

H IS FOR HEART **THE HEART: A HIP-HOP HAIKU**

A haiku is a form of Japanese poetry, hundreds of years old. Hip hop is a musical genre that is only about 40 years old. I can't say I'm particularly good at either, but I thought I'd try to bring the two together anyway.

Here are the three rules of haiku:

- 1) A haiku consists of three statements or images, and the middle one should in some way 'cut' between the first and last, so that you are made to realise how the first and last relate, or how one causes the other.
- 2) A haiku traditionally has 17 syllables, which are distributed as follows: 5 for the first line or image, 7 for the second, 5 for the third.
- 3) A haiku ought to have some reference to the seasons, or to change.

I have tried to stick to these rules. You should have very little trouble writing haiku that are better than mine.

I IS FOR ION / I IS FOR ISOTOPE **ION v. ISOTOPE**

What I thought I'd attempt with this little number is an interview, where the interviewer is me, and the two interviewees speak only through the medium of interpretative dance. And the names of the interviewees are Mr Ion and Mr Isotope.

Ions and isotopes are both atoms. And they are both atoms that are not in their 'normal' state. Let's take an example. Imagine a carbon atom. A carbon atom always has six protons, and it *normally* has six neutrons and six electrons as well. But if it has a different number of neutrons, then it is an isotope of carbon. And if it has a different number of electrons, it is an ion of carbon.

JOHN: Hi, and welcome to I. I'm joined today by Mr Ion and Mr Isotope. Mr Ion, you're an atom, I understand?

(Mr Ion responds)

JOHN: Great! But the number of electrons around your nucleus differs from normal, is that right?

(Mr Ion responds)

JOHN: Great! Now, Mr Isotope, you're also an atom, yes?

(Mr Isotope responds)

JOHN: Right! But it's not the number of electrons that differs, but the number of neutrons in your nucleus, yes?

(Mr Isotope responds)

JOHN: Okay, do either of you have anything to add?

(Mr Ion and Mr Isotope respond)

JOHN: Great! Back to you John, with a 'J'...