

## **1. Cubic Poem:**

**Time:** 20 minutes to compose (additional time for sharing aloud if desired)

**Materials:** Paper, pencil.

**Rationale:** To explore the curious ways that English words can work and brainstorm vocabulary words. To practice using an increasing repertoire of conventions of Canadian spelling, grammar, and punctuation. To select and use appropriate language features, and observe the meaning differences that can occur in a given context, tense, and form.

### **Activity & Constraints:**

- ☞ Write a poem with 3 words per line, 3 lines per stanza, and 3 stanzas total.
- ☞ Use only words that can be used as both a noun and a verb (eg. drink, bike, picture)
- ☞ Bonus points for words that can be used as other parts of speech as well!
- ☞ Add -ed, -ing, and -s to the ends of words as desired.
- ☞ Add punctuation as desired.

### **EXEMPLAR:**

#### **Remote Party**

Party smell drifts

Rumours wink, gesture.

Couple climbs table,  
strips clothes, embraces.

Kisses. Wet slaps.

Handles make marks.

Dog whines feed,

Garden calms roar,

Hedges cut shouts.

## **2. Spam Cut-Up and Vocal Performance**

**Level:** Grade 6–Adult Ed.

**Prepared By:** Kedrick James, Instructor, UBC Language and Literacy Education

**Time:** One hour to compose; 10 minutes to vocally prepare; 30 minutes to perform

**Genre:** Cut-up and Found Poetry

**Materials:** Photocopies or digital files of found text.

**Rationale:** To provide a deeper understanding of writing with a limited and estranged vocabulary, thus emulating a language learner.

**Framework:** Give context to the genre of found poetry. Explain the concept of automatically generated writing. Consider the role of email and language generators on contemporary writing practices. Discuss matters of information environments and trash or excess in the data stream. How is caring for our information environments like caring for the natural environments. What are the issues surrounding both material and cultural recycling?

**Activity & Constraints:** Using provided spam email “word salad” example, delete unwanted text until you are left with a work that you will perform in front of the class. Either digitally cut or strike-through undesirable text with a pencil. The found text must be used in a sequential manner, but phrases can be repeated once, as a ‘loop’, immediately following the same phrase. All forms of punctuation, capitalization, and line breaks may be freely added. Write out the selected text on a separate piece of paper. Working in collaborative groups, find ways to give dramatic or comedic readings of the text.

### **EXEMPLAR:**

#### **Prosperity of Hate**

Tied tightly,  
Face-first in each of these prickly buckets,  
In which average means obedient (near kneeling) as one to a monarch or religion.

She’s less powerful.  
Gold star.

Despite considerable pleasure, a great need remains;  
Unripe,  
Bent.  
In darkness, any bitter tomorrow is thrust (so sexist) into doves:  
Filthy.

There are two lawyers;  
Obnoxious,  
Attached.  
They (invested with exactly the power of making the law) pose the prince in presence of an encroaching democracy.

Straight kick in the little clit.  
He has torn a tear in order to obtain the fruit.  
xo

### **3. Register Shift**

**Time:** 15 minutes

**Materials:** Pen and paper, source texts (text messages or formal letters selected by students or provided) in a variety of registers.

**Rationale:** To examine different language registers and illustrate what type of situation they are (or aren't) appropriate for.

**Framework:** Language register is the level and style of your writing. It should be appropriate for the situation you are in. Discuss characteristics of different registers and look at some examples of each

**Activity & Constraints:** Rewrite a text message in a higher register or rewrite a formal letter in a low register.

**Extension Activity:** Shift your same text to another register (e.g. if you shifted down, shift up)

#### **HANDOUT:**

##### **REGISTER TYPES**

###### **'Familiar'**

This register is normally used between people who know each other well. Features of this register show a lack of grammar, spelling, punctuation and usually contains slang and jargon.

###### **'Neutral'**

This register is non-emotional and sticks to facts. It is most appropriate for technical writings.

###### **'Informal'**

Often journalism and occasionally academic writing use this register. When using an informal register, there is usually a close relationship between the writer, audience and topic with a degree of casualness. However, care must be taken in order not to mistake informal for familiar registers. The features of this register are different from the familiar register as more care is taken with grammar etc. However, the tone is conversational, using colloquial language, compared to the formal register.

###### **'Formal'**

A formal register is neither colloquial nor personal and is the register that is mostly used in academic writing. It is a register where strong opinions can be expressed objectively, it does not break any of the rules of written grammar and often has a set of rules of what not to do when using this register.

## **'Ceremonial'**

Modern academic writing rarely uses this register. Sometimes, it may be encountered when reading transcripts of speeches or historical documents. Often, misunderstandings in recognising the difference between ceremonial and formal registers occur when writers are experimenting with new vocabulary. A dictionary will help you make the right choices and reading academic texts will help you become more familiar with the appropriate choices.

### **EXEMPLAR:**

#### **OMG! Stoked!**

Hay Gur!

