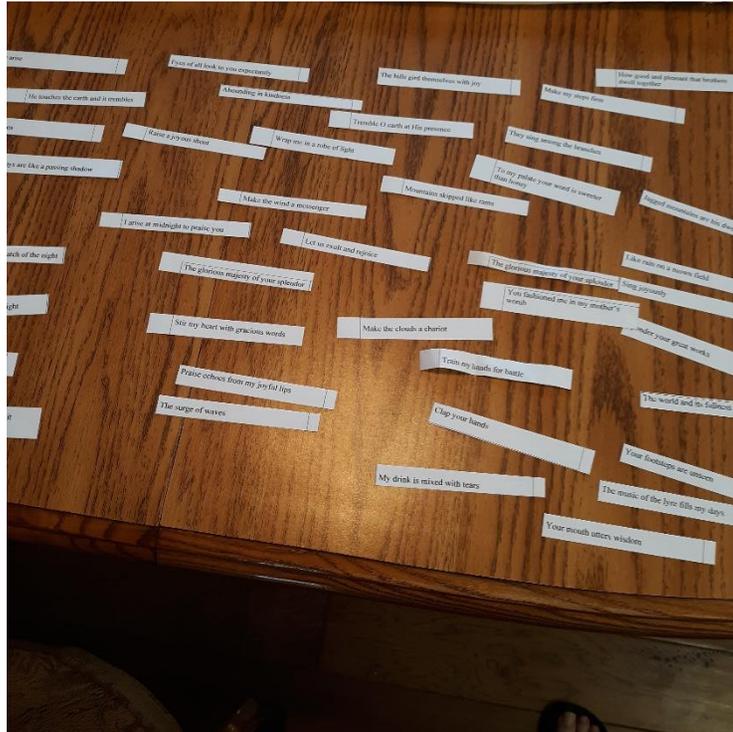


Word Play Poetry Directions and Sample



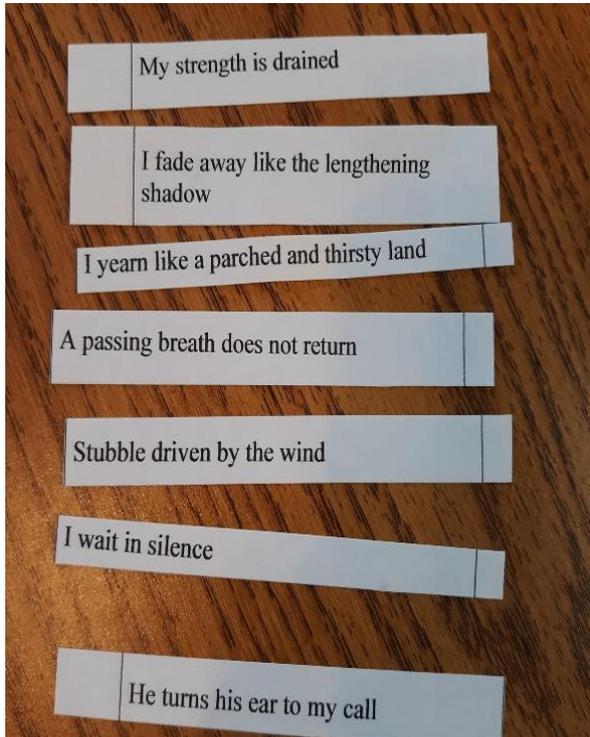
Step 1

Cut apart the phrases found on the last two pages of this hand out and spread them out as shown in the picture.

Step 2

Begin playing with the phrases. Select a few phrases that appeal to you. Look for phrases that express similar ideas. Or perhaps choose phrases that create a striking contrast. Have patience with this step and allow yourself to play. Put phrases side by side or line them up vertically. Read the phrases aloud and listen for ideas. Try new phrases and new combinations. Eventually, an idea will begin to gel.

Image for Step 3



Step 3

Put several phrases in order as shown in the picture to the left. Continue playing with these phrases. Simply let the words speak to you and inspire you.

Step 4

Begin to change some of the words. Add some of your own ideas. Select new phrases from the original stack if necessary.

Step 5

Continue playing with the ideas until a poem begins to take form. No need to create rhymes; free verse works better for this particular writing technique.

Step 6

Read each line and pay particular attention to the verbs. Try to eliminate weak verbs like is – are – was – be – got – went. Use verbs that create a striking image.

Step 7

If you would like, give your completed poem a title.

See the final poem below: *All Things Through Him*. Notice how it has grown from the 7 selected phrases shown in the Image for Step 4. Notice the changes, additions, and deletions.

Here is the final poem. Notice the words that are *italicized*. These words are taken directly from Psalms; they are from those slips of paper. The parts that are not italicized are from my own thoughts.

All Things Through Him

My strength is drained.

Like a *shadow* at twilight

I fade away to nothing.

News of riots, fighting, hatred, injustice

Attack my senses and fill my days.

I yearn for peace

The way *a parched and thirsty land* yearns
for rain.

I am powerless:

Like *a passing breath*,

A stubble driven by the wind.

I call to Him who is my strength.

And *I wait in silence*

As *He turns his ear to my call.*

My strength is drained

I fade away like the lengthening
shadow

I yearn like a parched and thirsty land

A passing breath does not return

Stubble driven by the wind

I wait in silence

He turns his ear to my call

Step 1 from directions above: Cut these phrases apart and spread them out on a table. Each phrase is from the Book of Psalms.

The glorious majesty of your splendor

Train my hands for battle

Days are like a passing shadow

My eyes greet each watch of the night

I arise at midnight to praise you

I remember your name at night

Let us exult and rejoice

He turns his ear to my call

Mountains skipped like rams

Tremble O earth at His presence

He touches the earth and it trembles

Wrap me in a robe of light

Abounding in kindness

Eyes of all look to you expectantly

My drink is mixed with tears

The swelling sea

The surge of waves

Stubble driven by the wind

Arise arise

Sing joyously

A passing breath does not return

Like rain on a mown field

Jagged mountains are his dwelling

The meadows are clothed in flocks

Make the wind a messenger	Praise echoes from my joyful lips
Make the clouds a chariot	I yearn like a parched and thirsty land
My strength is drained	Your mouth utters wisdom
Raise a joyous shout	The music of the lyre fills my days
Stir my heart with gracious words	Clap your hands
You fashioned me in my mother's womb	The world and its fullness are mine
How good and pleasant that brothers dwell together	The hills gird themselves with joy
To my palate your word is sweeter than honey	I wait in silence
I fade away like the lengthening shadow	I ponder your great works
He touches the mountain and it smokes	Your footsteps are unseen
	They sing among the branches
	Make my steps firm