



KID smART

Education through  
imagination

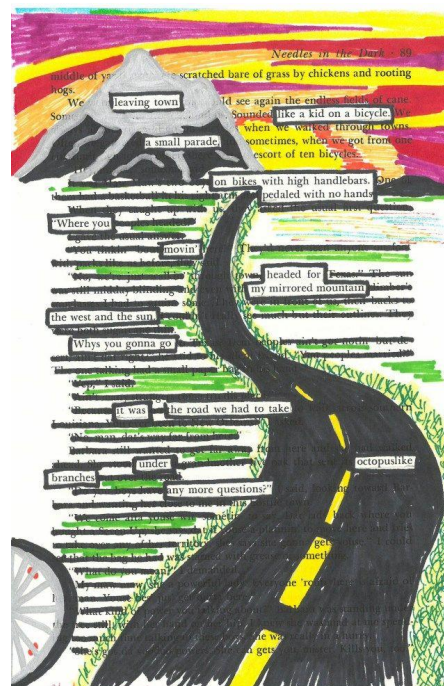
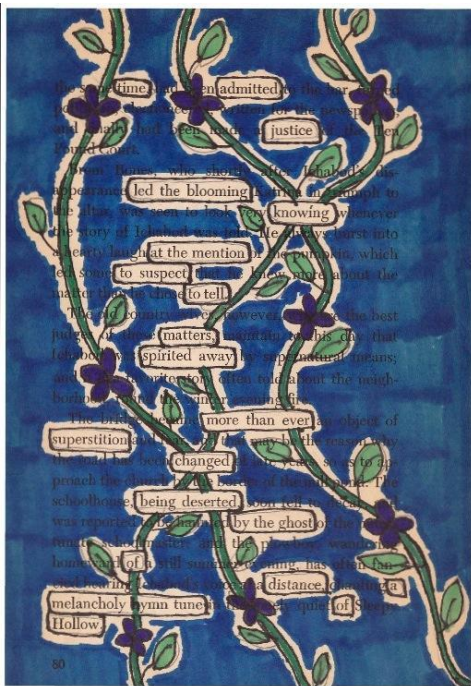
Habla Institute: Erasure Poetry



# What is Erasure Poetry?

Erasure poetry, or blackout poetry, is a form of found poetry wherein a poet takes an existing text and erases, blacks out, or otherwise obscures a large portion of the text, creating a wholly new work from what remains.

