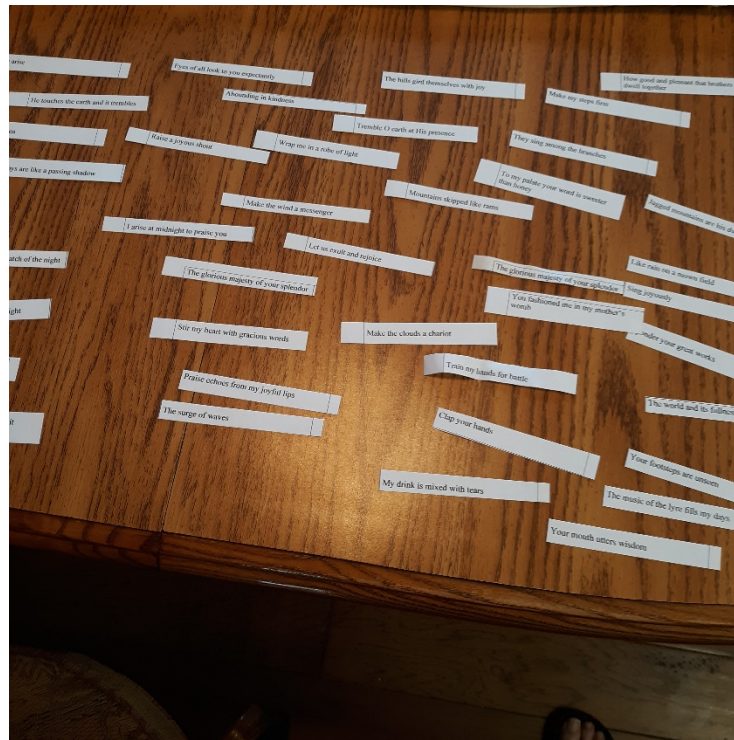


# Word Play Poetry Directions and Sample

## Step 1

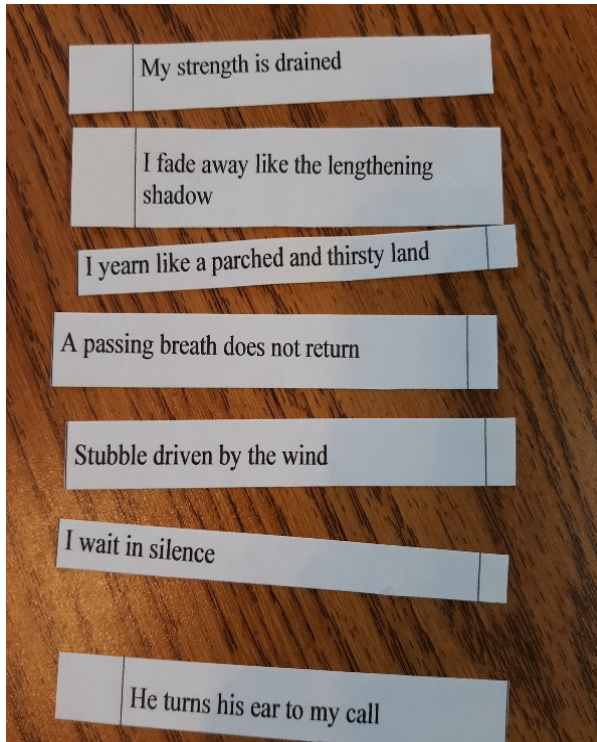
Cut apart the phrases found on pages 4 and 5 of this hand out and spread them out as shown in the picture.



## Step 2

Begin playing with the phrases. Select a few phrases that appeal to you. Look for phrases that express similar ideas. Or perhaps chooses phrases that create a striking contrast. Have patience with this step and allow yourself to play. Put phrases side by side or line them up vertically. Read the phrases aloud and listen for ideas. Try new phrases and new combinations. Eventually, an idea will begin to gel.

### Image for Step 3



### Step 3

Put several phrases in order as shown in the picture to the left. Continue playing with these phrases. Simply let the words speak to you and inspire you.

### Step 4

Begin to change some of the words. Add some of your own ideas. Select new phrases from the original stack if necessary.

### Step 5

Continue playing with the ideas until a poem begins to take form. No need to create rhymes; free verse works better for this particular writing technique.

### Step 6

Read each line and pay particular attention to the verbs. Try to eliminate weak verbs like is – are – was – be – got – went. Use verbs that create a striking image.

### Step 7

If you would like, give the poem a title.

See the completed poem below: *All Things Through Him*. Notice how it has grown from the 7 selected phrases shown in the Image for Step 4. Notice the changes, additions, and deletions.

## All Things Through Him

My strength is drained.

Like a shadow at twilight

I fade away to nothing

News of riots, fighting, hatred, injustice

Attack my senses and fill my days.

I yearn for peace

The way a parched and thirsty land yearns  
for rain.

I am powerless

Like a passing breath

A stubble driven by the wind.

I call to Him who is my strength

And I wait in silence

As He turns his ear to my call.

My strength is drained

I fade away like the lengthening  
shadow

I yearn like a parched and thirsty land

A passing breath does not return

Stubble driven by the wind

I wait in silence

He turns his ear to my call

**Step 1 from directions above: Cut these phrases apart and spread them out on a table. Each phrase is from the Book of Psalms.**

The glorious majesty of your splendor

Train my hands for battle

Days are like a passing shadow

My eyes greet each watch of the night

I arise at midnight to praise you

I remember your name at night

Let us exult and rejoice

He turns his ear to my call

Mountains skipped like rams

Tremble O earth at His presence

He touches the earth and it trembles

Wrap me in a robe of light

Make the wind a messenger

Make the clouds a chariot

My strength is drained

Raise a joyous shout

Abounding in kindness

Eyes of all look to you expectantly

My drink is mixed with tears

The swelling sea

The surge of waves

Stubble driven by the wind

Arise arise

Sing joyously

A passing breath does not return

Like rain on a mown field

Jagged mountains are his dwelling

The meadows are clothed in flocks

Praise echoes from my joyful lips

I yearn like a parched and thirsty land

Your mouth utters wisdom

The music of the lyre fills my days

Stir my heart with gracious words

You fashioned me in my mother's  
womb

How good and pleasant that brothers  
dwell together

To my palate your word is sweeter  
than honey

I fade away like the lengthening  
shadow

He touches the mountain and it  
smokes

Clap your hands

The world and its fullness are mine

The hills gird themselves with joy

I wait in silence

I ponder your great works

Your footsteps are unseen

They sing among the branches

Make my steps firm