OMG! Stoked to say that you can come back to the Ube'. Got you down for edumacating the big kids 'bout plays n stuff. It's for, like, the whole year.

u need yr # to come. Or to tell us if shit's going down or whatever. Or if you're gonna bail.

SO DO YOU WANNA OR NO?

Tell the dudes (use the sheets I put on here) in the next 2 weeks, K?

cya,

the guys that pick who comes here,

Teachin' School

'Ube

#### **4. Pilish**

**Time:** 15 minutes in class

**Materials:** Pen and paper, a list of 8 and 9 letter words that students may use if they wish. Dictionaries and thesauruses or other vocabulary lists, pi.

**Rationale:** To familiarize students with rigid constraints to prepare them for poetic forms (such as sonnets) which demand adherence to strict rules. Students will also expand their vocabularies by trying to find words that meet the digit requirements.

**Activity & Constraints:** Pilish is a style of writing in which the length of each consecutive words matches the corresponding digit of the number  $\pi$  (pi). For each digit, you will use a word with that man letters, in the order they are found in pi.

Write a story in Pilish style. You may insert spaces and punctuation. Use “0” as a wild card, where you can insert a word of any length.

Get as many digits into pi as you can!

**Extension Activity:** Write a Pi-ku, a piece in which the number of syllables of each consecutive word is representative of a digit of  $\pi$

**3.141592653589793238462643383279502884197169399375105820974944592307  
8164062862089986280348253421170679821480865132823066470938446095505  
8223172535940812848111745028410270193852110555964462294895493038196  
44288109756**

#### **EXEMPLAR:**

How I want a found flowerpot on cloudy patio. The plant shrivels painfully  
without continual h2o to wet. Sunshine also causes my plants some dry air.  
Relevant too, is climate generally, often causing it problems.

## **5. A Mysterious Note**

When you get to your classroom after lunch, you find a note waiting for you on your seat. What does it say?

Do not use the letter 'E'

You have 15 minutes

### **EXEMPLAR:**

Hi Sarah,

I think this is your chair. I pray that I didn't pick the wrong spot. Nobody can know what I'm about to say.

You may think that you want to try your hand at instruction. You do not. It is a difficult job that pays poorly. Folks who start doing it in schools find it hard to stop, for it is a trap. As our normal instructor, Mrs. Johns says, "Guys who can, do. Guys who can't, instruct."

But you probably can. Isn't anything that's not this an option for you?

Go back to what you did in the past. You will thank us for warning you about what may find you if you follow this path. Our class thinks you could do alright, just not at this job, and not right now. You do not want to try to forms us youth into adult humans

