

## Writing Prompts: Filling Your Creative Well

Part of creating a “writerly life” is attempting to view the world as an infinite source of inspiration. These prompts are intended to help you move through your day-to-day life with writerly intention. I encourage you to open yourself up to the idea that creative inspiration exists all around you. Consider how the written materials you engage with might be fodder for creative material. Using the examples below as inspiration, try and write your own creative texts. The examples provided are simply meant to show you ways that other writers play around with textual forms, but you are free to reinterpret these prompts however makes the most sense to you. There is no right or wrong, there is only Write. Have fun with it!

1. 50 words for \_\_\_\_ (using the in-class reading as an example, continue to play around with creating 50-word pieces to describe something...feel free to deviate and go off the rails a bit. Does it have to be 50 words? Does memory/language ever trigger another memory).
2. Make lists. Lots of lists:
  - a. What are you most interested in writing about?
  - b. What are some events from your life or history that you find to be compelling stories?
  - c. What was a moment (big or small) in your life where you felt you were changed?
  - d. What patterns do you see in your life (these can be internal, like your emotions/thoughts, or external, like events or seasons)?  
Write them down. Explore them.
3. Collect your thoughts. If you find yourself thinking, *I should write about this*, or, *this would make for a good story/essay*, pause and write it down. Put your thoughts on the page (or in your notes app). Similarly, if you hear something on the radio or in a show that feels connected to something you’re interested in writing about (even if it is simply a line of dialogue) write it down. Consider this an exercise in observation, in trying to see yourself as a writer and the world as an endless source of story. Collect!  
For inspiration, visit these readings:
  - a. Brandon Stosuy’s poem/hybrid essay on crying (Attached. This essay originally began as a long-standing series of tweet Brandon posted about public crying he witness. It later became this prose poem and then became the inspiration for his anthology SAD HAPPENS)
  - b. Juliet Escoria’s poem pictured below (from [Hobart :: Plague Poems \(hobartpulp.com\)](http://Hobart :: Plague Poems (hobartpulp.com)) ). Notice how this poem is a collection of emails she received. Consider how found texts might function as a form of art!

### THINGS MY STUDENTS HAVE EMAILED ME IN THE PAST COUPLE WEEKS

I am sorry but my essay is bad, my son dumped the kitty litter box into the air conditioning vent, poop and all.

I am sorry but I can't do the homework tonight, my aunt killed herself.

I am sorry that I've been slacking off, my boss is making me drive to Indiana, I am sleeping in my truck because I am too scared of the disease to stay in a hotel.

I am sorry but last night a tree fell on my house, I am lucky to be alive.

I am sorry but I need an extra day, I can't stop crying or feeling homicidal there is no in between.

4. Do some digging into your own life and habits. Make a catalogue of habits, observations, collections, etc. You might create a poem or story using the found text or you might unearth something that plays with the idea of "findings" (i.e. what one finds when one looks). Consider the material unearthings and see what you can reveal by digging a little deeper. We saw some examples of this in class with the found poetry, but here are some examples of this:

[Again / Sennah Yee | The Found Poetry Review](#)

[RESCUE 60640 by Megan Carlson | X-R-A-Y \(xraylitmag.com\)](#)

5. Write about something you observe. Go out into the world, jot it down. Edit it or don't. Do it every day if you want. Here is a short example from Catherine Lacey: [He's Very Well Read | The New Yorker](#)
6. Write about something you engage with every day. Bonus points if it is something you don't normally think about. Try viewing it from different angles, maybe turn it into a metaphor for something else, or consider how it relates to other parts of your life you may not have noticed before you started to brush the dirt off and start digging. Here is an example from Aaron Burch where he reconsiders what his email attachments say about him: [Attachments; by Aaron Burch — NO CONTACT \(nocontactmag.com\)](#)