



Unfold



Your Own Myth

Workshop Handbook

www.upf.tv/unfold

Dear Participant,

Thank you for joining **Unfold Your Own Myth!** We are thrilled to start this journey with you. In this pamphlet you will find helpful background information about **Lamya's Poem**, the animated film from which our project takes its inspiration.

Here you will also learn more about the Syrian war and the massive global refugee crisis that it spawned. Finally, we will introduce the poetry of Rumi, the great 13th Century Muslim poet, and one of the most popular poets in America to this day.

This pamphlet is meant for you to read during the course of the **Unfold Your Own Myth** workshop experience. It will help you understand the key themes of the project and learn more about the various forms of writing and poetry that you encounter in the course of your workshops.

The UPF Team



The mission of Unity Productions Foundation (UPF) is to create peace and counter bigotry through the media.

UPF produces films that tell compelling stories for television, online viewing, and theatrical release. These films are accompanied by long-term educational campaigns aimed at increasing religious and cultural pluralism, especially among Muslims and other faiths.

With may thanks to our supporters!

*The Arthur
Vining Davis
Foundations*



KIDSPIRIT



About Unfold Your Own Myth

The **Unfold Your Own Myth** Project is a serial workshop model in self-expression and community reorientation. It uses as its catalyst a feature-length animated film produced for teens and young adults, called **Lamya's Poem**. The film tells the story of a Syrian refugee girl who receives a book of poetry by the 13th Century Poet, Rumi. She carries the book in her backpack as she flees her country's civil war. The book becomes a magical gateway across time and space. Through it, she meets the young Rumi when he was teenager fleeing the violence of his time. Lamya's experiences help him to write the poem that 800 years later saves her life. **Unfold Your Own Myth** uses the film as a vehicle to communicate and teach the power of story in overcoming trauma and loss among marginalized youth. The audience of this project includes three struggling communities in America — refugee, immigrant and Muslim.

"Unfold your own myth" is a famous line drawn from Rumi's poetry. These are also the last words in the animated film, **Lamya's Poem**. They sum up the psychological journey of the film's main character, Lamya, whose imaginative relationship across time and space with the teenage Rumi helps her to overcome the trauma she endures as a refugee. She finds healing through his poems, by imagining a story that transcends her circumstances. "Unfold Your Own Myth" is a fitting title for a project that employs storytelling and poetry to help marginalized youth process trauma and loss, equipping them with the narrative tools of storytelling and writing, to help promote individual agency.

The Film: Far from the usual statistics-driven documentary film on a refugee crisis, **Lamya's Poem** is lyrical and imaginative and focused on a set of individual characters, their challenges and lives. It takes us inside the drama of a dynamic, displaced girl on the move, and it dramatizes the engagement with stories that helps her survive. By the end of the film, Lamya forges a connection among young people in her refugee camp, providing a model for making meaning out of difficult situations, a first step toward healing. Lamya's story will resonate with young people, especially those who have been uprooted from their homes and who face marginalization because of their religious identity, race, or immigration status.



“...a vivid and affecting depiction of a child fighting real-world problems with powerful poetry.”

DEADLINE HOLLYWOOD

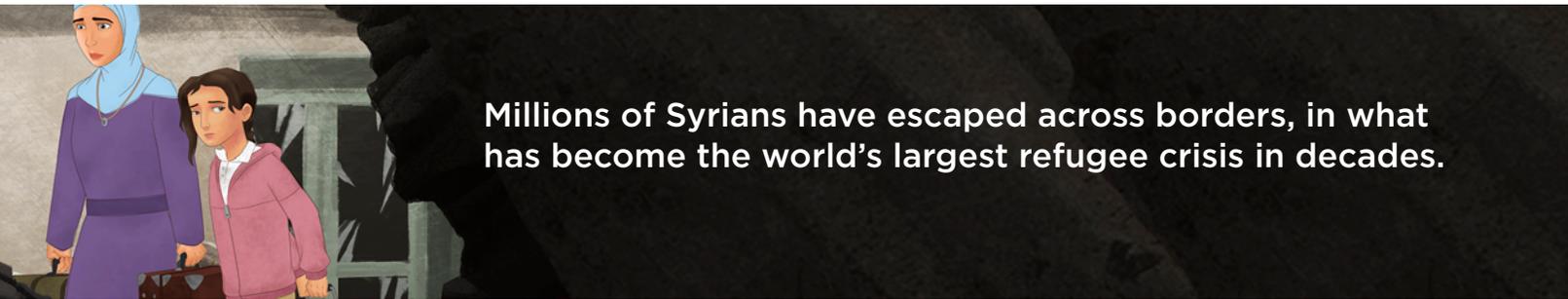
“...powerful and profound...”

