

the deaths of Bruce Whitney and  
a Treherne. Neither of those deaths  
fitted just right to me, Miss Jordan, not  
natural. Young, handsome people  
't . . . die so easily, as a rule. Mrs. Tre-  
herne's death was accidental, as has been  
published, but if you read psychology you  
know that we are all of us battling incessantly  
with an inherent 'will to die.' We are battle-  
lands between the 'will to live' and the  
'will to die.' Psychologically speaking, when  
an accident as Mrs. Treherne's occurs,  
'will to die' has triumphed. And for that  
to happen, there must be underlying  
a follow me?"

"You are explicit. Yes, I do."  
"I sit on the side lines, in a way,"  
"I am not," said the woman about the  
nation about the nation. But I was  
was much more helpful. It so happened  
the clerk who had recently forwarded a  
letter to one Mrs. Barbarr was himself from  
Riverport; and although the manner of for-  
warding the mail was such that no record  
was kept, it happened that the Riverport  
street address had stayed in his mind because  
it was the street upon which he had lived as  
a small boy. Mr. Barbarr had sent a letter  
addressed to the postmaster asking that an  
expected parcel be sent to him in Riverport,  
and with the letter he had enclosed a gummed,

children," he went on. "She is a very  
capable woman and could manage the lives  
and affairs of a considerable family with ease.  
Perhaps she gets considerable satisfaction  
from managing her little puppets."

The door opened and four grimy infants  
came in: the Bryan four-year-old, the Gil-  
christ boy and girl and the Toomey baby,  
toddling along with his hand firm in Betty  
Gilchrist's. They wanted candy.

Allie got up suddenly. She said, "Thank  
you, Mr. Pottle," in a kind of odd breathless-

# Blackout Poetry

from the veranda swing. Christopher's  
asleep with nothing on. He minds the heat,  
poor baby. You're hot, too, Allie. Why were  
you hurrying?"

"Catherine," Allie said abruptly, resting  
for a moment beside her on the swing.  
"would it be Doctor Carling who is black-  
mailing you?"

Catherine fixed her eyes on Allie's face.  
After a long moment a slow flood of color  
swept up inexorably from her long throat.  
"No," she said quietly.

Allie nodded. She got up. "I thought not,"

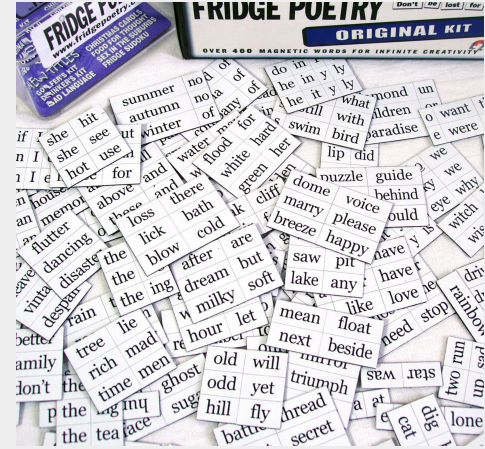
"Louisa likes to eat," Ida murmured.  
"Perhaps one has to be very fond of eating  
to become a good cook. I don't believe I  
cared very much, and I remember you  
never much of an eater. You haven't got  
at all. Louisa is really getting quite he-  
Evan."

"Yes."

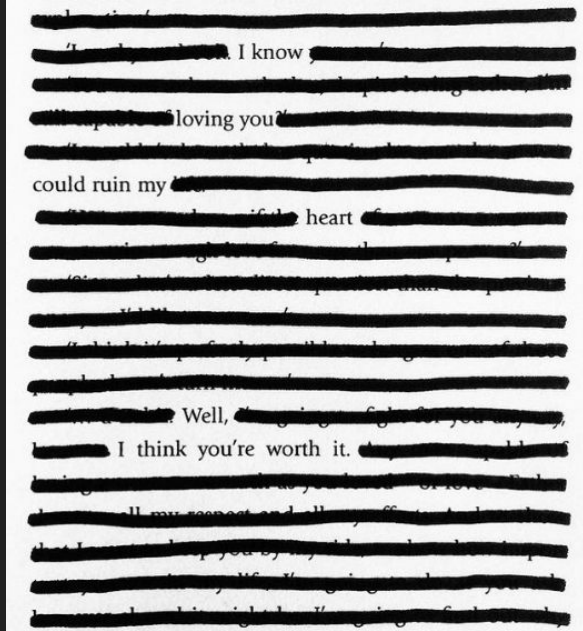
"Smoke if you like, dear. It's so nice  
to have a man around to smoke. I often think  
I should take it up myself, for company.  
Of course I should always forget to buy  
cigarettes or have no matches," she said.

