



Visual Poetry







Content Focus: Language Arts

- Poetry
- Reading: Comprehension
- Writing: Literary Response

Performance Outcome(s)

- Construct a visual poem based on your concept of home.

Standards/Interdisciplinary Connections

					
S	S	L	A	M	T
Science	Social Studies	Language Arts	Art - Visual	Math	Technology

How To Read The Symbols: The symbols in **bold** indicate the subject standards that this lesson satisfies.

Lesson Outline (3 - 4 lessons)

1. Motivation
2. The Challenge
3. Construct A Visual Poem
4. Discussion
5. Present
6. Reflect
7. Extensions And Variations
8. Middle School Standards

Salvadori Prerequisites

- None



CONCEPTS

- Concepts of home vary widely because of culture, economic status, age and gender.
- Visual (or concrete) poetry is an artistic expression of written language that makes designs out of letters, words, color and images.

RESOURCES

On-Line

Visual Poetry Examples

- www.geocities.com/visualpoetry_au (note underscore between visualpoetry and au) - Visual Poetry by Jennifer Phillips
- www.peterfinch.co.uk/newvis~1.htm - Peter Finch Visual Poetry

Multimedia Visual Poetry Examples

- www.scriberazone.co.uk/multimedia.shtml - The Scriberazone: Poetry and Other Vibes

Visual Poetry Description

- <http://www.generatorpress.com/pages/2/index.htm> - John Byrum, editor & publisher, Generator Press

MATERIALS

Students

- ●: Student Guide: Construct A Visual Poem
- Samples of visual poems
- Paper, Pencils/Pens, Markers, Old Newspapers and Magazines, scissors and/or Exacto knives
- Optional (Computer with Word or Illustrator, Xerox Machine)

MOTIVATION

List 3 descriptive words/phrases that come to mind when you think about the idea of home.

Students share their descriptive words/phrases and discuss why they chose what they did.



Now put your words/phrases to one side for a moment -- we will come back to them after we study examples of what is called "visual/concrete poetry."

Show and discuss the examples of visual/concrete poetry. If you have access to a computer, show the students a multi-media visual poem from the following website:

- <http://www.scriberazone.co.uk/multimedia.shtml>, especially, "The Character of Rain" and "Car Wash."

THE CHALLENGE

Construct a visual or concrete poem that describes your concept of "home," using the words/phrases you wrote down at the beginning of the class.

CONSTRUCT A VISUAL POEM

- Students review the ●: Student Guide
- Students sketch a simple image that comes to mind when they think of "home," using their words/phrases.
- Students write poems that conveys their ideas.
- Students search magazines and/or newspapers for images to include.
- Students may photocopy their poems, reduced or blown up as desired, so they can cut them up and rearrange them as a collage.
- Students shape their letters, words and images to resemble their sketches.
- Exhibit the visual poems in the classroom or school.

DISCUSSION

- *How do these poems communicate? How are they different from "regular" poetry?*

Visual poetry can involve text alone, imagery alone or a combination of the two. While it stresses the *look* of the poem on the page, it is understood to function primarily in a *literary* arts context. In fact, however, visual poetry lies on the continuum of between the literary and visual expression. The eye takes in, the brain processes, visual imagery in no certain order. The mind flickers between the receiving and processing of visual information. A mental image forms—an impression, a sense—that then accretes chains of associations and meaning. The reading of standard literary material, by contrast, is more of a linear, step-by-step, process. The range of meanings it induces is more *precise*, and thus more circumscribed (while still being vast of course), than is the case with visual imagery.



PRESENT

Students present their work.

REFLECT

- *How well did you meet your challenge? What would you do differently next time?*

EXTENSIONS AND VARIATIONS

- Extra credit or practice: Create a visual poem based on a two-couplet poem you write. (See handout.)
- Homework: Research visual/concrete poems on the Internet or in the library. Bring one in to share.
- Family/community involvement: Create a visual poem with a family member based on the idea of family or community.

