



# HOMEWORDS: A Project of the Poet Laureate of Kansas

By Wyatt Townley

Whether as reader or writer, you're invited to join HomeWords, a weekly poetry column syndicated in newspapers around the state.

Our subject is the concept of "home," micro to macro: from the mobile home of the body, to the room or house we live in, to the land that anchors us, to the sky that holds it all.

To explore these big themes, we're using a small poem. The **American Cinquain** has five lines, each line having—in order—2, 4, 6, 8, and back to 2 syllables. It's a terrific little form that both beginners and longtime poets can write successfully.

This week we'll look at home as land, home as earth. Our cinquain comes to us from Kim Stafford, who grew up hearing homesick stories of Kansas from his father,

noted poet William Stafford, whose centennial we celebrate this year at festivals statewide and nationwide.

Even though it's spring, Kansas snow can swoop in to surprise us. I admire how Kim has created such mystery and music in so small a space. That's one of poetry's best features.

*Flint Hills  
deep with new snow  
now older by a life—  
moon's old plunder that's gone under  
the field.*

**Kim Stafford** is the author of several books, most recently *100 Tricks Every Boy Can Do: How My Brother Disappeared*.

Poets and poets-to-be of all ages from across the state are invited to submit to HomeWords. For guidelines, visit [www.kansashumanities.org](http://www.kansashumanities.org).



Poet Kim Stafford

The Kansas Humanities Council is a nonprofit organization that supports community-based cultural programs and encourages Kansans to engage in the civic and cultural life of their communities.