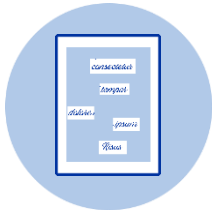




Use Collage and Redaction to make

Found Poetry

What is Found Poetry?



Found poetry is created by changing text written by someone else and giving it a new, and often opposite, meaning.



The “black-out” poetry technique, made popular by Austin Kleon, marks through, or redacts, words with a black marker. You can also use paint or other materials to hide unused words.



A different type of found poetry adds cut words or phrases from books or magazines to “build” a poem collage on a blank piece of paper.

What materials do I need?



Something to write on and build your collage from: a journal, old book, newspapers, magazines, fabric scraps and blank paper. You’ll be cutting or repurposing these materials, so keep that in mind when choosing.



Writing utensils: pencil, pens, markers, paints and brushes – whatever you’re most comfortable using. For Black-out Poetry, wide-tipped black markers work well.



Scissors or utility knife, and glue to attach your collage materials. White school glue is great, but heavier items may require a stronger glue.

What are the benefits?



The process of searching for the right words to express ourselves in creative writing helps develop problem-solving and communication skills.



Found poetry allows us to “flip-the-script” on narratives that only tell a negative or one-sided view of an issue. Telling a positive, meaningful story from negative source material can be powerfully symbolic and empowering.

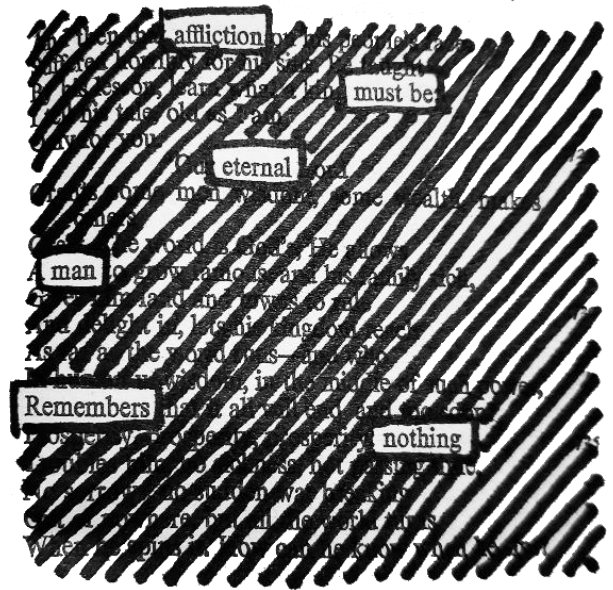
Black-out Poetry

Choose your source text.

1

Find some disposable text to begin with. You may want to start with a favorite page from an old book or an article from a magazine or newspaper.

Pages from fiction novels may have more descriptive language to choose from than an article about politics. Try making poems with different types of source text and compare results.



What will you say?

2

A **prompt** can be as simple as a single word that you find significant. You can come up with one of your own or use one provided to you. Look to current events or memories for inspiration!

Your source material may also give you an idea about what you want the **theme** of your poem to be. Do the words on the page stir you in agreement or protest?

How will you say it? Will you choose to tell a story (**narrative**)? Or will you choose to describe an external place (**descriptive**) or an emotion, feeling or idea (**lyric**)?

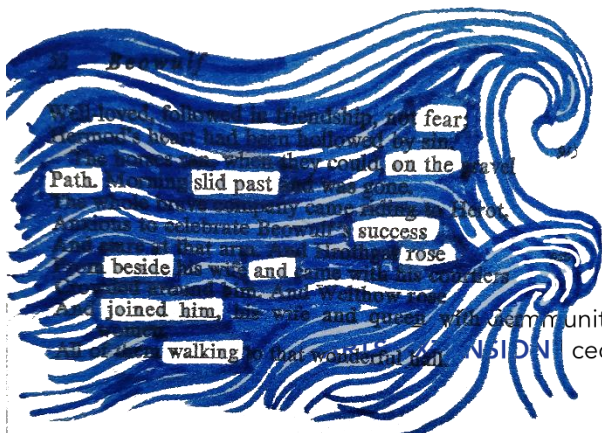
You're ready to **Black it out.**

3

First, scan the page in front of you without actually reading the page. Find and lightly circle 4 descriptive words that stick out to you with pencil, especially words that relate to your prompt.

Now go back and find additional words that will help you tell your story or describe your feelings or environment and circle those too. Keep working until you are happy with it.

Remember that the words you choose will stay in place on the page. Poems are usually read from top to the bottom, but you can create different reading directions by using arrows.



Once you have **composed** your poem, go back over your light circles with a dark marker. Does the "shape" of your poem or its theme make you think of shapes or designs you can use to cover the remaining text and margins of the page?