MIDDLE SCHOOL STANDARDS

Social Studies

- Culture
- People, Places, and Environment
- Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

Language Arts

- Reading (E1c, d, e)
- Writing (E3b)
- Speaking, Listening, Viewing (E3b, c)
- Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the English Language (E4a, b)



Lessons from the Salvadori Classrooms
LESSON TITLE: Visual Poetry
PREPARED BY: Lisa Quatralo (revised by Michael Bettencourt)
TOPIC: Home
SSLAM: Home / Language Arts / Put Together
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Art - Visual

- Knowledge of Structures and Functions
- Subject Matter, Symbols, and Ideas
- Relation to History and Culture
- Reflecting Upon and Assessing Work
- Connections Between Visual Arts and the Other Disciplines

name(s)

date

Home Construction

Example of Visual Poetry

up.

is

direction

possible

only

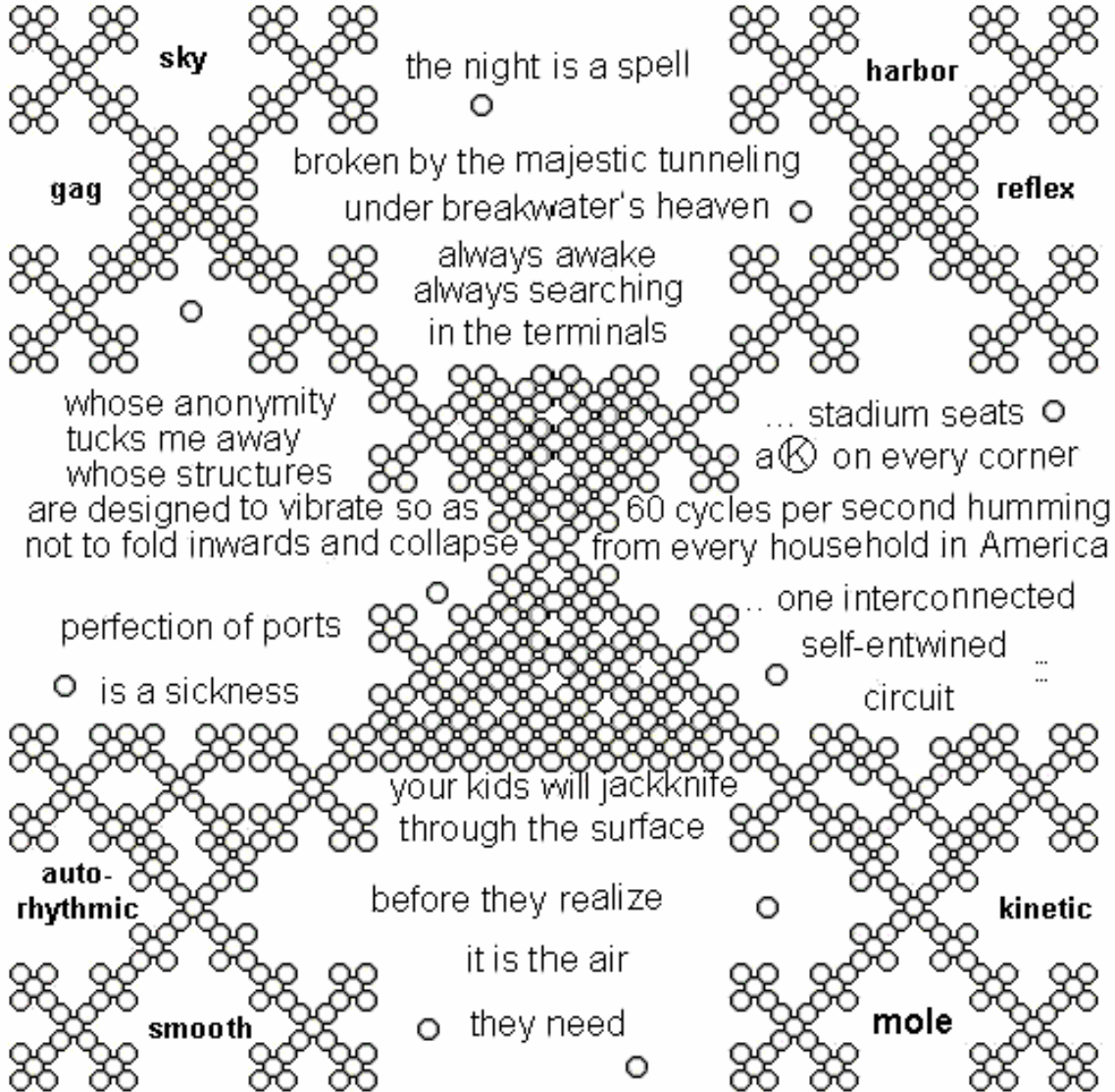
The

<http://people2.clarityconnect.com/webpages6/ronhenry/white8.htm>



Home Construction

Example of Visual Poetry



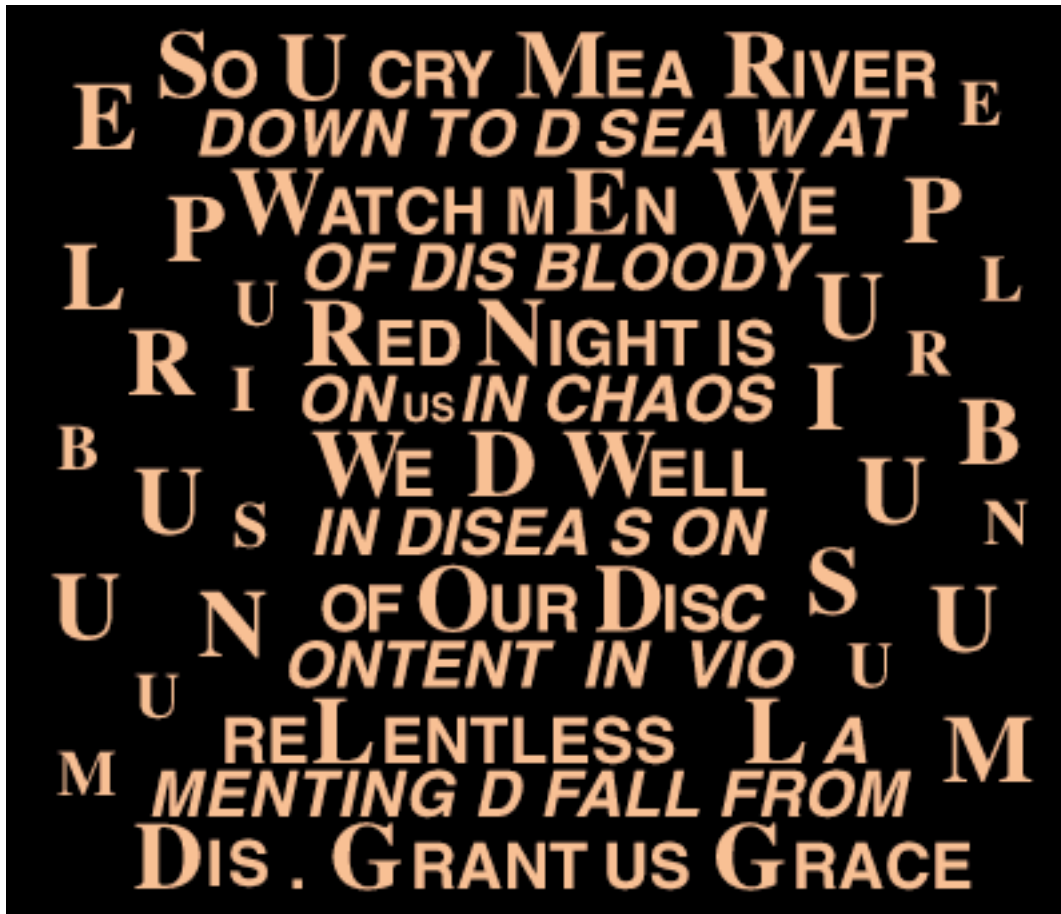
<http://www.brokenboulder.com/gestalten.htm>

name(s)

