Blackout Poetry

A poet starts with established text and redacts from it until a new, original poem is formed.

Blackout Poetry is a form of found poetry in which a poet starts with a text source. Then, they eliminate words from the text until they have their own, original poem.
Half of the fun is choosing the original source and medium.

Half of the fun in blackout poetry is choosing the text that you’re working from. Poets have used existing poems, newspaper clippings, entire books or something as simple as an old grocery list.

Another important piece of blackout poetry is the medium you choose to create it in. A few options include using a Sharpie, paint, or highlighter tool on a word processor.
THE O MISSION REPO

Travis Macdonald’s *The O Mission Repo* is a book of blackout poetry written atop the 9-11 Commission Report. Evocative and daring, it displays the power of writing blackout poetry and importance of choosing a source.

The O Mission Repo is a full-length book of blackout poetry and a perfect example of the power of writing poetry in this way. Because it’s written atop the 9-11 Commission Report, the already daring themes are even more eye-catching and evocative.

It also utilizes a variety of techniques such as using a translucent highlighter to black out pages so that the original text is still visible to the reader. The title itself is crafted by blacking out the phrase “The Commission Report”.
A quick Google search yields thousands of creative examples of blackout poetry. Many are crafted so that they also form a piece of visual art.
Blackout poetry is a good exercise for any writer, as it can help provide fresh inspiration and get the brain moving in new ways. It can introduce a poet to themes they wouldn’t normally think to write about and help with brainstorming.

It is also a great introductory exercise for new writer, as it may feel less daunting than starting with a blank page.

As is evident from The O Mission Repo, using an original source can help to pack even more of a punch.