

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

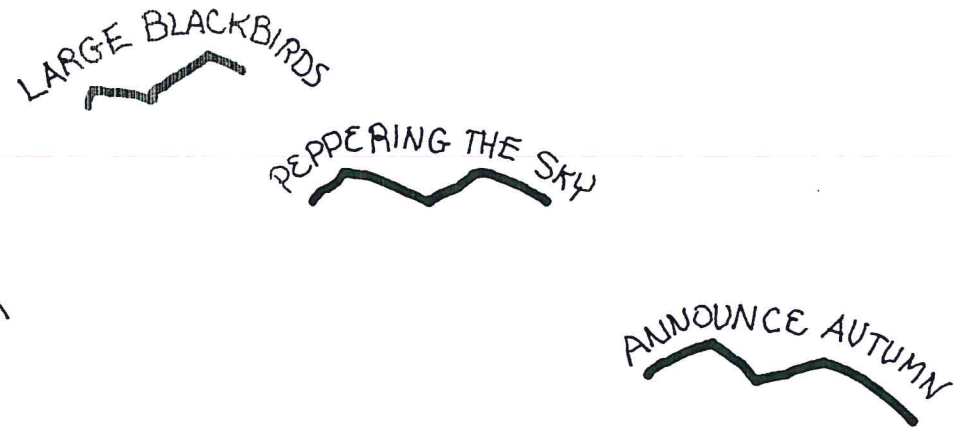
CONCRETE AND VISUAL POETRY

★ Though it does have historical roots, concrete poetry has enjoyed attention only within the last twenty-five years or so. This attention runs parallel with developments in "pop" art, in impressionistic photography, in graphics, architecture, etc. The most common type of concrete poetry depends on incorporating an array of poetically pleasing words or phrases with a strong visual component which identifies the topic in some way. For example, a three-liner such as:

Large blackbirds
Peppering the sky,
Announce autumn.

J. Romatowski

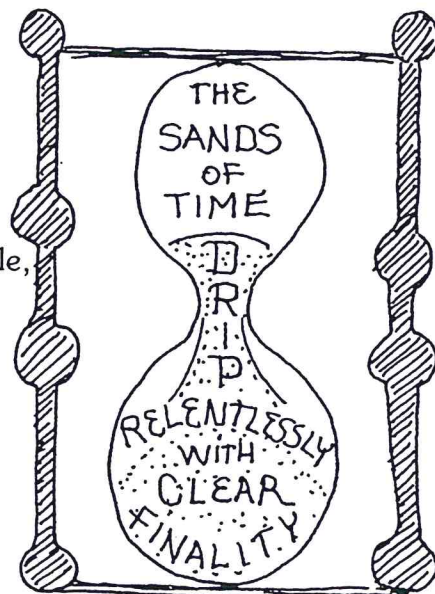
would be teamed up with a visual component (blackbirds) and would look like this perhaps:



Another three-liner,

The sands of time
Drip relentlessly
With clear finality.

J. Romatowski



The visual impact is meant to enhance the enjoyment of the sensitive lines.

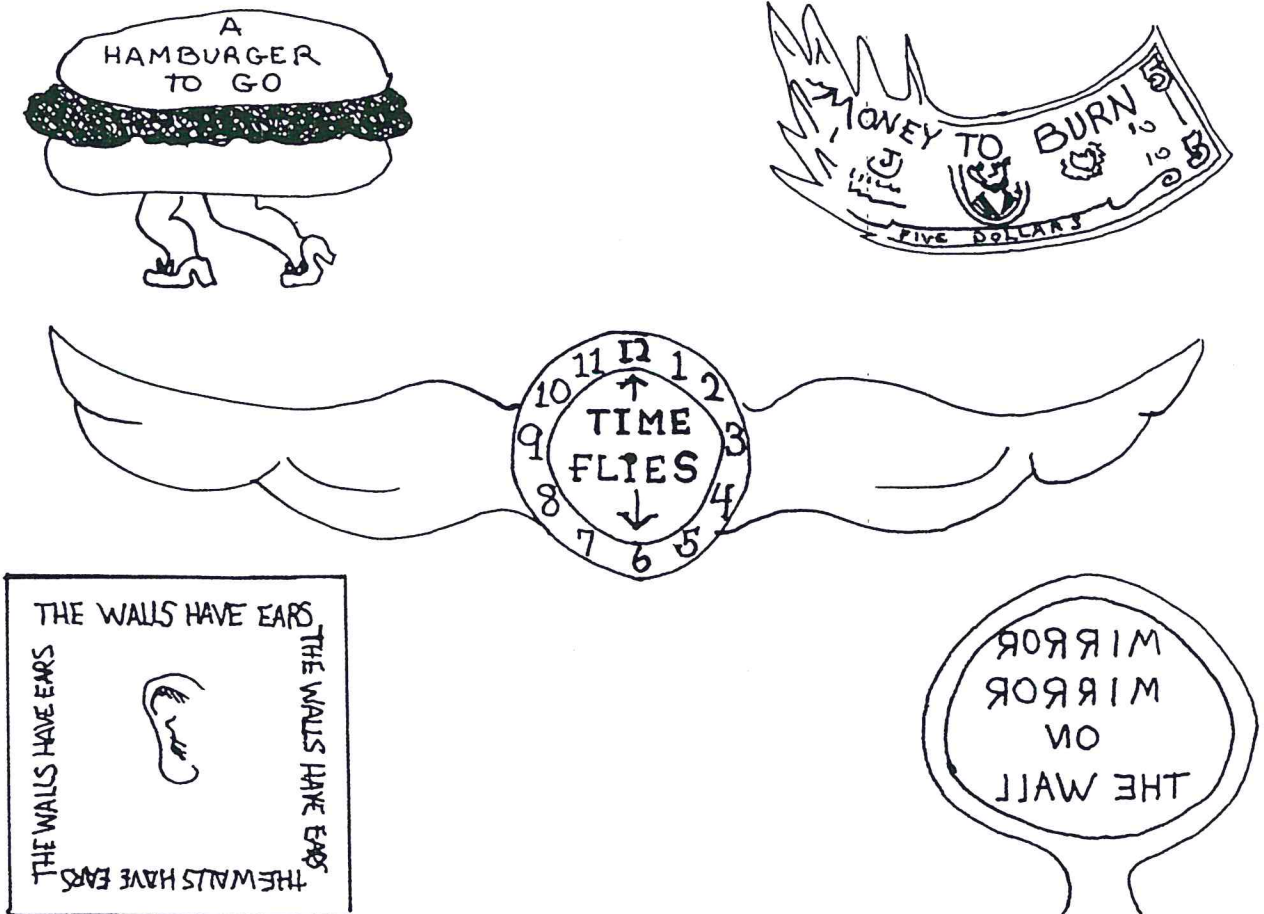
It would be a good idea to prepare your class for the writing of concrete poetry with related activities. Proverbs, the idioms of our language, sayings, and even words alone can serve as starting points. Using words with strong visual appeal, can you and your students make words look like their meanings? For example:

