

## THANKU: POEMS OF GRATITUDE Teacher Resources for Math Poetry

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Math poetry combines words with math to create fun poems that appeal to a wide audience. Some children believe they are “math and science kids” and not writers, and this format is especially helpful in breaking these students out of this self-imposed box. I’ve watched kids who insist they don’t like writing—or that they’re not good at writing—transform into enthusiastic poets when writing math poems! It is a joy to see their faces light up when discovering this unusual form.

A math poem follows the format of a mathematical equation. This can be a basic equation, *or* it can be a bit more complicated. When explaining to students, I have found it best to begin with very simple examples:

**peanut butter + jelly + bread = PBJ sandwich**

**gentle rain**  
**+ warm bed**  
**a good night's sleep**

**dog – leash = family run**

You get the picture! Basically, you can turn any math equation into a poem, as long as you can explain your process and your purpose logically. Students will quickly grasp this concept! As they do, urge them to think deeper—engage the order of operations, use fractions, graphs, etc. There is really NO limit to what you can do with this exciting poetic format!

**$\frac{1}{2}$  play time +  $\frac{1}{2}$  pool time = 1 perfect summer day**

**(berry patch + pail + purple fingertips) × grandma = blackberry cobbler**

For an excellent classroom resource, check out the book *MATHEMATICKLES*, written by Betsy Franco and illustrated by Steven Salerno (Margaret K. McElderry Books). Have fun with this unique poetic format!