popular

poetic forms

You'll also learn how to...

Write poems full of powerful imagery.

Decide whether or not to use rhyme in your poems.

Avoid clichés and other poetry pitfalls.

Revise your writing.

Start a reading series—or a poetry slam.

Get the most out of a writers' conference.

Start a workshop.

Get your poems published.

Beat writers' block.

Find good poems that will inspire your own work.

Read your own poetry aloud.

#### From the Back Cover

Discover the poet within! You've read poetry that has touched your heart, and you'd like to improve your own writing technique. But even though you have loads of inspiration, you're discovering that good instruction can be as elusive as a good metaphor. The Complete Idiot's Guide to Writing Poetry will help you compose powerful, emotion-packed poems that you can be proud of. You'll learn simple explanations of poetry building blocks such as metaphor, imagery, symbolism and stanzas; steps to the poetic process; easy-to-follow guidelines for writing sonnets, sestinas, narrative poems and more; fun exercises to help you master the basics of poetry writing; cliches and other poetry pitfalls to avoid; advice on writers' conferences and workshops; tips on getting your poetry published; good poems that will inspire your own work; strategies to beat writer's block.

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##### **Jerry Gavin:**

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##### **Patrick Adkins:**

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**Martha Fincher:**

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