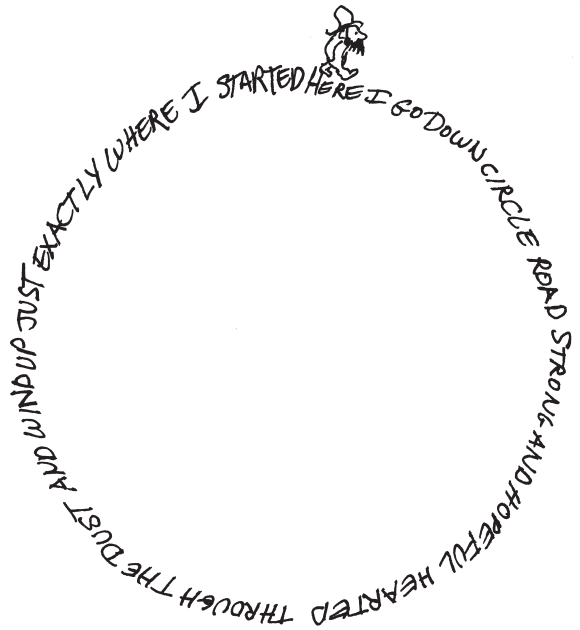
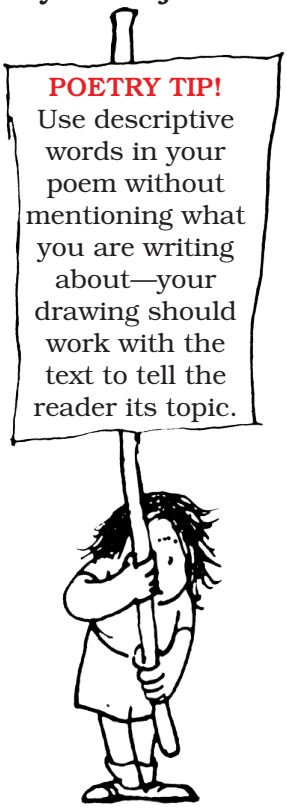
Concrete Poetry

Concrete poetry (also called shape poetry) is similar to visual poetry, but instead of using visual clues to reinforce meaning, it uses the actual arrangement of the words in a shape or other design to convey the subject or idea of the poem. For example, read "Circle Road" from *Every Thing On It* below. You'll notice that the poem itself is displayed as a circle. How does this placement help you better understand the poem? Would the poem make sense if it was displayed as a square?



Try your hand at a concrete poem! Write about something you know (and can draw), such as a favorite food or sport. Using a pencil, in the space below sketch an outline of your object as a guide when writing. Then compose your poem in the space of the drawing. When your poem is complete, erase the outline—your poem should represent the thing you are writing about! Add extra details in or around the poem the way Shel does in "Circle Road" to help convey its meaning.



"Circle Road" poem and art from *Every Thing On It* © 2011 Evil Eye, LLC. Art from *Where the Sidewalk Ends* © 1974, renewed 2002 Evil Eye, LLC. All rights reserved. Permission to reproduce and distribute this page has been granted by the copyright holder, HarperCollins Publishers.