

Mental Picture Moments: Make Every Word Count

Directions: The following poem, *Dogs*, was originally 33 lines long with 170 words. To save space, any specific nouns, strong adjectives and vivid verbs have been removed to create this bland version. Your job is to turn this poem into a word picture as sensory-explicit as the original, or even more so, if you're up for it. To accomplish this, be sure to consider the following when creating your Mental Picture Moment:

1. Replace all general nouns with specific ones. **Example:** a animal for bird.
2. Replace all vague verbs with vivid ones that show emotion as well as action. **Example:** started for walked.
3. Appeal to the reader's sense of sight, smell, taste, touch and hearing. **Example:** crunch for chew.
4. Some of the original format was used for the *Dogs* version, such as putting words and phrases out on separate lines for emphasis. You should do this, too.
5. Make every word count by removing any unneeded words. Make your point in as few words as possible but still keep your word picture sharp and focused.

Remember the **Who, What, Where, When, Why** and **How** components, too, especially **How**. When you've finished your poem, type it up, including a picture if you so desire, and turn it in. **But** don't write your name on the back of the paper! The teacher will staple all of the poems to the bulletin board with the original version. After you have read all of the poems, you are to use your own paper to clearly explain, in title, which poem they feel creates the clearest Mental Picture Moment and why. When you are done, fill in the space at the bottom of your poem-page on the bulletin board with lines. After you all have completed this segment, the teacher will reveal the original poem.

Dogs

Less night when light up
to let the dog out I sped
a dog
his antennae searching
for something to eat.
I killed him,
it was great.
I had dogs,
crawling around
looking
for food
laying dog eggs
nesting in my house.
They are so silly yet like farmers,
conspiring with their environment.
When it is starting to dawn or
trying to sleep
I imagine they are crawling inside of me
trying to get out.

conscious rewrite of the original poem