I pray you know what our class is saying,

Yours,

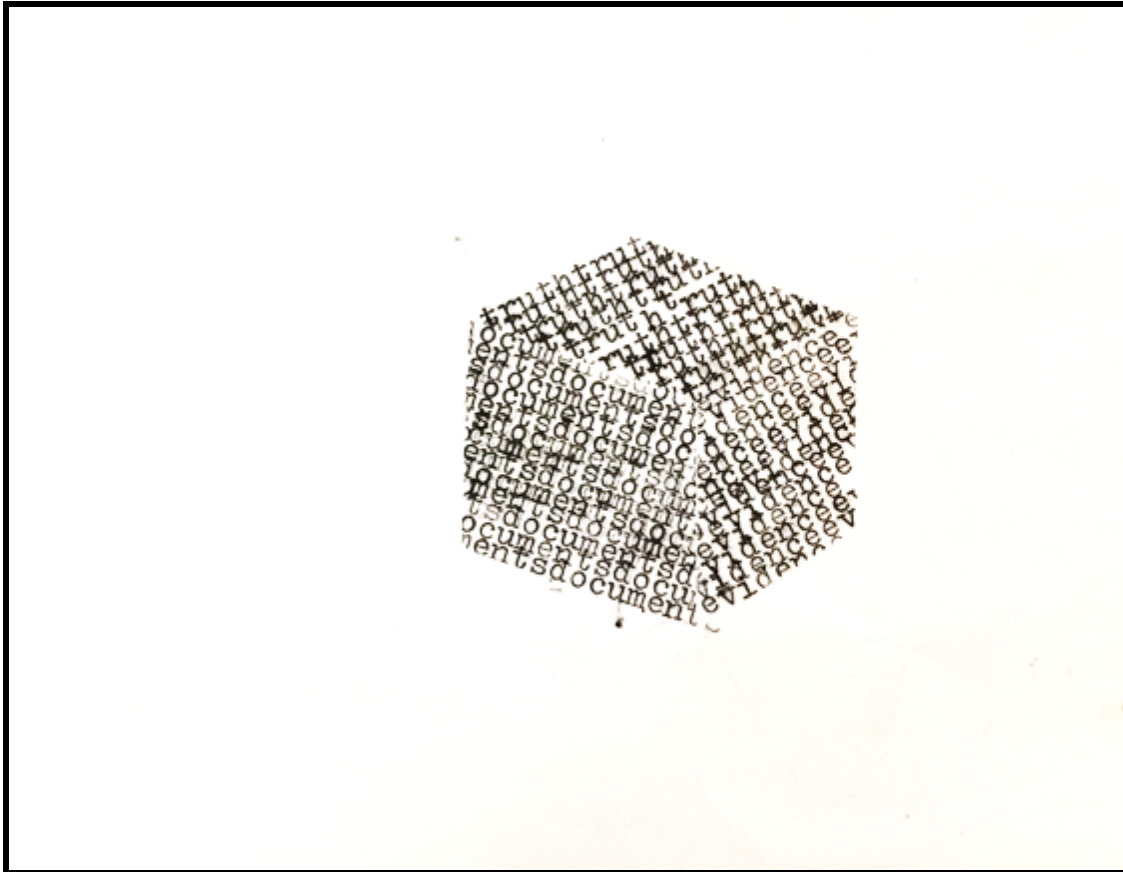
Anonymous

## **6. Concrete Poetry**

Create a piece of concrete poetry or text/language-based art. Use any of the materials provided (magazines and other found text to cut up; typewriters; alphabet stamps, stickers, and stencils; colourful markers and paper; plasticine; etc.) to create a visual poem, a textual sculpture, or a piece of typewriter art.

You have 20 minutes.

### **EXEMPLAR:**



## **7. An Ode to Junkfood**

**Time:** 20 minutes

**Activity & Constraints:** Write an ode to your favourite junk food or tasty treat.

An Ode is a poem in praise of, or dedicated to someone or something that captures the poet's interest or serves as an inspiration. It is often written in a formal or ceremonial tone with flowery, figurative language that celebrates its subject.

Extension:

1. Use each of the following stylistic devices at least once: alliteration, simile, metaphor
2. Use the ABABCDECDE

**Rationale:** Students will utilize emotive and passionate language and play with formal, flowery tone.

**Materials needed:** paper and writing utensil.

### **EXEMPLAR:**

#### Ode to Donuts

Oh tasty fried pastry,

The greasy sugarbread of the gods and the fortunate.

How hot and fresh your warming aroma.

Your captivating variety thrills me each time, never boring and only ever repetitive out of excessive admiration.

Your yeasty softness bounces across my teeth and tongue, a burst of flavour even in your naked honey-dipped form, without the rich adornment of custards or creams.

From the most classic, simple sugar-raised at the grocery store, heavily discounted in the early evening,

To the exotic, ingenious specialties of the pricey hipster coffee shop, heavily laden with ganaches, meringues, and fresh fruits in season,

Where I worship your freshness and not-too-sweet flavour combinations in spite of the excessively long line and the occasional ironic pork product pairing (An inappropriate and garrish joke at the expense of the humble, rustic fritter), happily handing over \$5 for just one heavenly don'.

Oh dear bismark, old-fashioned, long john and cruller, how you enchant me,



How your jellies and drizzles and creamy fillings squish out to wash away all my sorrows, landing, with a splat, on the pavement as I shovel you into my watering mouth while walking,

How could I live another empty second without you inside of me?

And how did I live during those dark, cold years before I had found my truest love,

A glistening pink halo shining brightly from her parchment-lined perch,

Filling the dark and dismal air of that, human-infested ratroach rendezvous

With the sweet serenade of her olfactory aria,

The queen of Lee's in all her food-coloured glory: the strawberry iced ring,

Fresh but fleeting,

She rises and fries with the light of dawn, and dances away with her sisters,

Gone before 4:30.

## **8. Morning Metaphors**

**Time:** 15 minutes

**Materials needed:** paper and pen, highlighters

**Extension:** use alliteration as much as you can

**Intended Outcome:** to recognize and distinguish simile and metaphor.

**Connection to language acquisition:** practising the non-literal uses of language. Reminds an ELL student that metaphors and similes are not literal, and helps them to identify them.

**Activity & Constraints:** Write about your morning routine using metaphors and similes. Place a straight line under a simile and highlight a metaphor.

## **9. Longest Word**

**Time:** 10 minutes

**Materials:** pen and paper

**Activity:** Come up with the longest word you can by adding prefixes and suffixes to a root. Define the word.

**EXEMPLAR:**

**predisantidiseestablishmentarianismphobia**

Definition: the state before being apart from the part of the person who is afraid of the opposition to the withdrawal of state support from an established church

## **10. Microfiction**

**Time:** 5 minutes

**Materials:** pen and paper, Hemingway's story overhead

**Framework:** Read Hemmingway's 6-word story and discuss how brevity can be powerful.

**Intended Outcome:** To explore the power of word choice. To practice being succinct and express ideas without directly stating them.

**Activity & Constraints:** Write your own 6-word story.

**Extension:** Use only one-syllable words

**EXEMPLAR:**

“Wrong number,” says a familiar voice.