

PALIMERICK EXPERIMENTS

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Writing palindrome limericks can be a fairly tricky feat. The first and last lines are the easiest to construct as they can simply be written as exact reversals of each other with no overhanging letters anywhere. The asymmetrical length and rhyme scheme involved in lines 2-4 is where the real challenge of palimerick-writing lies. I generally write lines 1 and 5 as the first step, followed by lines 2, 4 and the latter half of line 3 as the second "juggling act" step. Finally I write the very middle of the palimerick (the beginning of the 3rd line) as the last step.

A surefire way to make palimerick writing easier is to throw an additional constraint into the mix, such as an acrostic. In comparison to acrostic palimericks, regular palimericks suddenly become much easier to compose! Here is one of my acrostic palimericks, "Kayak." Picture a moat around a zoo in L.A., with an old watchful yak named Kay at its center. Ella Fitzgerald is playing on the radio. Things get rowdy in the kayaks and the law is called in.

Kayak a zoo, lap all, old-eye yak
Add Ella; clap, diva: a lilac
Yay, Cali, L.A.
Avid pal called D.A.
Kay eyed Lollapalooza kayak!

Another type of palimerick can be constructed using a two-letter unit for the palindrome structure. (This is a structure in which ONLY transforms into LYON). This type of "palindroming by pairs" was introduced to me by palindromist poet Anthony Etherin. Here is an example of a two-letter unit palimerick (I'll spare you the storyline):

A dry Adonis itch or nomad
Exes end me, malign sire iPad
A dip? Resign, Lima!
Mend sex edema
No orchitis on a dryad!

A third type of palimerick can be constructed using words as the unit. James Puder, inventor of the palimerick, also wrote the first word-unit palimerick, his excellent "Scarborough Fair." Here is my own contribution to the category of word-unit palimericks:

Hope your crush will love your persistence with dope?
Think you don't really drink, so shouldn't you grope?
You shouldn't! So drink,
Really, don't you think?
Dope! With persistence your love will crush your hope!