Black out all remaining text on the page. Inject your own imagination in this process by marking out text in a creative way!

Collage Poetry

Hunt for materials.

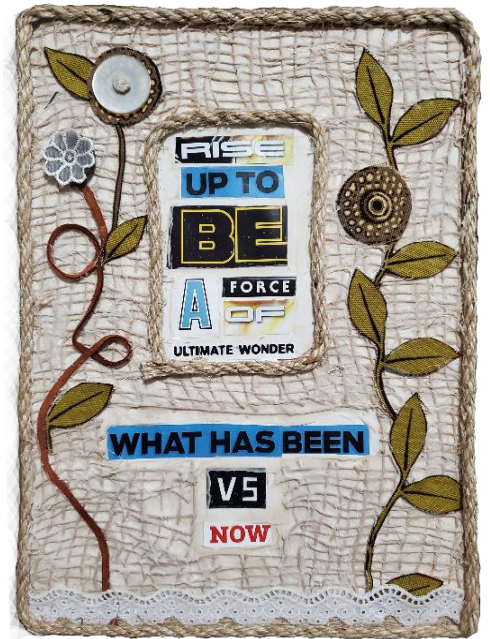
1

Grab some old magazines, newspapers or mailed advertisements to search for source text. Look for anything with bold headlines.

Don't forget scissors to cut everything down to size.

What do you have around the house that could be glued to your page for texture? Fabric pieces, buttons and twine work well, but require strong glue.

Paint or markers can also be used to embellish your found poem.



Start cutting.

2

Flip through your collected pages and cut out words that you find interesting. Cut out lots of words. You may even get some ideas for your poem as you go.

Cut a wide margin around your words. You can trim excess paper down to size later.

Also look for short connector words like "a", "to", "the", "of", "and", "be". You'll need all types of words to build your collage poem.

Upload
your poetry to
social media and
tag our page to
share your
creation!

Arrange your pieces.

3

Lay the cut words out on your journal page or blank paper and shuffle them around. Some words will naturally flow together. Start arranging them in the order that makes sense to you.

Don't spend a lot of time afterwards searching for additional words you think you need. Use the words you've already collected to create something new and interesting.

As your poem starts to form, think about how you will arrange the words on the page. If you plan to add other items to your collage, place them around your poem before gluing.

Take a few moments to plan the order in which you'll glue things down. For instance, it is easier to paint or draw on the background of the page before adding other items.

Have fun gluing down your found poetry collage. Keep adding embellishments until you have an attention-getting piece of creative writing.

Key Terms

Additive: a process of creating through the addition of elements (color, material) to achieve desired result.

Art-Journaling: the use of words or visual imagery to express oneself. There are no restrictions on technique, media, content or style.

Balance: referring to how the elements of art relate to each other within the composition in terms of their visual weight to create visual equilibrium. That is, one side does not seem heavier than another.

Black-out Poetry: a type of erasure or subtractive poetry in which a poem is formed through the redaction of already-created text (such as from a newspaper article or novel), usually with a sharpie marker.

Collage: artwork made from objects that are glued down onto surfaces like paper, canvas, or board.

Composition (in visual art): the arrangement or positioning of elements within the pictorial space.

Composition/Form (in poetry): refers to the way words and sentences are structured in a poem, and the kind of sounds that may come within that structure. The most basic poetic forms are narrative, lyric and descriptive.

Concise language: using a minimal amount of effective words to make one's point.

Convergence: guiding a viewer's eye in a visual work through visual cues like line, shapes or other elements.

Descriptive Poetry: a poem that outwardly describes the world seen by the poet, but that lacks emotional meaning.

Focal Point: the area that commands the visual attention of the viewer. A focal point usually includes the main subject, but should be limited, so as not to be distracting. Focal points can be created using techniques such as contrast, isolation, placement, convergence of something unusual.

Found Poetry: a type of poetry created by taking words, phrases, and sometimes whole passages from other sources and reframing them (a literary equivalent of a collage) by making changes in spacing and lines, or by adding or deleting text, thus imparting new meaning.

Lyric Poetry: poetry that focuses on creating a mood or recalling feeling in the reader, and expresses the impressions and emotions of the poet.

Narrative Poetry: poetry that tells a story, containing characters and a plot.

Prompt: a topic or phrase that inspires development of thought, perspective and creativity.

Redaction: the censoring, or hiding, of portions of text, usually for legal or security purposes.

Renewal: the replacing or repair of something that is worn out, run-down or broken.

Texture: the perceived surface quality of a piece of art, distinguished by its perceived visual and physical properties.

Theme: the underlying message in a piece of writing or art. What is the author trying to convey?