



TOTAL BRAIN HEALTH FAIR STATION



10-15
minutes



10-15
people

HAIKU U.

TBH Focus:

Mind | *Stretch Your Mind*
Spirit | *Believe In Yourself*

The TBH Science:

Penning a poem is one the most verse-atile ways to boost brain health, tone memory muscles, and ward off age-related dementia. Numerous studies have found that intellectually engaging activities, such as reading or creative writing—especially when they are new for us— may promote the growth of neurons (brain cells) and synapses (the pathways between those cells), thus creating a “cognitive reserve” that will be beneficial in the face of future memory challenges. Poetry stretches our minds in ways that reading, say, a how-to magazine article may not, forcing us to think more deeply in order to understand and interpret the words. Creative writing also uses both sides of the brain at once: the right side, which is responsible for creative thinking, and the left side, which supports logic.

You Will Need:

- **A staff member or volunteer to man the station; someone with poetry or creative writing experience would be ideal**
- **A large table with chairs**
- **Notepads, paper, or index cards**
- **Pencils or pens**

How It Works:

With guidance from the volunteer or expert, participants will write a haiku—an ancient form of Japanese verse made up of just three lines

Variations:

Up the Ante: Ask participants to write to an abstract idea prompt, such as: Wisdom; Friendship; Loyalty.

Make It Easier: Have the instructor provide a first line to get folks started, then offer more guidance throughout.



This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.



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Find your inner poet and pen a haiku!

How does haiku work?

Write three lines of verse:

- The first has 5 syllables
- The second has 7 syllables
- The third has 5 syllables

Classical haiku uses images that are seasonal or sensory in nature:

*She sat at her desk
The snow glistened in the sun
The tree shivered cold.*