SCREEN DAILY

Background on the Syrian War (2010-2021)

In December, 2010, a poor, young fruit-seller in Tunisia set himself on fire to protest harassment by the police and an official attempt to take away his family's source of income—his fruit cart. As the story spread, it touched off protest movements across the Middle East and North Africa among citizens of Egypt, Jordan, Yemen, Oman, Syria, and Morocco against governments that suppressed their voices and needs. The movement was called the Arab "Spring," after similar citizen protests in Eastern Europe, years before. Leaders in Tunisia, Egypt, and Yemen were soon removed from power or resigned, and later, the leader of Libya was driven from power and killed. Other governments in the region—Oman, Jordan, and Morocco—rushed to try and reform in an effort to end the protests. Citizens in other Arab countries, including Iraq and some Arab Gulf states, continued to protest for change, especially the end of long-serving authoritarian regimes that silenced their citizens' voices and ignored their needs.

In Syria, in March, 2011, students in the city of Deraa, Syria painted anti-government graffiti on a schoolyard wall. The young people were arrested, stirring protests in several Syrian cities. Thousands of Syrians protested peacefully, marching in the streets and asking for a more responsive government that would give citizens a voice in decision-making. In doing so, they risked their lives and security. The government had long maintained a police and judicial system that imprisoned and tortured people who questioned the government. As the protests continued in Syria and elsewhere in the region, and governments fought against the protesters in the streets, fear and tension grew.



Millions of Syrians have escaped across borders, in what has become the world's largest refugee crisis in decades.

In January, 2012, the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad gave a speech that blamed foreigners for these disturbances and labelled the protesters rebels. Beginning in February, 2012, protesters were met with force in an attempt to end the demonstrations. The army attacked the city of Homs, and in May, 108 people were killed in Houla. In July, more than 200 people were killed by the Syrian army in the Village of Tremseh. Groups formed to resist the army, and some soldiers joined the protest movement.

On 15 July, the International Committee of the Red Cross officially declared that the Syrian uprising had become a civil war. Opposition groups formed rebel militias and received weapons from foreign supporters. They took over areas in cities such as Aleppo, Syria's largest city. As the Syrian government lost territory in 2013, allies in the region sent fighters and advisors to support Assad's government. In the following years, other groups of foreign and Syrian fighters spilled over from the ongoing conflict in Iraq and claimed Syrian territory, while larger foreign powers such as the United States and Russia took sides and entered the conflict with weapons and troops. The Syrian rebels themselves were outnumbered by others who took over Syrian territory in 2014. Foreign military forces continued to bring in heavy weapons and launch air strikes to fight against Syrian rebels and their opponents. Between 2016 and 2018, the Assad regime retook lost territory and worked to regain control over cities, suburbs, and rural areas. Diplomatic efforts by the United Nations, European countries, Russia and the United States and regional powers failed to bring a resolution to the conflict.



The Syrian war sparked the largest humanitarian crisis since the end of World War II.

The Syrian civil war was a catastrophe for Syrian civilians. The largest movement of refugees since the end of World War II took place in the long wake of the Arab Spring. Millions of refugees had little choice but to flee the fighting, taking their families on dangerous journeys into Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Egypt, where they sought shelter with families or in crowded refugee camps. Many others crossed the Mediterranean Sea in overcrowded inflatable rafts, seeking safety and a new beginning in European countries and the United States.

