

Clerihew

Harry Potter
Was a magical plotter.
At Hogwarts he became a master
After many a goof and disaster

Mark Twain
Wrote books in a humorous vein
His characters can make us grin,
Especially that rascal Huck Finn.

Edgar Alan Poe
Penned stories that we all know
And every one that he wrote
Seems to end on a gruesome note.

Beatrix Potter,
While doodling with her pen on a fuzzy blotter,
May well have developed the habit
Of drawing Peter Rabbit.

—William Jay Smith

Name _____ Date _____

Looking at the Clerihew

Carefully read through the sample clerihews and see if you can spot what the poems have in common. Write your observations in the spaces below.

Poem 1

1. What is the subject of the poem? _____
2. How many lines are in the poem? _____
3. Write the words that rhyme in the poem. _____

4. Draw arrows connecting the lines that rhyme. Is there a pattern (or rhyme scheme)? _____
5. Can you find anything humorous in the poem? Jot down the humorous words and ideas you see. _____

Poem 2

1. What is the subject of the poem? _____
2. How many lines are in the poem? _____
3. Write the words that rhyme in the poem. _____

4. Draw arrows connecting the lines that rhyme. Is there a pattern (or rhyme scheme)? _____
5. Can you find anything humorous in the poem? Jot down the humorous words and ideas you see. _____

Poem 3

1. What is the subject of the poem? _____
2. How many lines are in the poem? _____
3. Write the words that rhyme in the poem. _____

4. Draw arrows connecting the lines that rhyme. Is there a pattern (or rhyme scheme)? _____
5. Can you find anything humorous in the poem? Jot down the humorous words and ideas you see. _____

Poem 4

1. What is the subject of the poem? _____
2. How many lines are in the poem? _____
3. Write the words that rhyme in the poem. _____

4. Draw arrows connecting the lines that rhyme. Is there a pattern (or rhyme scheme)? _____
5. Can you find anything humorous in the poem? Jot down the humorous words and ideas you see. _____

Name _____ Date _____

Finding a Subject

1 List four categories of celebrities or noteworthy people that interest you. Keep in mind that you can choose historical or literary celebrities as well as contemporary Hollywood-types. Then, list a few people that come to mind in each category.

1. _____

© _____

© _____

© _____

2. _____

© _____

© _____

© _____

3. _____

© _____

© _____

© _____

4. _____

© _____

© _____

© _____

2 Circle a favorite person on each list.

3 Write the name of the person you think will make the best subject for your clerihew here:

4 List a few things that come to mind when you think of this person:

- ⊙ _____
- ⊙ _____
- ⊙ _____
- ⊙ _____
- ⊙ _____

5 Is there something about this person that is easy to poke fun at? Write it here:

When you've finished this worksheet, try drafting your clerihew. Don't forget to look at the poems on page 19 if you're not sure how your poem should look and sound.

Name _____ Date _____

Checklist for Final Copy

Before you write your final copy, answer these questions:

1 Are there two couplets in your poem? Check the words at the end of each line. Do the words at the end of lines one and two sound alike? Do the same thing for lines three and four. Write your rhyming words below:

line 1 _____

line 2 _____

line 3 _____

line 4 _____

2 Does your poem have a lighthearted tone, or does it sound mean? Jot down words that show that the poem is meant to be playful. Change any words that seem mean.

3 Read your clerihew out loud to a friend. Listen for the rhythm. If the poem sounds choppy or awkward, see if you can find the reason for this and fix it. It might only mean changing a word or two.