

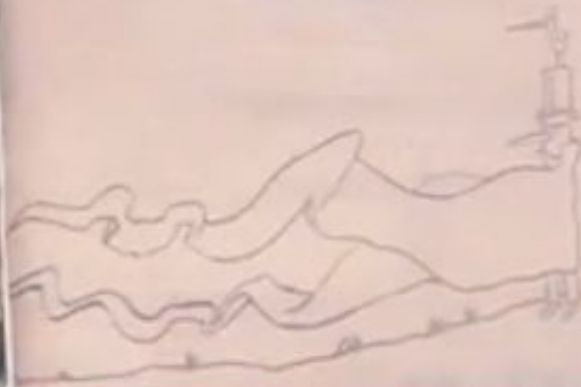


**Mentoring Craft and Structure:
Learning to Write
with Variety Through Emulation**

Paul Holimon

**A CLAS
Writing Workshop
Fall 2019**

**Morgridge
International
Reading
Center**



Rolling with the Changes



Former U.S. Poet Laureate Billy Collins on Marrying
Ideas

Quick: Partner Haiku!

5-7-5

write haikus about
the shift from summer to fall
here in florida



padlet.com/paulholimon/CLAS_haikus

"This writer [Plato] shows us, if only we were willing to pay him heed, that another way (beyond anything we have mentioned) leads to the sublime. And what, and what manner of way, may that be?

It is the imitation and emulation of previous great poets and writers. And let this, my dear friend, be an aim to which we steadfastly apply ourselves."

Longinus. 1899 *On the Sublime*. trans.
Roberts, W. R. XIII, 2.

"When teachers have authentic voices,
their students have them, too."

"A teacher who shows what she is
trying to learn through writing isn't
afraid to ask children what they are
trying to learn through their own
writing."

- Donald H. Graves, in "Children Can
Write Authentically If We Help Them"

Craft & Structure: Grade 8

LAFS.8.RL.2.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

Cognitive Complexity: Level 3: Strategic Thinking & Complex Reasoning

LAFS.8.RL.2.6 Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

Cognitive Complexity: Level 3: Strategic Thinking & Complex Reasoning

LAFS.8.RI.2.5 Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.

Cognitive Complexity: Level 2: Basic Application of Skills & Concepts

LAFS.8.RI.2.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.

Cognitive Complexity: Level 3: Strategic Thinking & Complex Reasoning

Breathe
in . . .

BILLY COLLINS

THE FIRST LINE OF A POEM

Before it flutters into my mouth,
I might spend days squinting
into the wind
like an old man
trying to thread a needle
by a window
in the dying light of late afternoon.

In a chair,
he aims the limp end
at the dim glint
of the impossible eye,
narrower than the door of heaven
or the sliver of moon
that will not rise
from behind pines

until the needle
finally slides
along the thin loop
and he eases
into his all-night stitching,
sipping the new wine,
singing a song
the color of his thread.

. . . breathe
out.

“The First Line of a Poem”: How’s it work?

Stanza 1:

Stanza 2:

Stanza 3:

Four Days

By Sarah Rose Etter

The numbers come in. The party gets quiet. A woman stands up and leaves, slamming the door. . .

Four Days
By Sarah Rose Etter
Read by Dawna McNaughton

"I'll have another," he says, pointing to his empty soda.

"Why did you do it?" I ask.

"Need to drain the swamp."

"A man tried to grab me in the street this week. He tried to grab me between the legs. There are protests every day."

"Nothing like that happening out here. We're all happy. You're overreacting. We spent eight years your way, and look where it got us."

The greased air of the restaurant clogs my nostrils. More french fries are delivered to the table.

"Another car dealership shut down, you know," my father says.

I picture the cars, shimmering in the sun and then crushed into piles of wrenched metal. I slide a french fry into my mouth. Through the window, beyond the green hills, the power plant churns up more perfect white smoke.

IV

My father drives to the city in a big, white car.

"Nice boat," I say and drop a kiss to his cheek.

We walk through my neighborhood in the sunlight, beneath the green

Recorded with

SCREENCAST  MATICS

We find a restaurant with a table outside and order plates of eggs.

"You know what I hate about the city?" he asks.

Four Days

By Sarah Rose Etter

Ambiguous intro

Present tense

Dark mood

Showing reactionary grief

Days are numbered ①

The numbers come in. The party gets quiet. A woman stands up and leaves, slamming the door. The food, on the trays, goes untouched, hard, cold. The woman on the television keeps repeating that she doesn't believe it. In the corner, another woman turns her back to the room and begins to weep.

In the morning, the sky is gray. I step into the street as a woman I've never seen walks by. Our eyes meet, and we fall into each other's arms, weeping, warbling against each other.

At lunch, I poke a fork at my food. I live on the salt of broth, a silent protest. I imagine women across the city doing the same – mouths clenched, bodies tense, bones emerging from beneath skin.