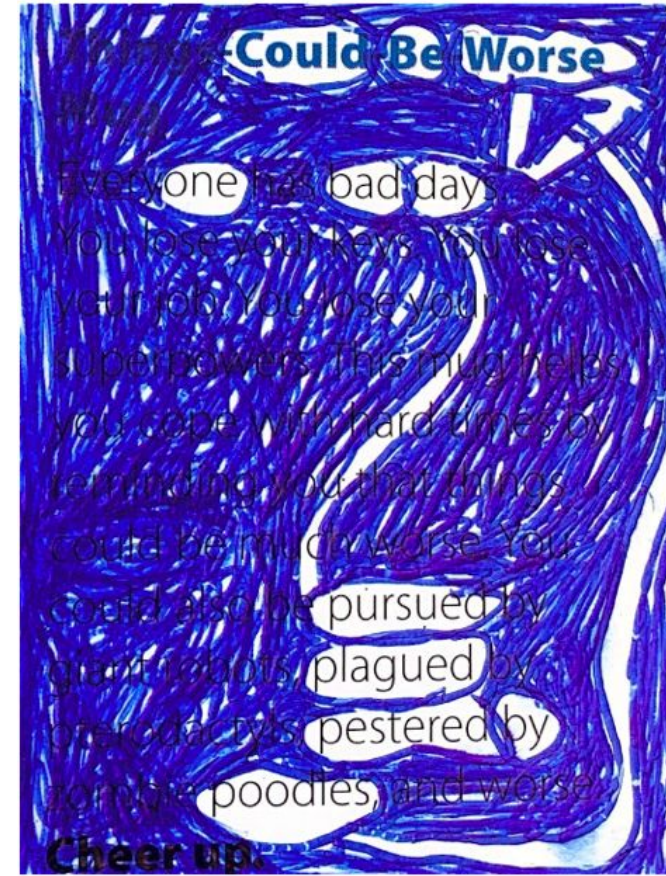
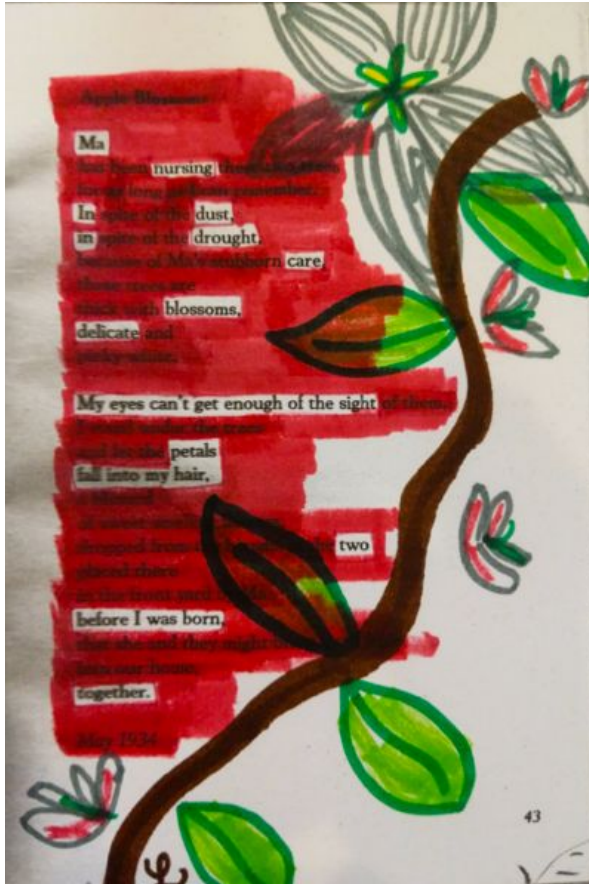
- Academy of American Poets





# What is Erasure Poetry?

Erasure poetry gives students the chance to find their own voices while working with a block of text written by someone else. Erasure poetry compels students to dive deep into a text in order to find hidden narratives to construct their own, new narrative, and the results are often surprising, exciting, and profound.



# What is Erasure Poetry?

## **Objectives:**

Students will:

- Improve language skills by focusing carefully on word choice.
- Improve associative and improvisational thinking skills.
- Understand the importance of context, arrangement, and form in writing.

## **Materials:**

- an appropriate text can include a book you are currently studying, primary source documents, political speech, poems, Shakespeare, etc.
- Pencils, black markers, and other coloring instruments (markers, colored pencils, etc.)

# Sentence/Phrase/Word

1. Choose your base text. It can be anything! Newspaper article, junk mail, brochure, page from a book, song lyrics, instruction manual, letter/email, etc.
2. Review the text and select a:
  - *Sentence* that is meaningful to you, that you feel captures a core idea of the text.
  - *Phrase* that moves, engages, or provokes you
  - *Word* that captures your attention or strikes you as powerful

# Sentence/Phrase/Word Example

## "The Star-Spangled Banner" by Francis Scott Key

O say can you see, by the dawn's early light,  
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming,  
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight  
O'er the ramparts we watch'd were so gallantly streaming?  
And the rocket's red glare, the bomb bursting in air,  
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there,  
O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep  
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,  
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,  
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?  
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,  
In full glory reflected now shines in the stream,  
'Tis the star-spangled banner - O long may it wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore,  
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion  
A home and a Country should leave us no more?  
Their blood has wash'd out their foul footsteps' pollution.  
No refuge could save the hireling and slave  
From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave,  
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