date

Home Construction

Example of Visual Poetry



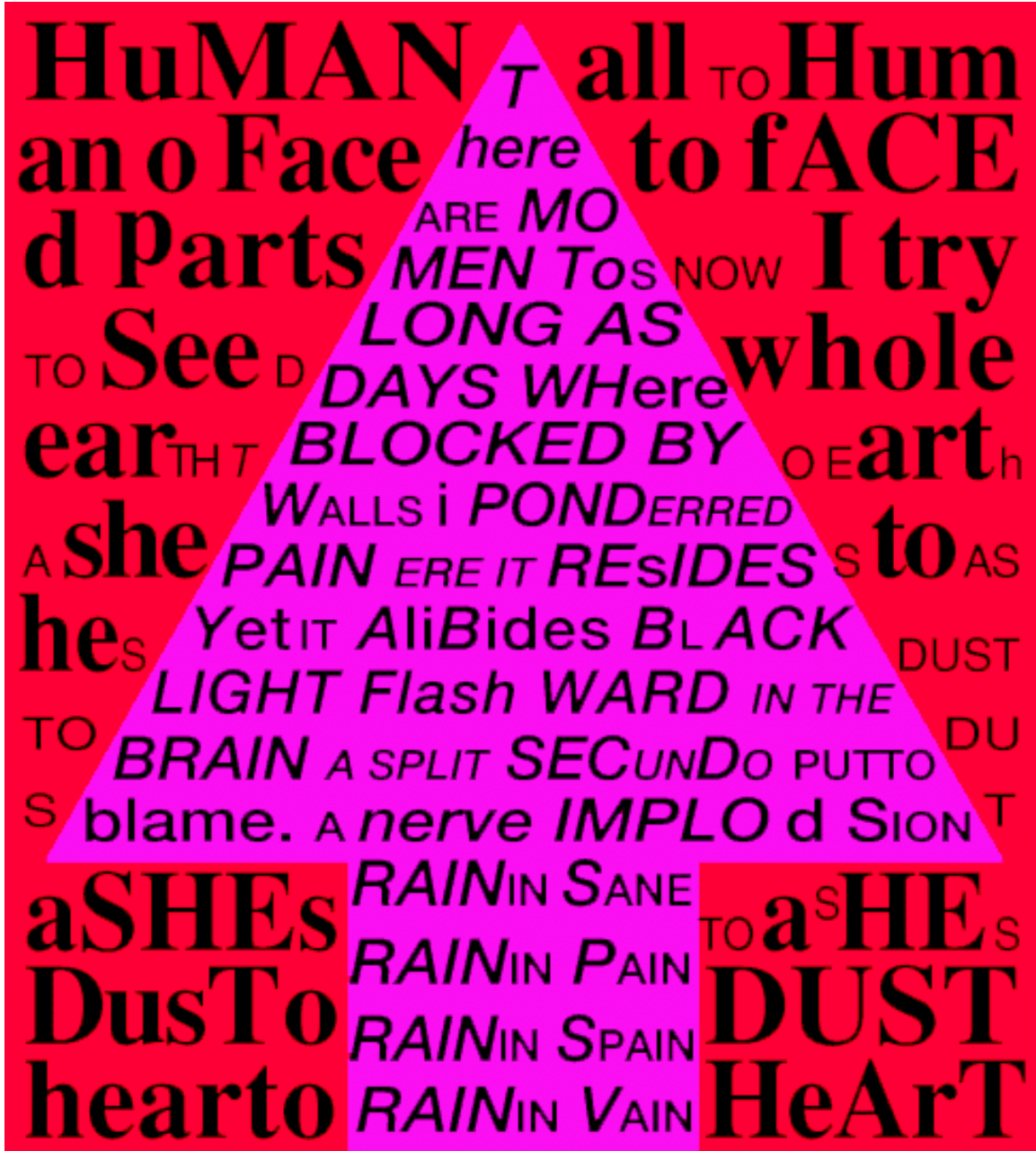
"Cry" by Blair Seagram: <http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/vol21b/blair>

name(s)

date

Home Construction

Example of Visual Poetry



"Ntree" by Blair Seagram: <http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/vol21b/blair>



name(s)

date

Home Construction

Example of Visual Poetry

m m m m m
m m m m m
m o m o m o o o
m o m o m o o o
o o o o o o o o
o o o n o n o n n n
o o o n o n o n n n
n n n n n
n n n n n