drop stairs SHAKY

Try these with your class:

flag	eye
tall	tear (as in crying)
small	wide
wide	stretch
lightning	explode

New and old idioms also lend themselves to such concrete forms. For example:



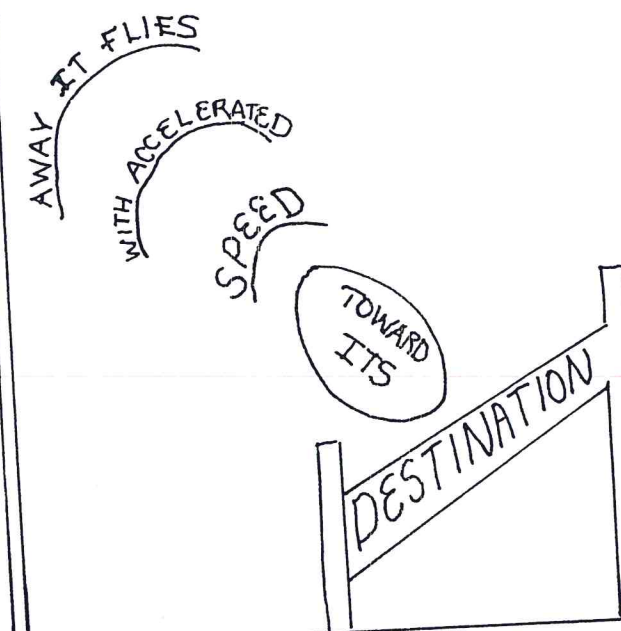
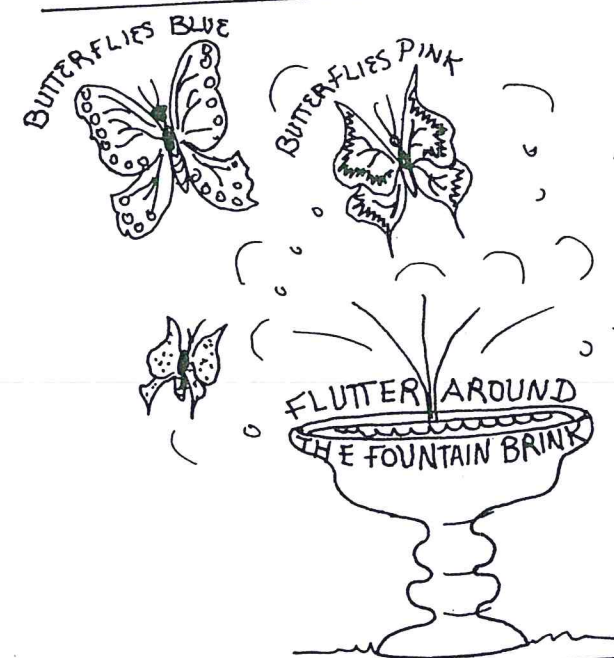
CONCRETE AND VISUAL POETRY

WRITE A CONCRETE POEM

Concrete poetry is a combination of poetic language arranged in the shape of the topic being considered. Here are two examples.

BUTTERFLIES

THE FOOTBALL



1. Think of a topic about which you would like to write a concrete poem. Remember that the topic you choose must be one that can be illustrated! Write the topic here. _____

2. Now think of poetic words and phrases for your topic.

3. Select those words or phrases which are best and most poetic sounding. Below, lightly design the shape of your topic. Write in the phrases and words you have selected. Be careful with the arrangement. The reader will depend on you to arrange the words in such a way that they can be easily read.