

Blackout poems – If Cats Disappeared From the World

Blackout poetry is a way of creating new works of art without starting with a blank page.

We'll give you a creative prompt. All you need to do is cross out some words and leave others legible to create your own original work.

How a blackout poem works

Your finished text might look something like this:

~~It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age~~
~~of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of~~
~~belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light,~~
~~it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was~~
~~the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had~~
nothing ~~before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were~~
~~all going direct the other way in short, the period was so far~~
like the ~~present period, that some of its noisiest authorities~~
~~insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the~~
~~superlative degree of comparison only.~~

Example from *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens

Finished poem

Wisdom was nothing like
The noisiest authorities

On the following page, you'll find a prompt to create your own blackout poem. Get your pen out and start scribbling!

If Cats Disappeared From the World

This novel, by Japanese author **Genki Kawamura**, explores the things that really make life worth living.



Use this as a starting point for your blackout poem

When I thought about it this way I finally understood why it is that we humans keep cats as pets. there's a limit to how well we know ourselves. We don't know what we look like to others, and we can't know our own future, and we can't know what our own death will be like. And that's why we need cats. It's just like my mother said. Cats don't need us. It's human beings who need cats.

As these thoughts were going round and round in my brain I suddenly felt a sharp pain in the right side of my head.

Feeling powerless I curled up in bed, trembling, just like Lettuce when he was dying. I felt so small and helpless in this body of mine, this body no dominated by death. I felt a heavy weight pressing down on my chest.

The pain in my head was getting worse. I went into the kitchen and took two painkillers, washed them down with water, and then went back to bed. I fell into a deep sleep.

From If Cats Disappeared From The World, Genki Kawamura, 2012

