

Fall 2017

# Erasure Poetry Assignment

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Intro to Lit  
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### Erase Your Own Poem!

For this assignment, please find any text—literally, anything: a speech, a commercial, a poem, a dramatic passage, a song lyric—and make it your own through the methods of [erasure poetry](#) (or blackout poetry) as outlined in theoretical articles and examples we have discussed in class. You could do this either through visual scrubbing techniques like you see in *The Atlantic* article, strike-thru lines, or omission (when you do this give me the source text since I won't know what is omitted). The easiest way is to simply use the highlight feature in Word and set to black and cross out the words that way. Also, the most dynamic erasure poems employ graphics, so their text file is loaded onto a .jpg file and the words aren't on a blank page but an image that works with or against the text. Challenge yourself you incorporate graphics using Microsoft Paint/Preview as we looked at in class, although there are many of ways of doing this.

As many of you noted in class, erasure/blackout poetry is in some cases “easier” to write because you don't have to stare at a blank page but already have someone else's words there to strategically erase. However, the goal of this assignment (and the practice in general) is often to make a larger political or artistic point via the strategies of blackouts, graphics, audio, etc. employed. Therefore, please append at least 250 words on at least four specific decisions you made in your version of the poem and why you made them, i.e. what political or cultural argument do such actions express?