O thus be it ever when freemen shall stand  
Between their lov'd home and the war's desolation!  
Blest with vict'ry and peace may the heav'n rescued land  
Praise the power that hath made and preserv'd us a nation!  
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,  
And this be our motto - "In God is our trust,"  
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

# The Star-Spangled Banner

By: Francis Scott Key

Oh, say can you see by the dawn's early light  
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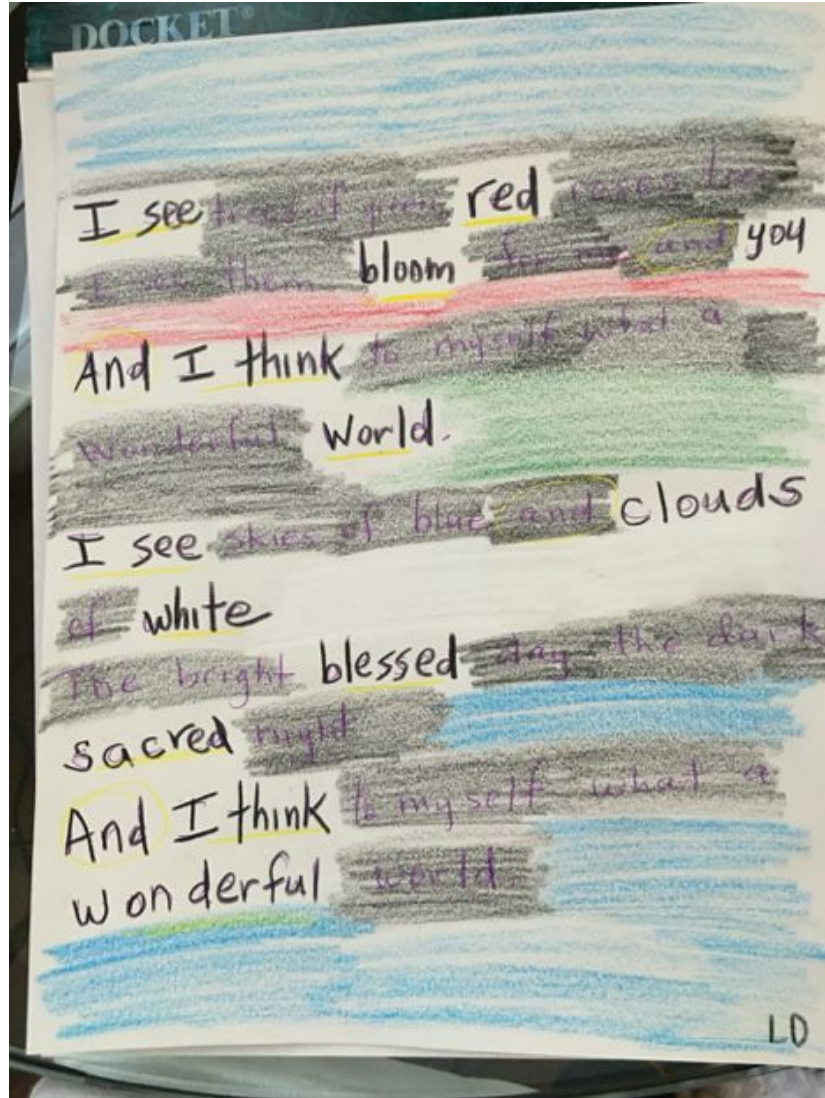
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# More Examples



electricity becoming  
visible currents of coursing silk  
cobwebs through the skies  
gaining even more influence  
at the control of the ship  
The miraculous engagement of the storm began in  
the strong breeze blowing across the deck.  
if you please

# Erasure Poetry Protocol

- Read the whole text once all the way through and choose your sentence/phrase/word.
- Scan the text for more anchor words, or words you find significant to act as a grounding for your poem.
- Circle words that connect to anchor words in **pencil**.
- Read through your circled words and make phrases, adding smaller, connecting words (like the, and, a, etc.).
- Cut words to make new words. Combine multiple words to make new words.
- Less is more!
- If you have time: create a picture to conceal the rest of the text that you didn't choose.