Found Poem Instructions

1. Chose 50–100 words that stand out in your memoir.

Highlight or underline details, words and phrases that you find particularly powerful, moving, or interesting. Note especially examples that reflect your loving feelings or loving feelings of the subject of the prose text.

2. Keep them in the order that you found them

On a separate sheet of paper, make a list of the details, words and phrases you

underlined,. Double space between lines so that the lines are easy to work with. Feel free to add others that you notice as you go through the prose piece again.

3. Cut out everything that is dull,

Try to cut your original list in half.

4. Think about the tone

The words should all relate to love, since you are creating a love poem. Make sure that you have words that communicate your emotions or those of the person in the prose text.

5. Make any minor changes

You can change punctuation and make little changes to the words to make them fit together (such as change the tenses, possessives, plurals, and capitalizations).

7. Reread your poem

Read one more time and make any deletions or minor changes.

8. Choose a title

Is there a better title than “Found Poem”?

9.Arrange the words

• Read aloud as you arrange the words! Test the possible line breaks by pausing slightly. If it sounds good, it’s probably right.

• Arrange the words so that they make a rhythm you like. You can

space words out so that they are all alone

or allruntogether.

• You can also put

key

words

on lines by themselves.

• You can shape the entire poem so that it’s wide or tall or shaped like an object

(say a heart?).

• Emphasize words by playing with boldface and italics, different sizes of letters,

and so forth.