More than half of Syria's population has been displaced, often in constant danger as the fighting destroyed homes, schools, businesses, hospitals and roads. International organizations have worked to meet the needs of uprooted people in Syria and surrounding countries. Some citizens of countries receiving refugees have supported helping them, while others have protested their presence and tried to prevent their entry. According to the United Nations Refugee Agency, as of March 2021, 13.4 million Syrians need humanitarian and protection assistance in Syria; 6.7 million Syrians have left their homes for other locations in Syria; 6.6 million Syrians have become refugees worldwide, with 5.6 million hosted in countries near Syria. Each one of them is a person with a story and a struggle to survive and overcome hardships. The story of Lamya and her mother is dedicated to them all.

Other Refugee Crises

About 26.4 million people around the world have fled their countries because of conflict, violence, persecution, or human rights violations. Many more — 82.4 million — have been displaced from their homes, according to the U.N. Refugee Agency (UNHCR). That number has doubled in the last decade and increased again during the current pandemic.

In the wake of U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, 100,000 refugees have arrived in the U.S. In total, more than 2.8 million people from Afghanistan have fled their country as refugees from generations of warfare. Another 2.9 million Afghans are displaced within the country due to conflict, drought, and other natural disasters. Conflict and insecurity in other countries, including Ethiopia, Iraq, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, and Myanmar have caused additional millions to flee their homes.

The number of refugees and asylum-seekers from the North of Central America (NCA) has soared in the last five years and today approaches 1 million people fleeing crime, violence, oppression and economic instability.

Recent earthquakes in Haiti since 2010, have created severe economic and political instability, resulting in thousands more refugees seeking asylum in other countries.



As of June 2021, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported 82.4 million forcibly displaced Persons around the world, the highest ever recorded in the UNHCR's seventy-year history.

Sources:

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Biographical Note on Jalaluddin Rumi

About 800 years ago, in 1207 CE, the Muslim poet and spiritual teacher Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, best known as Rumi, was born in Central Asia, in a town in present-day Tajikistan. He lived in a turbulent time, when the Mongols under their leader Genghis Khan were gaining strength and about to conquer much of Asia.

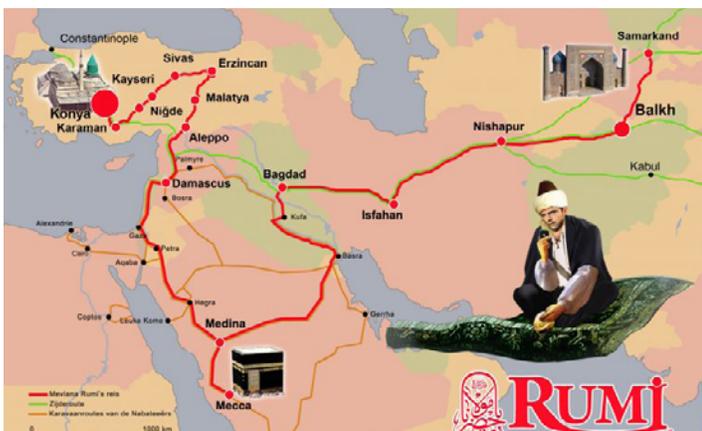
Rumi's father Muḥammad Bahā' al-Dīn Sulṭān Walad, was a teacher of Islamic spirituality and law in the town. In those days, it was necessary for such a person to seek patronage and support from one of the regional or local Muslim rulers, who would officially appoint him as head teacher in one of the schools established to serve their court. At the same time, such intellectuals also sought to learn at the feet of other scholars and to visit important Muslim centers, where they gathered in great capitals like Samarkand, Damascus, Tabriz, Cairo, and Jerusalem. Such appointments and relationships might remain stable for years, offering the scholar and his family a good living and real prestige. Absent such an appointment, in a period of instability, Baha Walad, Rumi's Father, and a group of his faithful followers took to the road.

