



Altered Poem

An Altered Poem is a form of mixed media art that transforms text from its original form into something new, altering its appearance and/or meaning. Altered Poetry uses the original source material to edit and build upon, preserving the original work but updating and enhancing the text to take on new meanings and illuminate new revelations. See [here](#) for some examples!

In this exercise, we will create our own Altered Poetry.

What you will need:

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| • Text/Story | • Markers |
| • Pencil | • Collage paper |

Steps for Crafting an Altered Poem

Step 1

Select a text! We have suggested text from "Duties of the Heart" as our foundation document, which can be found by clicking [here](#) or on the next page. But if you would like to work with another one, feel free to do so!

Step 2

Scan the page. Look for words that seem meaningful and significant. Start imagining possible themes and topics for your poem.

Step 3

Use a pencil to lightly circle any words that connect and resonate with you. Try to avoid circling more than three words in a row.

Step 4

Piece your selected words together to create a new narrative. If you are stuck during this step, select or remove words for your poem. The word you are searching for could be right there.

Step 5

Once you've identified the words for your Altered Poem, either **blackout, color over, or collage onto the other words**, so that the only words that appear are the ones that are in your new narrative.

Step 6

Create a new illustration or design that connects to the meaning of your poem. You can also use collage, markers, or other found objects to enhance your work.

Questions to consider:

- What was the experience like for you crossing out words?
- Was it hard to decide which words to cross out and which ones to preserve?
- What story is your new poem telling? Does it resemble the original text?

Duties of the Heart (abridged) 20:1-11

The Motives of Human Benevolence There are five aspects of human beneficence:— (1) that of the father to his children; (2) of the master to his slave; (3) of the rich to the poor, in order that he may receive the reward of heaven; (4) that of some men to others, for the sake of acquiring a good name, or honor, or worldly reward; (5) that of the strong towards the weak, because he pities them, and because he is pained on account of their condition. If we look closely at all these kinds of benevolence, we shall find that, in motive, not one of them is entirely disinterested. The beneficence of a father is for his own good. The son is a part of himself, and the very substance of his hope and his ambition. And do we not see that a father is more anxious about his children than about his own body—in regard to their food and drink and clothing, and in warding off all injuries from them; and the natural parental compassion and kindness of fathers for their children makes the burden of all trouble and labour, and all disturbance of his rest on behalf of his children, seem light to him. Nevertheless, Reason, as well as Scripture, obliges the child to serve, honor, and reverence his parents. And even though the parent is compelled, by the promptings of Nature, to all this, and although these natural instincts are of God, whose delegate in this respect he is, such honor and gratitude are no less due to him. The beneficence of a master to his slave is prompted only by self-interest, and yet the Creator has made it the duty of the slave to repay that goodness with service and gratitude as well. The beneficence of the rich to the poor, for the sake of the reward of heaven, is like the purchase by a business man of a great and permanent advantage to come to him at some future time, in return for a small, perishable, and contemptible good that he parts with immediately; and his only intention is to adorn his own soul in his after-life. And yet, in spite of all this, gratitude is due to him. The beneficence of one section of mankind to another for the sake of the love of praise and honor and worldly reward, is like the conduct of a man who gives his neighbor goods to take care of until he wants them for himself, or who entrusts money to his neighbor which he will, himself, require later on. But although his intention is only to benefit himself in doing good to others, yet praise and gratitude are due to him. Even he that takes pity upon the poor and the afflicted whose sufferings are painful to him, intends, by relieving them, to relieve himself of a pain that afflicts his own soul; and he is like one who, by the goodness of God, is healing himself of a painful illness; but yet he is not left without praise. Thus the primary intention of everyone in doing good to others, is to do good to himself, or save himself from pain.