



HOMEWORDS: A Project of the Poet Laureate of Kansas

By Wyatt Townley

This week our topic is **home as sky**. To address this idea, we're using the American Cinquain, a 5-line form whose syllables are divided among its lines: 2, 4, 6, 8, and 2.

Kansans keep their eyes on the sky with its constant fluctuations. This week our poets explore tornados. **Jack Warring** is a 15 year old from Pittsburg who has lived in Kansas all his life. I like how his riddle-like, repeated set-up leads to the final line. Notice how his choice to center the poem on the page suggests a funnel forming.

*Dreary,
dark skies, one word.
Winds increase, go faster.
Everyone inside for one word:
twister.*

Alarie Tennille has spent half her life in the Kansas City area and is the author of *Running Counterclockwise* (2014, Aldrich Press). Here the poem's "waterspouts" call up the history of Kansas as an inland sea.

*So far
from an ocean,
Kansas becomes a sea,
gales whipping waterspouts out of
the sky.*

Poets and poets-to-be of all ages from across the state are invited to submit to HomeWords. For guidelines, visit www.kansashumanities.org.

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.



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