

ABOUT FOUND POETRY

“Happy poets who write found poetry go pawing through popular culture like sculptors on trash heaps. They hold and wave aloft usable artifacts and fragments: jingles and ad copy, menus and broadcasts — all objet trouvés, the literary equivalents of Warhol’s Campbell’s soup cans and Duchamp’s bicycle. By entering a found text as a poem, the poet doubles its context. The original meaning remains intact, but now it swings between two poles. The poet adds, or at any rate increases, the element of delight. This is an urban, youthful, ironic, cruising kind of poetry. It serves up whole texts, or interrupted fragments of texts.” — Annie Dillard

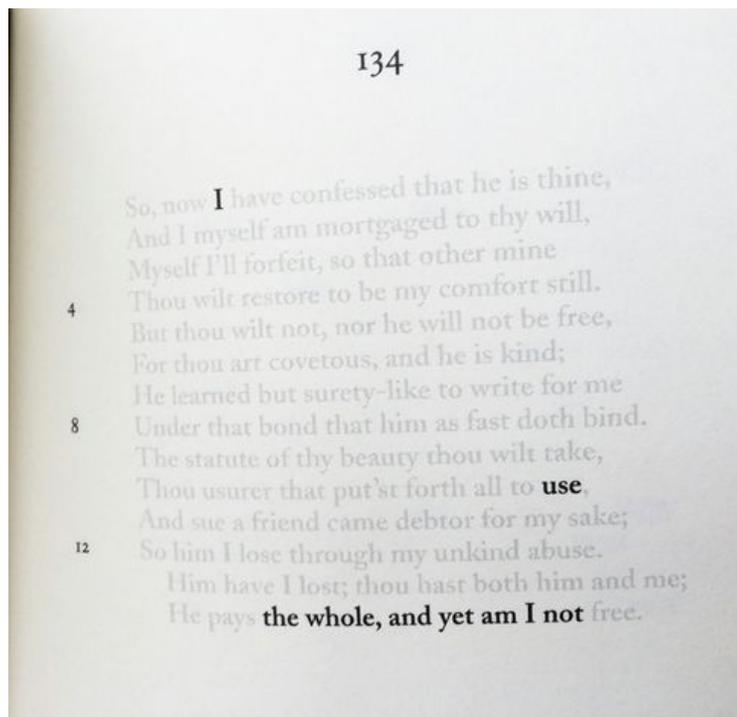
Put another way, found poetry is the literary version of a collage. Poets select a source text or texts

— anything from traditional texts like books, magazines and newspapers to more nontraditional sources like product packaging, junk mail or court transcripts — then excerpt words and phrases from the text(s) to create a new piece.¹

Types of Found Poetry

Poets employ a variety of techniques to create found poetry. Two forms and practices include:

- Erasure: Poets take an existing source (usually limited to one or a few pages) and erase the majority of the text, leaving behind select words and phrases that, when read in order, compose the poem.



¹ ref: <http://www.foundpoetryreview.com/about-found-poetry/>

- Free-form excerpting and remixing: Poets excerpt words and phrases from their source text(s) and rearrange them in any manner they choose

Psalm 66 (NIV)

For the director of music. A song. A psalm.

- 1 Shout for joy to God, all the earth!
2 Sing the glory of his name;
make his praise glorious.
3 Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds!
So great is your power
that your enemies cringe before you.
4 All the earth bows down to you;
they sing praise to you,
they sing the praises of your name."^[a]
5 Come and see what God has done,
his awesome deeds for mankind!
6 He turned the sea into dry land,
they passed through the waters on foot—
come, let us rejoice in him.
7 He rules forever by his power,
his eyes watch the nations—
let not the rebellious rise up against him.
8 Praise our God, all peoples,
let the sound of his praise be heard;
9 he has preserved our lives
and kept our feet from slipping.
10 For you, God, tested us;
you refined us like silver.
11 You brought us into prison
and laid burdens on our backs.
12 You let people ride over our heads;
we went through fire and water,
but you brought us to a place of abundance.
13 I will come to your temple with burnt
offerings
and fulfill my vows to you—
14 vows my lips promised and my mouth
spoke
when I was in trouble.
15 I will sacrifice fat animals to you
and an offering of rams;
I will offer bulls and goats.
16 Come and hear, all you who fear God;
let me tell you what he has done for me.
17 I cried out to him with my mouth;
his praise was on my tongue.
18 If I had cherished sin in my heart,
the Lord would not have listened;
19 but God has surely listened
and has heard my prayer.
20 Praise be to God,
who has not rejected my prayer
or withheld his love from me!

What are the words in this passage that you "Find"?

Psalm 66

For the worship leader. A song.

1 Shout out to God, all the earth.

Erupt with joy to the one True God!

