

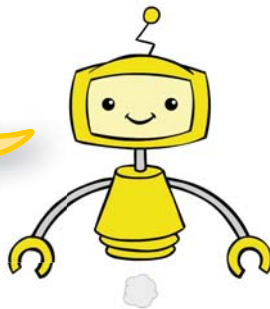
The writing life

LINKS TO:

Stage 2, Module 17

Learning Object 3: How I express myself

Now that I've learned all about reading Indonesian poetry, I think it's time to try my hand at writing some! How hard can it be? Let's find out!


PRIOR LEARNING:
Stage 2

 Module 17 Work Sheet 3: *Poetry to my ears*


The old *pantun*

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As you already learnt in Work Sheet 3, *Poetry to my ears*, the *pantun* is one of the most popular forms of traditional poetry in Indonesia. They originated in Malaysia hundreds of years ago, since at least the fifteenth century.

In Indonesia, the *pantun* is a symbol of intelligent thinking and is often used as a tool to communicate.

Creating a *pantun* can be a good way of entertaining others, or showing off one's language skills. *Pantuns* are still written and recited today at engagement ceremonies or during weddings, as an opening or closing speech or as a wedding proposal.

Pantuns can also be used to express emotions or sentiments that are not usually discussed openly or directly, as well as to express romantic feelings. A *pantun* can be light-hearted, or it can be used to illustrate a moral or to teach something.

Pantun form

In its most popular form, a *pantun* has the following features:

- four lines based on an *abab* rhyme scheme
- lines of between eight and twelve syllables
- it has two equal parts, both of which are related to your central theme.



For example:

*Jika tidak karena bintang,
Tak mungkin bulan terbit tinggi.
Jika tidak karena sayang,
Tak mungkin saya datang ke mari.*

If it weren't for the stars,
The moon would not rise so high.
If it weren't for love,
I would not dare come here.

(Anonymous)

Exercise 1

By the end of this work sheet, you are going to learn how to write a *pantun* in Indonesian!

First, read the following example of a *pantun* and see if you can interpret it, then answer the following question in English.

*Kalau ada sumur di ladang,
Beta minta menumpang mandi.*

*Kalau ada umurku panjang,
Kita akan bertemu lagi.*

Provide an English translation of the *pantun* above, and then summarise its meaning.

Exercise 2

Write a *pantun* in English by following the steps outlined below.

2.1 Choose a theme for your English *pantun*. What will the pantun be about?

2.2 Write a *pantun* in English using the theme you have identified in Exercise 2.1.

Your *pantun* should use the *pantun* patterning devices you have learnt about in this work sheet:

- it should have four lines
- it should have a rhyme scheme: *abab*
- each line should have between eight and twelve syllables
- the first half and the second half should be different images or expressions, both of which are related to your central theme

2.3 Now you are going to write a *pantun* in Indonesian by following the same simple steps. First, choose a theme for your Indonesian *pantun*. What will the *pantun* be about?

2.4 Write your *pantun* in Indonesian inspired by the sample *pantun*.

2.5 Provide a translation in English of your Indonesian *pantun*.

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Exercise 3

Reflect on your experience of writing the *pantun*.

3.1 What did you find most exciting and interesting about writing *pantun*?

3.2 What did you find most challenging about writing *pantun*?
