

Blackout poems – The Moonstone

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!

The Moonstone

Wilkie Collins was a Victorian publishing sensation, rivalling Charles Dickens for popularity.

His mystery story, *The Moonstone*, thrilled readers in the 1860s, and is often cited as one of the first detective stories.



Use this as a starting point for your blackout poem

“I am so glad we have met again,” he said. “I had it on my mind– I really had it on my mind, Mr. Blake, to speak to you. About the dinner at Lady Verinder’s, you know? A pleasant dinner– really a pleasant dinner now, wasn’t it?”

On repeating the phrase, he seemed to feel hardly as certain of having prevented me from suspecting his lapse of memory, as he had felt on the first occasion. The wistful look clouded his face again: and, after apparently designing to accompany me to the street door, he suddenly changed his mind, rang the bell for the servant, and remained in the drawing-room.

I went slowly down the doctor’s stairs, feeling the disheartening conviction that he really had something to say which it was vitally important to me to hear, and that he was morally incapable of saying it. The effort of remembering that he wanted to speak to me was, but too evidently, the only effort that his enfeebled memory was now able to achieve.

*Just as I reached the bottom of the stairs, and had turned a corner on my way to the outer hall, a door opened softly somewhere on the ground floor of the house, and a gentle voice said behind me:-
“I am afraid, sir, you find Mr. Candy sadly changed?”*

From The Moonstone, Wilkie Collins, 1868