

Question the Body



GRADE LEVEL

2 - 5

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Inspired by the art making process in Dorney's featured work and additional project *Home Poems*, create an abstract redaction poem by recycling an already existing work of writing.

GOALS

Students will understand:

- How close observation is a tool for learning and discovery
- Transformation of body of writing to art form
- Development of a simple poem unique to the maker
- Art process of subtracting elements

ARTIST

Erin Dorney | Lovell, ME

Blending poetry and visual arts, Dorney's work takes shape on screen, encased, or installed into intimate spaces.

Her featured work was developed during a residency

INTRODUCTION

QUESTION THE BODY is a collection of photographs and time-lapse videos where gathered natural objects obscure pages from "The Question and Answer Book About The Human Body" by Ann McGovern (Random House, 1965). Through recorded erasure/redaction, each poem is built by the disembodied hands of the artist. The unobscured text reveals inquiries into physical form, preference, expression, and function.

By emphasizing process over product, *QUESTION THE BODY* blurs the boundaries between writing, visual art, appropriation, performance, and assemblage. Works in this series were created during a residency at Hewnoaks Artist Colony in Lovell, Maine. All natural objects were collected from the grounds of the residency during the artist's weeklong stay in 2019.

LESSON

Take a look at the On Screen artwork of Erin Dorney found on our website at <https://cmcanow.org/event/screen-dorney-question-the-body/>. Inspired by the art making process in Dorney's featured work and additional project *Home Poems*, create an abstract redaction poem by recycling an already existing work of writing. Additional poetry projects and resources can be viewed at erindorney.com.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS

What are some words that I see? What can a poem look like? What are some features of abstract visual art? How can I apply what I understand about abstract art to a piece of writing?

*Abstract poems do not have to make sense! They can be a collective of words or ideas that sound good together or look as though they belong.

CELEBRATE YOUR WORK

Build a collection of your own abstract poems and share them with family and friends, teach your siblings or parents the process and share what you've created with us @cmcanow.

VOCABULARY

Abstract: a form of artistic response to a physical reality, simplified marks to complex physical information

Redaction Poem: repurposing a work of writing using the editing technique of blacking out text to transform original visual form and meaning

Outline: line restricted to the area around text or physical shape

Negative Space: area in between objects, texts

Emphasis: focal point in a visual artwork

MATERIALS

- Recycled food containers
- Labels
- Magazines
- Wide marker
- Tape - optional



INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1

Collect a handful of labels and writings you find around the house. These may take the form of a pasta box, can of beans, or old print outs.

STEP 2

Observe closely words that stand out to you and begin to cross out the words around it using a solid tape or marker. Emphasize a particular word(s) by outlining them and scratching out the extra text.

STEP 3

Form shapes from your blocked out areas. Think about the negative spaces you create as a frame for the poems you're forming.

TIPS & TRICKS:

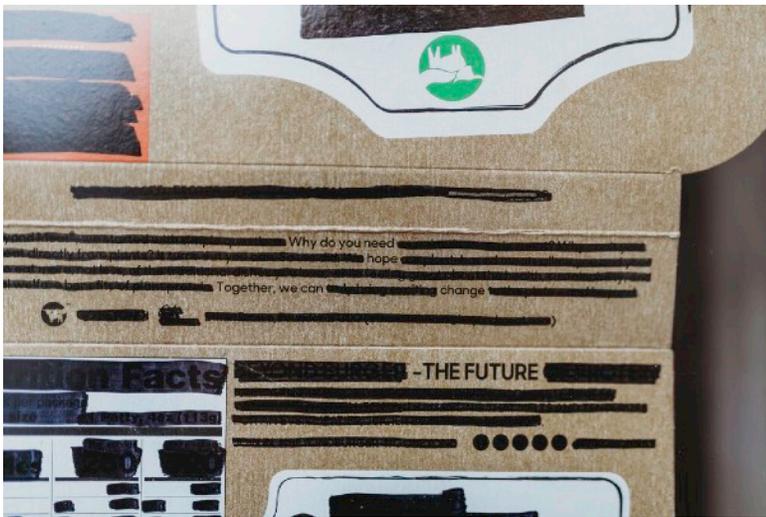
- When assisting younger artists create a game where they choose words that they can spell or identify
- Older art makers challenge yourself by creating a collection of abstract texts to form your own installation of works



Erin Dorney

Left Top: *Home Poems*, 2020
Photograph, recycled cardboard

Left Bottom: *Home Poems*, 2020
Photograph, recycled cardboard



Bottom Left: *Question the Body*, 2019
Recycled paper, Wood
On Screen 6:53

Bottom Right: *Question the Body*, 2019
Recycled paper, Wood
On Screen 6:53

