



Homeschool  
Enrichment Kits

## Teens Taking Action | Kit 9

### Engagement 1 | REFLECTION: The Music of Language

Think about the various elements of songs for a moment. In your notebook, jot down anything that comes to mind. For example, rhythm, chorus, etc.

Next, circle any of the elements of songs that you wrote down that could also serve as a characteristic of poetry. How many characteristics did you circle?

### Engagement 2

For centuries, poetry has been used to draw attention to the parts of society that need improvement. For this engagement, please visit [this page](#) at the American Academy of Poets. Once there, you will find a collection of social justice themed poetry.



We invite you to open at least 5 of the poems listed there--keep searching the collection until you find a poem that really resonates with you. When you have found the poem that you find most compelling, feel free to print it out and/or write it in your notebook. Make sure to note the author's name.

Our team really loves the poem A Small Needful Fact by Ross Gay which was written in response to the death of Eric Garner.

#### A Small Needful Fact

Is that Eric Garner worked  
for some time for the Parks and Rec.  
Horticultural Department, which means,  
perhaps, that with his very large hands,  
perhaps, in all likelihood,  
he put gently into the earth  
some plants which, most likely,

some of them, in all likelihood,  
continue to grow, continue  
to do what such plants do, like house  
and feed small and necessary creatures,  
like being pleasant to touch and smell,  
like converting sunlight  
into food, like making it easier  
for us to breathe.



### Engagement 3 | Art as Limitation

Once you have identified the poem of your choice, please write what is known as an imitation or mimic poem. An imitation/mimic poem can 'copy' any element of the original poem.

Check out this example in which the writer, Kelsey, 'responds' to the original poem by using some of the the poet's original language and also by incorporating her own 'opposite' language:

Poet:	Kelsey:
I am wanting this forever: staircases not inside me. I can't light up	you are wanting this forever: staircases not inside of you not lit up
I come to the party— a beautiful stranger pinned in a glass box	you come to party such a beautiful person frozen under glass
in mint condition. Dressing myself with myself like an old fur.	in mint condition wrapping around yourself like old skin.

Some ideas for your mimic poem:

- Write a poem with the same amount of lines that your poet used
- Incorporate an image that your poet used
- Write about the theme(s) your poet addressed, such as joy, loss, fear, anger, sadness, etc.
- Use a line from the original poem to begin your poem.

Before you begin, check out this concrete poem (a poem in the shape of its topic) called [Social Distancing](#) by the former Poet Laureate, Juan Felipe Herrera. You have the option of listening to the poem being read when you visit the link provided. If you enjoyed his poem, you might consider imitating it by creating a shape or concrete poem of your own.

Have fun and be sure to send us your final product!

