

Blackout Poetry

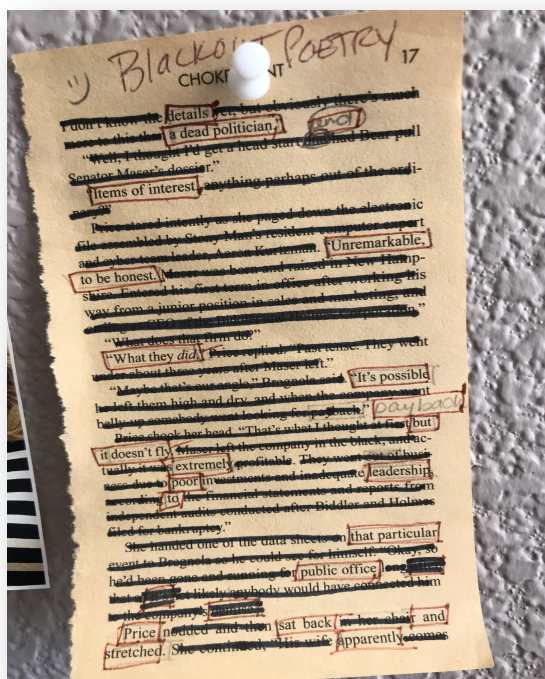
Blackout poems are super fun, and kind of subversive. The first step is ripping a page or two from an old, worn out book that no one reads anymore. Yep—really tear a page from a book. What other form of poetry does that? See, totally subversive.

If you don't want to tear a page from an old book, you can use a newspaper or a magazine, but I say try it. It's weirdly freeing. ;)

Once you have your page, take a look at it. Scan for words that jump out, that grab your attention, that inspire you. Maybe there are excellent verbs like *ignite*, *scamper*, or *dismantle*. Maybe you got lucky and found a page with *splitzwiggled* (a Roald Dahl word for caught). Or maybe you got a dud and most of the words are *blah*, *meh*, and *huh*. It doesn't matter. You can make magic with this old page. (Honestly, if your page says *blah*, *meh*, and *huh* you should get another page.)

Once you find a word or two that you like, think of them as your anchors. Build your idea or theme from there. Circle your anchor word(s) and up to 10-20 more words that expand your topic in interesting ways. Try not to have more than two or three words in a row.

Now read the words in order, as if you were reading a sentence or a poem. Fiddle with it until the words are how you want them. Feel free to change or adjust the ends of words to keep the appropriate tense, etc. When you're all set, blackout the rest of the page. If you want to get fancy, design a drawing or picture that acts as the blackout. Check out these [examples](#) from Scholastic.



My first blackout poem, torn from an old detective novel. It's kind of dark, but you get the idea.

Details:

A dead politician, and items of interest.
"Unremarkable, to be honest."
"What they did? It's possible payback."
"But it doesn't fly."
"Extremely poor leadership to that particular public office."
Price sat back and stretched.
"Apparently."