You know, when you married  
you had quite a nice figure. She  
but nothing like she is now. Evan,  
Evan, she is rather a strange  
Louisa. I must say I never quite knew  
you married her, dear. Except that I know  
she had quite a bit of money and  
couldn't manage medical school. Jack  
should have helped more there. But was  
only the money, dear? It would put  
my mind at rest if I knew."

He said, "I was pretty young. Twelve  
three. I know now that she was a great  
older than she said. She wasn't bad-looking  
she was amiable, kind, helpful. I thought  
she was intelligent. There were a lot of things  
I didn't understand very well; I thought



# Examples: Regular Blackout Poems



I know loving you

Could ruin my heart.

Well, I think you're worth it.

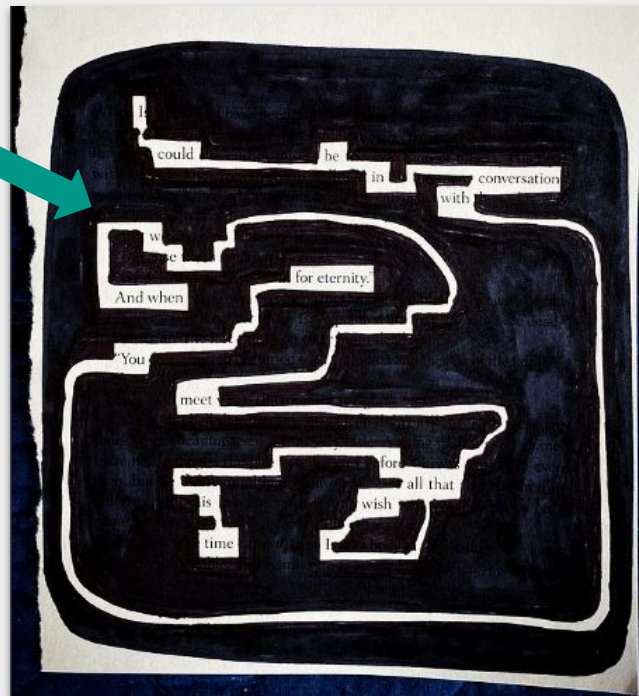
# Examples: Trailing Blackout Poems

Note how the author separated letters to spell words!

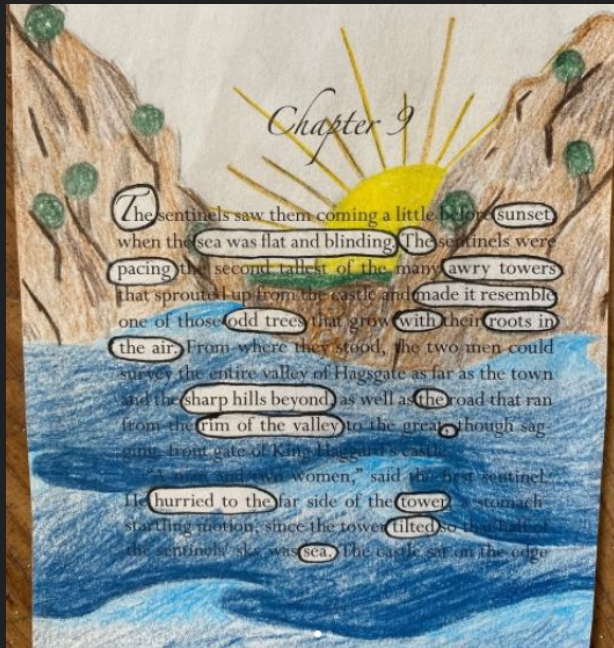
I could be in conversation with  
you for eternity.

And when we meet,

All that I wish for is time.



# Examples: Artsy Blackout Poems



The sunset sea was flat and blinding

The pacing awry towers

Made it resemble odd trees with roots  
in the air

Sharp hills beyond the rim of the  
valley

Hurried to the tower tilted sea



# How to Create a Blackout Poem: Selecting the words

Choose the text you want to work with.

Read through your page and circle words that stand out to you in pencil.

*You can repeat this step as many times as needed until you find a section with a lot of good words (especially with longer texts).*

[12] As a result of the things he suffered, saw, and was ordered to do as a pipefitter in the petrochemical plant, Sherman became an ardent environmentalist. Calcasieu Parish, in which he worked for 15 years at PPG, is among the 2% of American counties with the highest **toxic emissions** per capita. According to the American Cancer Society, Louisiana has the second-highest incidence of cancer for men and the fifth-highest male **death rate** from cancer in the nation.

[13] Lee Sherman's work at PPG was a source of personal **pride**, but he clearly did not feel particularly loyal to the company. Still, he did as he was **told**. And one day in the late 1960s, after his acid bath, he was told to **take on another** ominous **job**. It was to be done twice a day, usually after dusk,<sup>10</sup> and always in secret. In order to do this job, Sherman had to wield an 8ft-long "tar buggy",<sup>11</sup> **propelled forwards** on four wheels. Loaded on this buggy was an enormous steel tank that held "heavy bottoms" – the **highly** viscous tar residue of chlorinated hydrocarbon that had sunk to the bottom of kitchen-sized steel vessels. A layer of asbestos<sup>12</sup> **surrounded** the tank, to retain heat generated by a heater beneath the buggy. Copper coils were wound around its base. The hotter the tar, the less likely it was to solidify<sup>13</sup> before it was dumped.