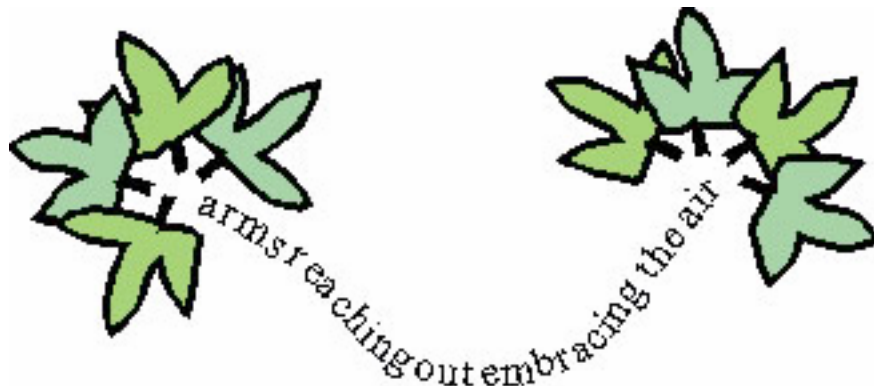
From *m mo o oo on n* taken from *Typewriter #4* (1973) by Peter Finch:
<http://www.peterfinch.co.uk/newvis~1.htm>

name(s)

date

Home Construction

Example of Visual Poetry



grabbing
at leaves
heavy
and dry
headless
streaks
marbling
the earth
gummed
from birth

Arms by Jennifer Phillips: http://www.geocities.com/visualpoetry_au/images/armsreaching.jpg

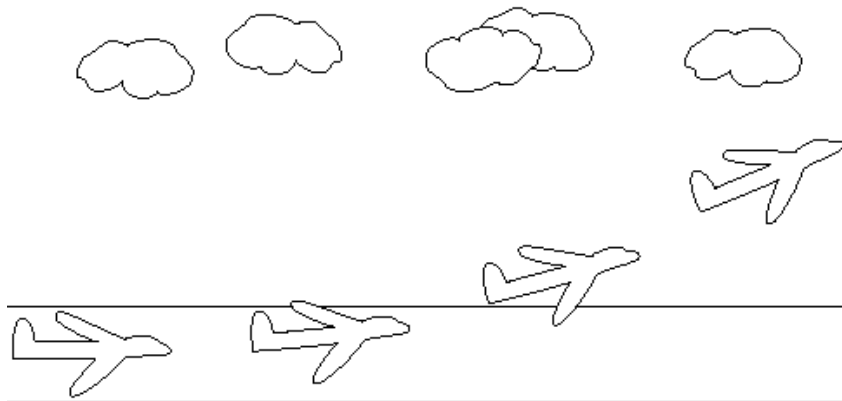
Home Construction

Construct A Visual Poem

Concrete poetry is an artistic expression of written language. Concrete poets make designs out of letters and words. Even though the visual pattern (shape) can really catch our eye, it is the language itself that makes a poem poetic. There are different kinds of concrete poetry. This is a type of concrete poetry that combines two couplets with a visual image. A couplet has two lines in which each line ends with words that rhyme. Read the two couplets below:

A click, a sputter, a whoosh- to **roar!** line 1
 A flick, a shudder, a push- to **soar!** line 2
 The wings held steady; the nose held **high;** line 3
 The plane is ready to touch the **sky!** line 4

In the first two lines, the words roar and soar rhyme. In the second two lines, the words high and sky rhyme. Lines one and two form the first couplet. Lines three and four form the second couplet. These are then grouped on the page in such a way that it appears the plane is starting its engines, moving down the runway and then lifting up into the sky.



to touch is ready
 the plane the sky

the wings steady
 the nose held high

a sputter a whoosh
 a click to roar

a shudder a push
 a flick to soar