

What is Found Poetry?

 thewritepractice.com/what-is-found-poetry/

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According to the Wikipedia, **Found Poetry** is:

a type of poetry created by taking words, phrases, and sometimes whole passages from other sources and reframing them as poetry by making changes in spacing and lines, or by adding or deleting text, thus imparting new meaning.

Found poetry is the literary equivalent version of collage. Much like the visual artist who combines multiple media (newspaper, feathers, coins, sheet music) into collage art, you can do the same with words, pulling concepts and phrasings from various sources to create “found” poems.

My cousin introduced me to Found Poetry when she was compiling a book to honor her older brother who had passed away. Upon discovering a stash of his many writings, she invited people to create “found poetry” using his narratives as inspiration.



Collage Journal Elements
by [Star Gardener](#)

What can you use for source texts?

Anything goes here, from the obvious newspapers and magazines to the more obscure product packaging, menus, obituaries, junk mail, recipe cards, graffiti, sheet music, diary entries, cook books, appliance instructions, to-do lists and court transcripts. Just be certain you give copyright where copyright is due.

Okay, I have some random writings. Now what?

This is where your *word artistry* comes in. Start playing. You can cut out words or phrases that speak to you and start rearranging them until a thought or theme jumps out at you. You can start with a complete text and work backwards — start to erase words and sentences until something new emerges. You can start with, for example, the directions to something and change out words. Sometimes, it's simple a matter of breaking up sentences in interesting ways.

A sample poem

I did this one from a sample diary entry I found online. The entry was several paragraphs long about the comings and goings of the day. I read it and noticed where my mind and eye stopped. I noticed repetition. What felt meaningful and interesting in the text. I re-wrote the narrative into this:

Mama went out to Ethels.
Steve went out in the canoe.
Dad went out to shop.
Everyone went out.
And then came in.
To eat supper.

Have you ever tried found poetry? What do you like about it?

PRACTICE

Are you a word artist? Find a narrative that you've previously written and pull from it words and phrasings to create a poem.

When you're finished, post your practice in the comments section. And if you post, be sure to leave feedback on a few practices by other writers.

Have fun with this one!

Marianne Richmond

I'm Marianne Richmond—writer, artist and inspirationalist. My words have touched millions over the past two decades through my children's books and gift products. Basically I put love into words and help you connect with the people + moments that matter. You can find me on my [website](#), [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#) (@M_Richmond21).

