

# Playing from the Heart



PETER H. REYNOLDS

In *Playing from the Heart* by Peter H. Reynolds, Raj loves to create his very own music on the piano. He also learns musical notes, scales, and songs by other composers.

Poetry has a rhythm, just like music, and sometimes it rhymes, just like the lyrics of some songs. Composers write songs, and poets write poems. There are lots of different types of poems, just like there are many genres of music, and some poetry has rules.

Be a poet! First, write a poem following some rules, just like Raj learned to play piano using musical rules. Try writing a quatrain, that's a verse containing four lines of poetry. Some of the last words on each line will rhyme with each other. The pattern that the rhyme follows is called the rhyme scheme. We can label the pattern with matching letters.

Like this:

***On the piano book's rigid pages (A)***

***Notes look like animals in cages (A)***

***I can improvise a key (B)***

***With my song I'll set them free (B)***

Your quatrain can be about anything you want, and it can follow any rhyme scheme.

Some common rhyme schemes are ABAB, ABBA, AABB, AABA, ABAC, ABCB

If you need an idea for your poem, think about the themes of *Playing from the Heart* like music, family, creativity and growing up. Think about the illustrations in the book, as well as the images you could see in your imagination as you read it. Think about your own experiences; do you play an instrument? Would you like to try? Have you ever really enjoyed doing something on your own, but not enjoyed it in school or in a club or lesson?

Title of My Quatrain: \_\_\_\_\_

Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Line 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Line 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Now, write a poem without rules. This is called Free Verse. Free Verse poems do not have to rhyme, and the rhythm of the poem is up to the poet. You can try to write a quatrain again, but maybe your poem needs five lines, or six, or just three. Some of the lines might have many words, syllables, or beats, and some might just have a few. It's up to you!

Like this:

*When I push the pedal to the floor the music  
Revs like an engine  
Watercolor composition hanging in a steamy cloud  
Of beautiful exhaust  
That is healthy to inhale  
I take a deep breath and drive my fingers down Route 88  
What a joyride!*

Title of my Free Verse Poem: \_\_\_\_\_

Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Line 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Line 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Line 5: \_\_\_\_\_

Line 6: \_\_\_\_\_

Line 7: \_\_\_\_\_

Line 8: \_\_\_\_\_

Need more lines? No problem! Print another page! (Or reuse some paper from home.)

Try reading both of your poems out loud. Which one do you like better? Why?

Peter H. Reynolds is the author *and* illustrator of *Playing from the Heart*. Try **illustrating** your poem. **Or reverse the process!** Create a piece of visual art (with pencils, watercolors, crayons, chalk, markers, modeling dough, magazines and glue, a camera, etc.) Then, write a poem that tells the story of your creation.

**Share your poems and artwork with a family member, friend, or teacher. You can submit your creations online at [adamswartzpuppets.com](http://adamswartzpuppets.com)**

**Or snail mail them to: FableVision Learning • P.O. Box 1242 • Dedham, MA 02027**