



# Write Your Own *Valentine's Day Love Poem* in 8 Easy Steps



Valentine's Day is hurtling toward us like a heart-shaped meteor. Yet you're stuck in the same rut as far as what to get that special someone. Flowers. Candy. A John Legend CD. You'd love to pen a poem for your beloved — a document of true, heartfelt personal expression — but a full heart and a blank page is just too daunting for a beginning bard like you.

Well, we're here to help! Here's the truth: employing a set of guidelines or restrictions can actually help spur creativity by jump-starting the process and giving your ideas something to push against. The framework below will help you organize your own experiences and sentiments into a genuine, one-of-a-kind love poem. But first, let's take a quick look at some big-picture "best practices" for poetry:

**Avoid cliches** such as "you're my moon and stars" and "love conquers all." Poems are meant to express your feelings in your words. They're all about interesting surprises and new connections. Cliches are pre-existing, unsurprising word packages. They're boring. So rely on your own, personal specifics to anchor the poem.

**Use concrete images.** Concrete images are details perceived with the senses. They're the things of the physical world: a scratchy old sofa, a waft of fresh basil, the huff of a grizzly bear. They convey experience and help a reader "enter" the poem. Abstractions like "love," "pain," or "truth" are too big and vague to write about directly. Instead, show your personal take on these big concepts through your singular choice of concrete details.

**Don't be afraid to be playful!** You know what's consistently listed as one of the top traits people look for in a romantic partner? Sense of humor! Poems don't have to be moody dirges, especially where love is concerned. Feel free to get cheeky, flirty, or fun if your poem permits.

Alright, ready to get romantic? Read over the framework that follows. But don't feel the need to start writing right away. You may need to step away and ponder.

**Line 1: Name** — Write the name of your beloved. Hopefully this one is easy.

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**Line 2: A Beloved Subtitle** — Describe the person in three words. It might be a list of adjectives, a short phrase, or even a metaphor\*. Bonus points if you use alliteration\*\* or rhyme the last word of this line with the name from line one.

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**Line 3: First sight part 1** — Describe the setting where you first met the person (10 words or less)

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**Line 4: First sight part 2** — Describe what the person was doing (10 words or less)

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**Line 5: First sight part 3** — Describe what you felt using interesting and concrete images (10 words or less)

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**Line 6: State of the union** — Describe the current state of your relationship with a metaphor or simile\*\*\*. Start this line with “We are...”

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**Line 7: Dreaming ahead** — Describe your wish/hope/vision for your future together — again, lean on concrete images and figurative language. Start this line with “Let us...”

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**Line 8: XO** — End with “Happy Valentine’s Day” or something else that wraps things up in a flirty, cheeky, touching, etc., fashion.

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Short and sweet! There’s an example below if you’d like to see one way this could turn out. Of course, feel free to tweak the recipe as your heart demands. Once you’ve got a first draft, put it aside and return to it a few more times. Fresh eyes will allow for new insights and word choices that will really make your poem sparkle like Cupid’s onesie. Happy Valentine’s Day!

\***Metaphor:** A comparison between two unlike things without using “like” or “as.” (Example: “You were the first crocus bursting through an endless winter.”)

\*\***Alliteration:** Repetition of initial consonant sounds. (Example: “My mirthful matador.”)

\*\*\***Simile:** Like metaphor, another form of figurative language that makes a comparison. A simile, though, compares using the words “like” or “as.”

EXAMPLE POEM:

Jess  
My perfect mess  
Beside a bubbling creek that crept to the sea  
You sparked a cookfire from moss and flint  
And the tinder inside me was lit  
We are at the edge of a wondrous wood  
Let us smash the compass  
A clumsy adventure awaits