For four days, my city is silent as a funeral, except for the protests, except for the helicopters, thundering overhead.

Title

Link

②

On the way to the protest, I hold posters beneath my arms. Women stream out of their work buildings in the professional clothes. They meet me on the corner. We walk down the street together, thirty or forty strong in the thin sunshine.

A man lifts his head as I pass.

"Guess who won?" he bellows. He flings his hand out, grabbing for my crotch.

A shot of terror rips through my body.

"Get your hands away from me!" I scream.

"Oh, you would have liked it," he says, spitting on the sidewalk.

Later, in the center of the city, I lift my sign high beneath the helicopters and scream until my throat splinters.

SHIFT from women to men

Legitimized Misogyny

Clue →

Dialogue

Father and suburbs grotesque

III

My father sits across from me, his stomach bulging, his flesh bigger than before. We are eating in my hometown, a suburb of small rolling green hills, power plant churning smoke, shuttered car dealerships, ribs of dogs lying exposed in alleys, drugged corpses of my high school friends.

"I'll have another," he says, pointing to his empty soda.

"Why did you do it?" I ask.

"Need to drain the swamp."

"A man tried to grab me in the street this week. He tried to grab me between the legs. There are protests every day."

"Nothing like that happening out here. We're all happy. You're overreacting. We spent eight years your way, and look where it got us."

The greased air of the restaurant clogs my nostrils. More french fries are delivered to the table.

"Another car dealership shut down, you know," my father says.

I picture the cars, shimmering in the sun and then crushed into piles of wrenched metal. I slide a french fry into my mouth. Through the window, beyond the green hills, the power plant churns up more perfect white smoke.

Spare with dialogue tags

Setting mirrors mood

IV

My father drives to the city in a big, white car.

Symbolism

"Nice boat," I say and drop a kiss to his cheek.

We walk through my neighborhood in the sunlight, beneath the green trees. We find a restaurant with a table outside and order plates of eggs.

"You know what I hate about the city?" he asks.

"What?" I ask.

"Everything! The crowds, the traffic, it's all trash everywhere."

Contrasted perspective

I picture his life at home: the same restaurant every Friday, the same television show every Saturday, the same salted pretzels for a snack, on the couch, in the living room. I picture the gate around the neighborhood of identical houses where I grew up.

"Aren't you worried about crime?" he asks. "Something bad is going to happen to you one of these days. I worry about you all the time."

Unreliable character

I shake my head. I know the numbers. I know what's on the decline.

"It depends what kind of crime you mean," I say, picturing the face of the man who reached for my crotch, in the street, in broad daylight, in my city.

Denial, apathy

City Picturesque

MAGA

“Four Days”: How’s it work?

First Day:

Second Day:

Third Day:

Fourth Day:

Nonna's in Black Like Usual
By Stella

Nonna's in black like usual, but this time with gold. She wanted to honor him. . .

Nonna's in Black Like Usual, by Stella

to come back.

"It's amazing how beautiful they are yet so dangerous, just like your grandma."

"What do you mean?" I had asked.

"When I first laid eyes on your grandmother, I couldn't breathe. Just like what would happen if you were stung by one of these. All she had to do was walk in the room, and it was like I was underwater."

Now we are in the kitchen back in Naples, the tiny tropical town we call home. It's not raining but it might as well be in the summer heat. Mom is making tacos again. I wish it were shrimp.

"I wish grandpa was here."

"Can you pass the seasoning, Boom?"

I slam the seasoning on the counter and storm off to my room. Thankfully, she doesn't seem to notice. I pick up a framed photo of me and him. In the reflection I can see a tear.

I hear footsteps coming down the hall, and then she bangs right into the room.

"I'm sorry about earlier. Sometimes in my own pain I forget that you miss him, too."

I picture the two of them walking through the aisles of the flea market. I never saw them hold hands but I wonder if they did when she was young.

"If you need to talk about how you feel, I'm always here."

But I'm lost for a response. How do you express how you feel about him?

I wrap my arms around her. The picture falls to the floor, but the carpet saves it. Mom picks it up and wipes my tear from the glass surface, and another one replaces it.

Recorded with

SCREENCASTOMATIC

The Third Line or Four Nights?

Let's give this a whirl, shall we?



We Read, We Wrote, Now We Share and Discuss.

“Literature is not primarily about ‘figuring out’ symbolism or figurative language or setting or mood or structure.

Literature is primarily about us as individuals, as people seeking to understand ourselves and the world we share.”

- Mike Schmoker, *Focus: Elevating the Essentials to Radically Improve Student Learning*

AHAs

Learning to Write with Variety via Emulation Is . . .

. . . excellent (and I dare say better) “FSA Prep”!

In order to write “Nonna’s in Black Like Usual,” Stella:

Determined the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyzed the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

Analyzed how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

Analyzed in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.

Determined an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.

. . . And wrote like a champ!

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