

Found Poem Instructions Adapted from “Found and Headline Poems” from *Getting the Knack: 20 Poetry Writing Exercises* by Stephen Dunning and William Stafford.

1. Decide what focus you want for the poem: mood, development of character, or conflict. Choose **one**.
2. Carefully re-read the story, and look for **50–100** words that stand out and that relate to your focus. **Highlight or underline** details, words, and phrases that you find powerful, moving, or interesting. Take words from at least **three** of the five sections.
3. On another sheet of paper, make a list of the details, words and phrases you underlined, keeping them in the order that you found them.
4. Look back over your list and cut out everything that is dull, or unnecessary, or that just doesn't seem right for the poem. Try to cut your original list in half, so that you have **25–50** words.
5. Make any minor changes necessary to create your poem. You can change punctuation and make little changes to the words to make them fit together (such as change the tenses, possessives, plurals, and capitalizations). You can also repeat key words and phrases for emphasis
6. When you're close to an edited-down version, if you absolutely need to add a word or two to make the poem flow more smoothly, to make sense, or to make a point, **you may add up to two words of your own**. That's two (2) and only two!
7. Read back over your edited draft one more time and make any deletions or minor changes.
8. Check your words, and choose a title—one that is better than “Found Poem”, “Mood”, “Rainsford” or “Conflict”.
9. Copy the words and phrases onto a piece of paper or type them in a word processor. Space or arrange the words so that they're poem-like. Pay attention to line breaks, layout, and other elements that will emphasize important words or significant ideas in the poem.
 - Read aloud as you arrange the words! Test the possible line breaks by pausing slightly. If it sounds good, it's probably right.
 - Arrange the words so that they make a rhythm you like. You can space words out so that they are all alone or allruntogether.
 - You can also put key words on lines by themselves.
 - You can shape the entire poem so that it's wide or tall or shaped like an object.
 - Emphasize words by playing with boldface and italics, different sizes of letters, and so forth.
10. At the bottom of the poem, tell where the words in the poem came from. In this case, From “The Most Dangerous Game” by Richard Connell.
11. Write a paragraph explaining your choices. Make sure you explain how all of the words fit the focus you've chosen (mood, conflict or characterization). Consider this your “proof.” You can explain connections that I might not have seen—which means that you will end up getting a better grade overall if your paragraph does a great job of explaining what you were thinking.

EXAMPLE OF A FOUND POEM Focus: Foreshadowing

First words chosen—steps 2-3

Who cares how a jaguar feels?

The world is made up of two classes—the hunters and the huntees. Luckily, you and I are hunters.

Sometimes I think evil is a tangible thing

What perils that tangle of trees and underbrush might hold for him did not concern Rainsford just then.

a bit of a savage...So am I

he found the general studying him, appraising him narrowly. Doubtless that is way I enjoy the problems of the chase.

78 words

Limiting words—step 4

Who cares how a jaguar feels?

two classes—the hunters and the huntees. Luckily, you and I are hunters.

evil is a tangible thing

perils tangle of trees and underbrush did not concern Rainsford just then.

general studying appraising narrowly.

problems of the chase

44 words

Final Poem: In the Darkness

Who cares how a jaguar feels?

Two classes—

Hunters and huntees

Luckily

You

And I

Are Hunters

Evil is a tangible thing

Perils

Tangle of trees and underbrush

Did not concern him—just then

General

Studying

Appraising

Enjoying

The problems of the chase.

From “The Most Dangerous Game” by Richard Connell

My poem focuses on the element of foreshadowing in “The Most Dangerous Game.” The mood sets up a foreboding sense of what will happen later in the story. This is why I chose the title “In the Darkness.” I also think that from the very beginning the reader is given the feeling that Rainsford’s ideas about hunting will come back to haunt him. The first stanza contains lines from that discussion. Then, when Whitney and Rainsford are talking about Ship Trap Island, Whitney expresses the idea that evil is something very real and tangible, which is why they can “feel” something. If evil is “there,” then something bad is bound to happen related to the island. After Rainsford finally makes it to shore, the narrator states that the danger in the trees didn’t bother him then; this foreshadows the danger to come. Finally, even before Rainsford knew what Zaroff hunted, he did feel uneasy when he’d notice the general studying him. This foreshadowed the information about General Zaroff we would later learn. This also ties in to the reference to “the problems of the chase,” since it’s the chase that Zaroff enjoys and prolongs when he hunts Rainsford. All of these choices lead to the feeling of foreshadowing that the story brought out.

Name _____

Found Poem Rubric

	1	2	3	4
Title	The poem does not have a title.	The title is vague and does not connect to the focus of the poem.	Title connects to the focus of the poem, but does not increase meaning of the poem.	Title increases the meaning of the poem and connects to the focus.
Focus of Poem on One Literary Element (Mood, Characterization, or Conflict)	Little or no attempt has been made to relate the poem to the focus.	Some of the poem is related to the focus, but the majority of the poem is general or on another topic.	Most of the poem is related to the focus. The poem wanders off topic at one point or its focus is too general.	The entire poem is related to the focus. The focus presented in the poem stands out.
Word Choice	Most of the words were vague or cliché and were taken from only 1 part of the story.	Some of the words were vague or cliché and were taken from at least 2 parts of the story.	Most of the words used were vivid and unique and were taken from at least 3 parts of the story.	Words used were vivid and unique and were taken from at least 3 parts of the story.
Poetic Form	Little or no attempt to use line breaks, layout or rhythm. Lines don't make sense when moving from one to the next.	Some use of line breaks, layout and rhythm. The poem might not always make sense or flow well from one idea to the next.	Most uses of line breaks, layout and rhythm add to the poem. For the most part the poem flows well.	Effective use of line breaks, layout, rhythm, etc. that brings additional meaning to the words. The poem flows well.
Conventions	So many errors that the poem is difficult to read.	Many errors that detract from the overall poem.	Some errors that don't detract too much from the overall poem.	Few minor errors, if any, which do not detract from the overall poem.
Paragraph	Little or no explanation of how the "Found" words fit the focus chosen.	Explained some parts of the poem so that it is somewhat clear how they all fit the focus chosen.	Explained most parts of the poem so that it is clear how they all fit the focus chosen.	Explained all parts of the poem so that it is very clear how they all fit the focus chosen.