

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.

MYSTERIOUS NIGHT LIGHT

A mysterious ghostly light which has been appearing recently on the road across Inch Eank leading from the mainland at Tooban into Inch Island is terrifying people who reside near this part of the island. The mysterious light was first seen by a Tooban

red
news
of fed
tion
is
brakes
LAVAGES
FRAS WA
CHAPP STFX
Eaton Oa II
further

POETRY

BOOKS

From the heart of this dark, evacuated campus
I can hear the library humming in the night,
an immense choir of authors muttering inside their books
along the unit, alphabetical shelves,
Giovanni Pontano next to Pope, Dumas next to his son,
each one stitched into his own private coat,

Half of the fun is choosing the original source and medium.

after leaving a party at Inch Island. The driver saw a sudden bright flash, from what is described as "a ball of fire," emerge into the roadway before the bus. The strange light was so powerful that it momentarily dimmed the headlights of the bus. As quickly as it had appeared, the light vanished. Since then, the light has been reported seen by several people who have been abroad in this district at night.

red
news
of fed
tion
is
brakes

walls within walls, as rain soaks New England,
or standing in a bookstore in a trench coat.

I see all of us reading ourselves away from ourselves,
straining in circles of light to find more light
until the line of words becomes a trail of crumbs
that we follow across a page of fresh snow;

when evening is shadowing the forest,
small brown birds flutter down to consume them
and we have to listen hard to hear the voices
of the boy and his sister receding into the perilous woods.

22

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

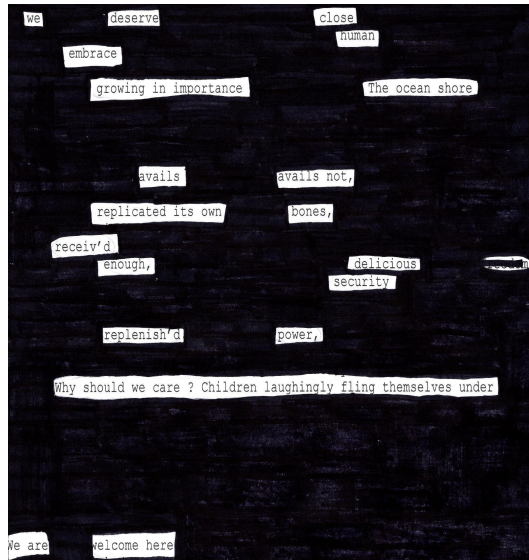
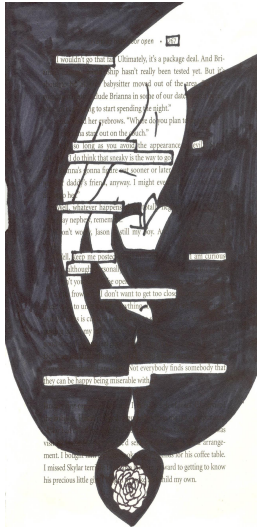
Travis Macdonald's *The O Mission Repo* is a book of blackout poetry written atop the 9-11 Commission Report. Evocative and daring, it displays the power of writing blackout poetry and importance of choosing a source.



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".

More Examples



Caption

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.

Significance

- Escaping writer's block
- Introduction to poetry
- Creating evocative poetry

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.