2 Sing of the glory due His name!

Offer Him the most magnificent praises!

3 Say to God, "All You have done is wondrous and causes fear!

Your power is mighty, and Your enemies pretend to submit to You.

4 The entire earth will bow down to worship You

and will sing glory-songs to You;

they will sing praises to Your name!

[pause][a]

5 Come and witness the True God's endless works.

His miraculous deeds done on behalf of humanity inspire fear.

6 He transformed the sea into dry land;

our people passed through the river on foot!

Rejoice in Him; celebrate what He did there!

7 By His great might, He rules forever;

His eyes watch over all the nations,
so no one should go up against Him.

[pause]

8 Everyone, bless our True God!

Let praise-filled voices be heard near and far—at home and on foreign soil!

9 Praise the One who gives us life and keeps us safe,

who does not allow us to stumble in the darkness.

10 For You have put us to the test, O God;

You have refined us as silver is refined.

11 You trapped us with a snare;

You have laid upon our backs a heavy burden.

12 You allowed us to be conquered and let our enemies run over us.

We journeyed through dangers, through fire and flood,

But You led us finally to a safe place, a land rich and abundant.

13 I will come into Your temple with burnt offerings;

I will fulfill my promises to You—

14 The oaths that parted my lips

and were promises my mouth freely made when I was suffering and in anguish.

15 I will bring You my sacrifices—plump beasts and the sweet smoke of consecrated rams—

I will also offer You bulls and goats.

[pause]

16 Come and listen, everyone who reveres the True God,

and I will tell you what He has done for me.

17 I cried out to Him with my mouth,

and I praised Him with my tongue.

18 If I entertain evil in my heart,

the Lord will not hear me.

19 But surely God has heard me;

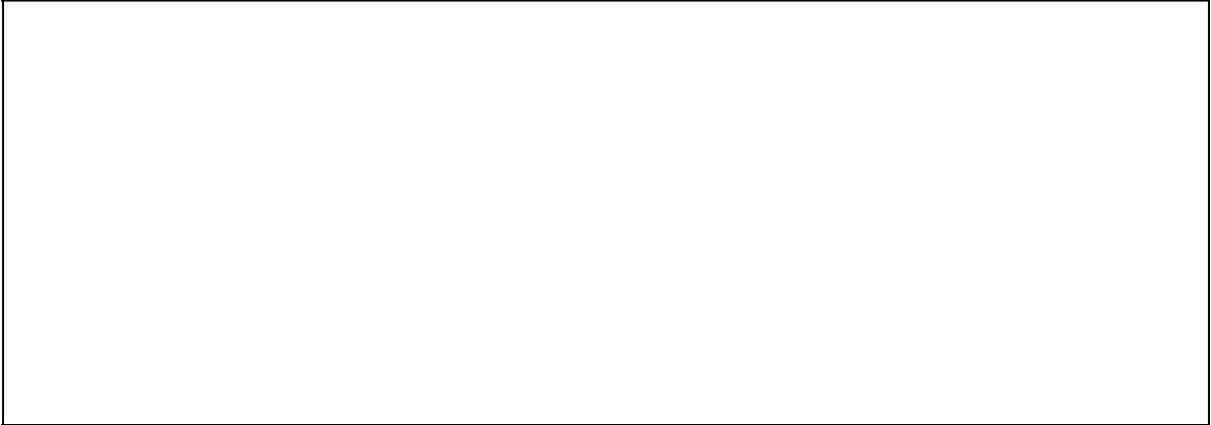
He has paid attention to the urgency of my request.

20 May the True God be blessed,

for He did not turn away from my prayer nor did He hold back His loyal love from me.

What are the words in this passage that you "Find"?

