Poem Shape Lab

Notice how a poem's shape can guide its meaning and style.

ELA.6.R.1.4 "Describe the impact of various poetic forms on meaning and style."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Mark the end of each displayed poem line. Circle one pattern or layout choice you notice in each poem, then number the poems 1, 2 and 3 in the order you read them.

Lena's Garden Poems

(1) At sunrise, Lena carried a jar to the community garden. Near the gate, she paused and wrote:

Dew beads on bean leaves
A sparrow lifts from the fence
Morning holds its breath

She tucked the three lines into her notebook. The garden was not silent for long. A hose clicked on, a truck passed, and children arrived with gloves. Lena kept noticing small changes, including a snail trail shining beside a row of carrots nearby.

(2) Later, Lena made a sign for the seed table. She wrote:

Seeds sleep under soil.
Every root waits for rain.
Earth gives worms a dark home.
Daylight calls green shoots up.

She placed the sign beside packets of peas and sunflowers. Visitors could read the lines from top to bottom while choosing seeds. At noon, Lena watered the new bed and watched drops sink into the loose brown ground beside the wooden fence after lunch.

3 Before leaving, Lena heard a breeze push through the tall corn. She wrote:

Wind slips in
then runs
between the stalks,
rattling dry leaves
like tiny paper flags.

The lines spread across the page in different lengths. Lena read the poem aloud near the corn, then added it to a display of garden writing. The display included poems, labels, and sketches made by students during the planting day at the neighborhood library that Saturday morning.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do the first poem's three short lines affect the way you experience the garden scene?

2. What word do the first letters of the second poem's lines spell? How does that letter pattern add to the poem's meaning?

3. How do the different line lengths in the third poem match what the poem describes?

4. Compare the styles of the first and second poems. How does each poem's form help create a different style?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a short poem about a weather change. Choose a haiku with three lines of 5, 7, and 5 syllables, or an acrostic whose first letters spell a weather word. Then write two sentences explaining how your form shapes the poem's meaning and style. Put each poem line on its own line and keep the two explanatory sentences separate. Use extra paper if your acrostic needs more lines.

ANSWER KEY

Poem Shape Lab

GRADE 6 · ELA.6.R.1.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Mark the end of each displayed poem line. Circle one pattern or layout choice you notice in each poem, then number the poems 1, 2 and 3 in the order you read them. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the first poem's three short lines affect the way you experience the garden scene?	**They create a brief, focused snapshot, making the small garden details feel still and carefully observed.**
2	What word do the first letters of the second poem's lines spell? How does that letter pattern add to the poem's meaning?	**The letters spell SEED. The pattern connects the poem's form to its subject of seeds and growing plants.**
3	How do the different line lengths in the third poem match what the poem describes?	**The short and long lines create a stop-and-start movement that echoes wind moving through the corn.**
4	Compare the styles of the first and second poems. How does each poem's form help create a different style?	**The first poem is compact and image-centered, so it feels like a quick observed moment. The second poem uses a visible letter pattern, so it feels like a carefully designed message about seeds.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Clouds cover the sun
Warm pavement darkens with rain
Puddles wake the street

The three short lines hold one quick moment. Their small shape makes the rain scene feel quiet and focused.

Accept answers that connect a form feature, such as line length, line count, or first-letter pattern, to a reasonable effect on meaning or style. For the open task, accept either form when it is used correctly and the two sentences clearly explain its effect. Inspect the actual displayed line structure: source haiku 5/7/5, acrostic SEED, and five irregular wind lines; teacher model haiku 5/7/5. Accept other supported effects and valid weather acrostics. Keep the two-sentence explanation separate from verse; allow extra paper rather than constraining longer acrostics to the response space.