

Blackout poems – It Lasts Forever and Then it's Over

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!

It Lasts Forever and Then it's Over

This haunting tale of life in the afterlife was one of the best-loved novels of 2024. Below is an extract to use as the starting point for your blackout poem.



Use this as a starting point for your blackout poem

Mitchem says I'm in denial. That I am depressed because I am indulging in a sense of loss instead of wonder.

“Embrace your new existence,” he says. I picture myself trying to do this with one arm.

When I was alive, I imagined something redemptive about the end of the world. I thought it would be a kind of purification. Or at least a simplification. Rectification through reduction. I could picture the empty cities, the reclaimed land.

That was the future. This is now.

The end of the world looks exactly the way you remember. Don't try to picture the apocalypse. Everything is the same.

From It Lasts Forever And Then It's Over, Anne De Marcken, 2024