HOW TO START AND CONTINUE WRITING

Dennis Etzel Jr

E-newsletter

tinyletter.com/poemslyrical

Line Volta

Me writing while driving
ABOUT ME
ROAD THROUGH POETRY

IMITATION
INSPIRATION
PROMPT
PROJECT
??????
ROAD THROUGH POETRY

IMITATION
INSPIRATION
PROMPT
PROJECT
RITUAL
| POETIC UTOPIA |  |
|---------------|  |
| COMMUNITY     | AUTONOMY / AGENCY |
| SUPPORT       | BOUNDARIES       |
COMMUNITY

All poets see, hear, and love each other. New poets encouraged to enter the poetic utopia.

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All poets are empowered to write and share through community.

SUPPORT
To find one or two other poets to share for feedback before bringing poems out.

BOUNDARIES
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To find one or two other poets to share for feedback before bringing poems out.

BOUNDARIES
Do not waste time and energy on anyone who does not support your autonomy or community-making.
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NAME / CONTACT
Some people write a reward for return

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KEEPING A (FANCY) NOTEBOOK

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IDEAS ABOUT POETRY
From discussions and collected quotes

INTRUSIONS

IDEAS FOR PROJECTS
“Poetry is an example of vulnerability as a strength”

--Dennis Etzel Jr.

“This is poetry as illumination, for it is through poetry that we give name to those ideas which are — until the poem — nameless and formless, about to be birthed, but already felt.”

--from “Poetry is Not a Luxury” by Audre Lorde

“Every poem is a descendent of God.”

--Li-Young Lee
KEEPING A (FANCY) NOTEBOOK

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INTRUSIONS
From discussions and observations (this does not include having time to write)

IDEAS ABOUT POETRY
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IDEAS FOR PROJECTS
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INTRUSIONS
From discussions and observations (this does not include having time to write)

IDEAS ABOUT POETRY
From discussions and collected quotes

IDEAS FOR PROJECTS
Often come from a combination of two or three things (e.g. childhood, movies, survival)
DEVELOPING A RITUAL

PEOPLE STOP WRITING OFTEN BECAUSE OF BAD JOBS

YOU CAN WRITE ANYWHERE FOR 15 MINUTES A DAY AS PART OF THE DAY

EMPHASIS ON WORDS—NOT POEM

Bad job ritual
DEVELOPING A RITUAL

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Leslie’s prairie ritual
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EMPHASIS ON WORDS—NOT POEM

Bad job ritual
Leslie’s prairie ritual
Farai’s food and fall ritual
HAPTIC RITUAL

(based on Stephen Vincent)

Look in the mirror, rose quartz in receptive hand
HAPTIC RITUAL

(based on Stephen Vincent)

Look in the mirror, rose quartz in receptive hand

Make a drawing like a seismograph
HAPTIC RITUAL

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Look in the mirror, rose quartz in receptive hand

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Switch rose quartz to dominant hand
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Wet rose quartz in water
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Draw shape on forehead with rose quartz
(based on Stephen Vincent)

Look in the mirror, rose quartz in receptive hand
Make a drawing like a seismograph
Switch rose quartz to dominant hand
Wet rose quartz in water
Draw shape on forehead with rose quartz
Switch rose quartz back to receptive hand
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Look in the mirror, rose quartz in receptive hand

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Write as fast as you can
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RESULTS
I guessed Autumn would hide and seek with it show and
tell no spreads over morning when the temperature was
so awful that summer even fled I look over any hint of monarchs
from the south yes I love those days as Shakespeare is on stage
that hummingbirds as winged things give their own
performance
When you left you meant away your left in the way that
words make circles and leave spin tornadoes this must be
Kansas as Juniper takes this right away approach to
climbing milkweed makes its own Jack Beanstalk stories
while I am perched on the porch waiting for Monarch
butterflies to roam their ways through our Feast of the front
yard and their Journey forth I am moving into September
with the luxuries Cool Breeze bestow I am the royalty of a
lion said goodbye to my crowning season only best wishes
throughout a month like everyday holds a holiday

By Dennis Etzel Jr.
Topeka, KS
UNIVERSAL DECK RITUAL

TWO TO FOUR PEOPLE – FORM GROUPS NOW

FIVE INDEX CARDS PER PERSON

I WILL TAKE YOU THROUGH THE STEPS:

Number each card as you write on one side

If possible, use a marker
On the other side of each card, draw an artistic representation for each word.
UNIVERSAL DECK
RITUAL

Make space

One person lays a card down ART SIDE UP

Someone else takes a turn placing a card down that is similar to or relates to the one that is on the table (intuitive play)

Take turns laying cards down
UNIVERSAL DECK RITUAL

Make space

One person lays a card down ART SIDE UP

Someone else takes a turn placing a card down that is similar to the one that is on the table

Take turns laying cards down
UNIVERSAL DECK
RITUAL

Feel free to add branches
Write “Universal Deck” and today’s date in your journal

Take notes of what you see as connections

Take notes like an anthropologist in the field

Do not worry about the poem!

There is no “right way” for doing this

Try to write for half a page or more
Flip the cards while keeping the same order / chain

Take more notes of what you see as word connections

Add your own words, too!

Do not worry about the poem!

There is no “right way” for doing this

Try to write for half a page or more
phosphorus
luminous
harvest
pumpkin
breeze
flamboyant
growth
film
relief
Flip the cards while keeping the same order / chain

Take more notes of what you see as word connections

Add your own words, too!

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Try to write for half a page or more
WHAT ELSE TO DO WITH THE WORDS FROM A RITUAL

• Put feet flat on the floor for typing

• Take turns between writing as fast as you can for five minutes and copying the notes over
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• Bring together those fragments to write a poem / Revisit the other copy in a month, even reading backwards
WHAT TO DO
WITH THE
WORDS FROM A
RITUAL

from A Fine-See-Los Ritual to Bring Myself Home 15

this house that I thought I dwelled in carried another dwelling I absorbed to keep my safe body could take any blows as it couldn’t be a temple with those possible outcomes I couldn’t make in my choose adventure way of only two or three choices while each constellation had so many stars in letter [I was born in a July of possibilities] while only given promises I was in a July that wish to return replaced by an emperor posing as a leader when it is an empire that I seek but to be a leader of whatever to follow like a dance around trees still firm like a maypole jaking notes of June while July offers augst a remedy of forests full lushness I am hinged while I want to circle
• If I don’t shape a poem any day for a month, I am still writing

• I use voice-to-text to transfer words over to a Google Doc

• I copy words over to an MS Word file to shape a poem

• Mental health boost / self-care
What questions do you have?

Would you like a personal ritual to help in writing?
THANK YOU!

Dennis Etzel Jr

dennis.etzeljr@washburn.edu
dennisetzeljr.com