

## Writing poems...

A. This poem was written by Sarah Glaz, professor of Mathematics at the University of Connecticut.

You can  
spin a dragon  
by its tail,  
be caught  
in the whirlwind  
and propelled  
into orbit.  
After circling  
the earth for  
thirteen hundred years  
you land  
on a moon  
that was never  
inhabited, but which functions  
according to all  
the laws of mathematics.  
This is the land  
of new beginnings:  
red sky,  
pale purple sun,  
magenta clouds  
pouring heavy rains  
on dense,  
primordial vegetation.  
Blue creature – you.  
I forgot  
to mention  
that orbiting  
the earth is  
supposed  
to purify the  
soul of pain.

1. What does the shape of the poem evoke ?
2. Explain the sentence ; “you land on a moon that was never inhabited, but which functions according to all the laws of mathematics”.
3. Webquest.
  - a) What are these poems called ? (answer : These poems are called “calligrammes”.)
  - b) Do you know a French poet who use to write poems in which the design and layout of letters created a visual image ? (answer : Guillaume Apollinaire wrote *Calligrammes*.)

## B. Mnemonic texts about a great number.

A lot of texts have been invented to memorize the digits of the number  $\pi$ . For instance, the following text gives 21 digits of  $\pi$  :

*Now, I wish I could recollect pi.  
“Eureka”, cried the great inventor.  
Christmas Pudding ; Christmas Pie  
Is the problem’s very center.*

Write down the number of letters in each word. Explain why this text reveals 21 digits of  $\pi$ .

Find other mnemonic texts or poems that deal with number  $\pi$ .