Guidelines for Writing Haibun in English  
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Tense
Written both in present and in past tense

Subject matter
Autobiographical prose, travel journal, slice of life, memory, dream short sketch of a person, 
place, event, object
Traditional topics: life as a journey, love affairs, illness, human concerns & experiences

Point of View
Written in first person (everything seen through the author's eyes—I), third person (he/she), or 
first person plural (we).

Tone
Consistent, sets a mood, often interrupted by the haiku

Sensory Power
Uses sensory images, concrete details, no abstractions

Focus
One or two elements

Language
Uses language to suit the subject matter and mood (colloquial, formal, dialect)

Length
Varies from very brief (1-2 sentences) with one haiku, to long prose entries with interspersed 
haiku, to memoir-length works

Styles
Haiku/prose
Prose/haiku
Haiku/prose/haiku
Prose/haiku/prose/haiku/prose/haiku etc.

Prose in Haibun
Tells the story
Gives information, defines the theme
Creates a mood through tone
Provides a background to spotlight the haiku

Haiku in Haibun
Moves the story forward
Takes the narrative in another direction
Adds insight or another dimension to the prose
Resolves the conflict in an unpredictable way, or questions the resolution of the prose.
Prose is the narrative and haiku is the revelation or the reaction.

TIPS ON WRITING HAIBUN
- Don't accept the first haiku that comes to you after writing the prose. Find a word or image in 
  the prose to play off of
- Avoid the linear in the capping haiku—take a right angle turn. Haiku should link to but not 
  repeat what the prose has said.
- Prose best if kept to a single theme with sensory detail, haiku crystallizes the experience
- Use symbolism in your haibun to deepen the emotional impact
- End with a surprise, not a narrative resolution
- Often the haiku is contained in the last sentence of the prose, waiting to be transformed.