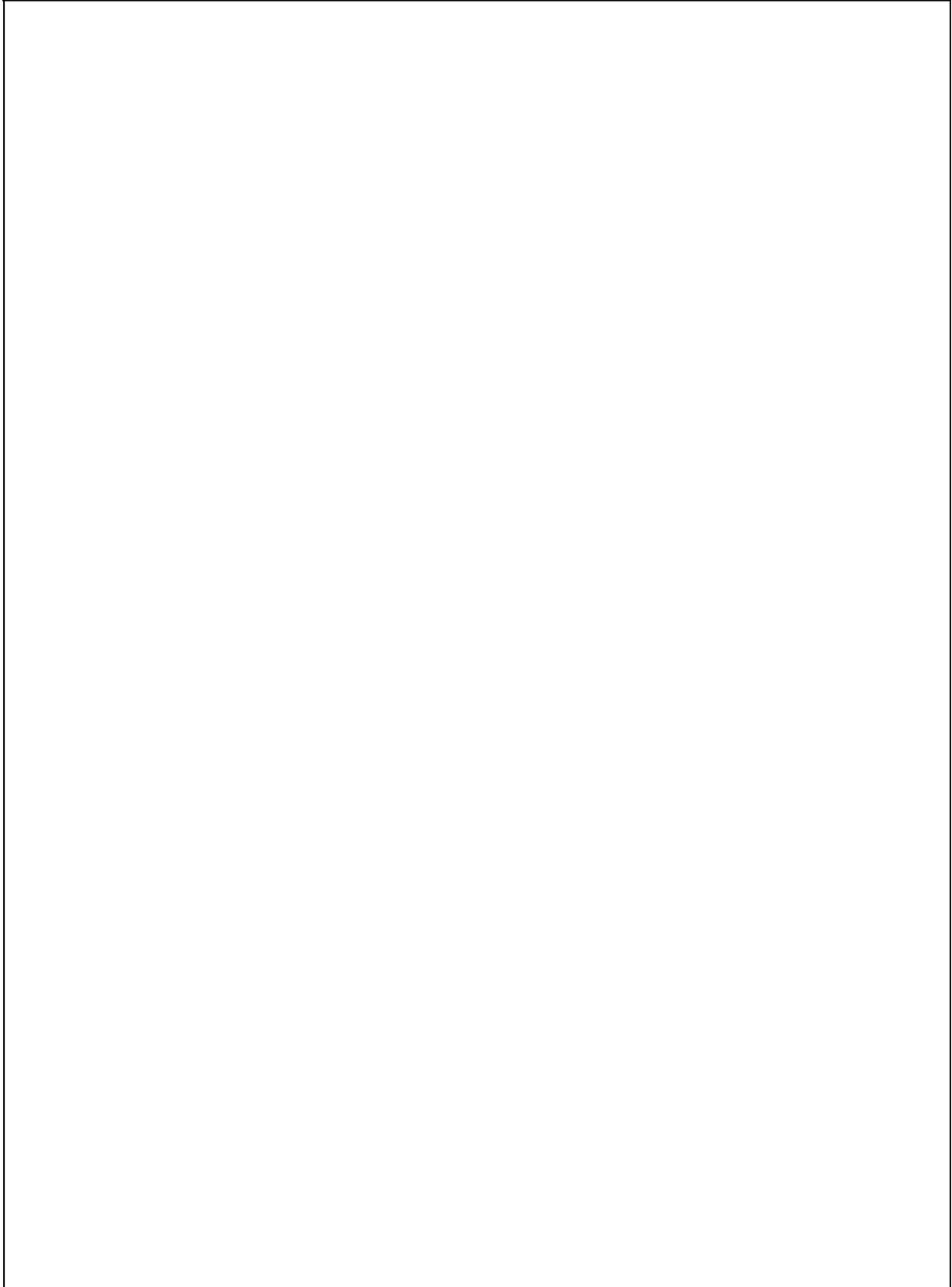
What are the themes that emerge from this passage?



Write a found poem using the words that you have chosen from the two versions of this Psalm.



Write a found poem that reform and remixes this Psalm. I have included an example below this section.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the student to write their found poem. The box occupies most of the page's vertical space below the instruction.

An example of a found poem.

Psalm 64 (NIV)	My Version
<p>For the director of music. A psalm of David.</p> <p>1 Hear me, my God, as I voice my complaint; protect my life from the threat of the enemy.</p> <p>2 Hide me from the conspiracy of the wicked, from the plots of evildoers.</p> <p>3 They sharpen their tongues like swords and aim cruel words like deadly arrows.</p> <p>4 They shoot from ambush at the innocent; they shoot suddenly, without fear.</p> <p>5 They encourage each other in evil plans, they talk about hiding their snares; they say, "Who will see it [b]?"</p> <p>6 They plot injustice and say, "We have devised a perfect plan!" Surely the human mind and heart are cunning.</p> <p>7 But God will shoot them with his arrows; they will suddenly be struck down.</p> <p>8 He will turn their own tongues against them and bring them to ruin; all who see them will shake their heads in scorn.</p> <p>9 All people will fear; they will proclaim the works of God and ponder what he has done.</p> <p>10 The righteous will rejoice in the Lord and take refuge in him; all the upright in heart will glory in him!</p>	<p>I don't understand why people plan evil, Isn't doing good a better option? It's happened again though, My dear enemy has promised good, But delivered hate, They keep telling me that it's love! Confusion is created again, Too many words wreaking havoc, Hate relishes confusion, It give opportunity for destruction.</p> <p>A much better way is to plan good, God doesn't tolerate duplicity, He will set it all straight, My dear enemy will face the truth, Words used to destroy me, Will entrap them in their own confusion.</p> <p>I love how my God works, Protecting me against my dear enemy, Turning the tables - My enemy's power becomes weakness, Even if they don't see it, It is a witness God's power to the world.</p>