[14] **Working overtime** in the evenings, under cover of dark, his respirator on, Sherman would tow the tar buggy down a path that led towards the Calcasieu Ship Channel in one direction and towards Bayou d'Inde in another.

[15] Sherman would look around "to make sure **no one saw me**" and check if the wind was blowing away from him, so as to avoid fumes blowing into his face. He backed the tar buggy up to the marsh. Then, he said, "I'd **bend down** and open the faucet." **Under the pressure** of compressed air, the **toxins** would spurt out "20 or 30 feet" into the marsh. Sherman waited until the buggy was drained of the illegal **toxic** waste.

[16] **No one ever saw me**, he says.

# How to Create a Blackout Poem: Connecting the words

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Look over all of your words. See what connections you can make between the words that you chose.

Remove any circled words that you don't feel fit with the rest.

# How to Create a Blackout Poem: Connecting the words

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Look for any other words that may connect to the theme of your poem, along with connecting words that you can use to make phrases.

Examples of connecting words:  
a, the, is, this, etc.



# How to Create a Blackout Poem: Blacking out the background

Once your words are chosen, cover up the rest of the words with a sharpie.

## Final Poem

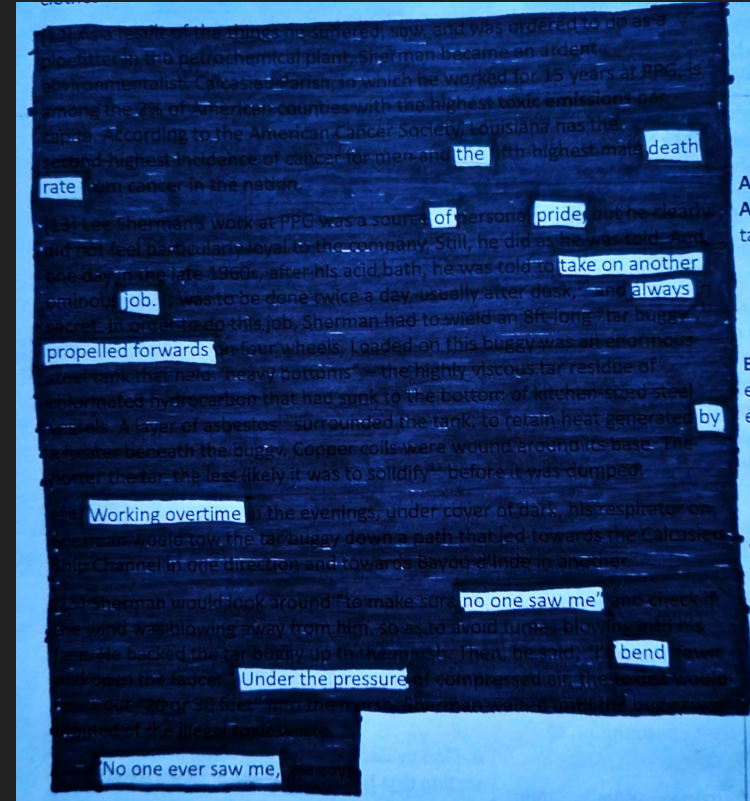
*The death rate of pride:*

*Take on another job,*

*Always propelled forward by working overtime.*

*No one saw me bend under the pressure.*

*No one ever saw me.*



## Review: Steps to Create a Blackout Poem

1. Pick a paper to work with
2. Find words that stick out to you
3. Connect your words and remove any that don't fit
4. Find any connecting words you may need
5. Black out the rest of the words

Once you are finished, add a title to your poem!

# Exit Ticket: How did you like this activity?

On the whiteboard, write down:

- Anything you liked about this activity
- Anything you think could be improved about this activity

...and quickly forwarded it  
les Banbarr was himself from  
although the manner of for-  
mail was such that no record  
happened that the Riverport  
had stayed in his mind because  
it upon which he had lived as  
Mr. Banbarr had sent a letter  
poor Gaby. "Oh, no, no, no. Why were  
you hurrying?"  
"Catherine," Allie said abruptly, resting  
for a moment beside her on the swing,  
"would it be Doctor Carling who is black-  
mailing you?"  
Catherine fixed her eyes on Allie's face.  
After a long moment a slow flood of color  
she had quite a lot  
couldn't manage medi-  
should have helped m-  
only the money, dear  
mind at rest if I knew  
He said, "I was pr-  
three. I know now the  
older than she said. St-