After accomplishing the pilgrimage to Makkah, Rumi and his father traveled on to Palestine, Damascus, and Aleppo, visiting scholars in each of these centers and taking part in learning circles. By 1228 CE, the family had arrived in Asia Minor, the territory of we know today as Turkey. At that time, the Seljuk Turks were consolidating power over these lands. Like other Muslim rulers, they established mosques, schools, caravanserais, and built cities.

The territory came to be known as Rum, referring to the Eastern Roman Empire under the Byzantines. Baha Walad's reputation as a scholar and preacher won him a position at the city of Konya, where he taught and preached until his death in 1231. During this time, Rumi was being prepared to inherit his position. Before his father died, his tutor Borhan rejoined him, and Rumi grew in knowledge, followers, and spiritual vision. This period included time spent in Damascus, where he studied religious law and theology.

Some years after his father died, Rumi met a Sufi teacher named Shams al-Dīn Tabrīzī, in 1244. Their relationship changed Rumi's path of spiritual development and introduced him to a path of intensified divine love for God, transforming his writing and teaching forever. For the rest of his life, Rumi taught, led circles of his followers, and wrote beautiful lyric poetry. He is known all over the world today by the honorable title of Mawlana, or spiritual guide.

Among his works were the 35,000 verses of the *Diwān-i Shams-i Tabrīzī* (The Collected Works of Shams of Tabriz), representing the teachings of his spiritual guide. The work for which Rumi is best known, the *Mathnawi al-Mānawī* (Spiritual Couplets), comprise about 50,000 lines of couplets, or pairs of verses. As his fame grew, he gathered many followers, and introduced spiritual practices such as choreographic meditation in the manner of the 'whirling dervishes,' who focused on praising God while moving in rhythmic circles together. Other writings include *Fīhi mā fīhi* (Signs of the Unseen), which contain notes from Rumi's lectures, conversations, letters, and preaching, collected by his scribes and followers. Jalal al-Din Rumi died at Konya in the year 1273 CE.



Rumi Trail



Rumi's Shrine at Konya

Sources:

- Gooch, Brad. *Rumi's Secret: The Life of the Sufi Poet of Love*. First edition. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2017.
- Hotham, Matthew. *Rumi, Jalal al-Din al-* - The Oxford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Science, and Technology in Islam at "[Oxford Islamic Studies Online](#)."
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Unfold Your Own Myth: Overview of Four Themes in Lamya's Poem

THEME ONE: Rumi's Place in the Islamic Tradition

The poet Rumi lived more than 800 years ago. He wrote thousands of verses in Persian and Arabic, and his work has been translated into many languages. Today, he is, according to the BBC, the most popular poet in the United States. People quote his lines in greeting cards, on posters, and at weddings, births and funerals, because they find real meaning in his ideas. However popular Rumi's poetry may be, most people do not realize that his ideas and images are rooted in his identity as a Muslim and as a scholar of the Islamic religious tradition.

The film **Lamya's Poem** explores this identity and heritage, in an effort to bring out a more authentic understanding of Rumi as a poet and a person, as a teacher and a seeker of God. The images and concepts in his poetry consistently draw upon verses of the Qur'an and sayings and deeds from the life of the Prophet Muhammad. Rumi's work and example of spiritual leadership have influenced the literature, culture and education of Muslims across the world for centuries. Poems in the *Masnavi*, Rumi's largest and best known work, are still memorized and shared among Muslims in regions as diverse as India, Iran, Afghanistan and Turkey. They are recited by refugees seeking strength to endure hardships on the road between a war-torn Middle East and Western Europe. The story of **Lamya's Poem** was originally inspired by a video of refugees reciting poetry at night in a park in Athens, Greece. Rumi's words have long provided guidance and inspiration for the spirit. His works are deeply rooted in Islamic teachings, communicating Islam's ideals through the prism of his inspired imagination.

Dr. Omid Safi, an American scholar of Rumi's work, observes that, "In many parts of the world, Rumi's poetry is among the most frequently copied Muslim texts, second only to the Qur'an. So, it is certainly a text that has shaped the poetic imagination, the religious and moral imagination of Muslims. . . ." In this way, Rumi's work unites diverse cultures across the world.



THEME TWO: Rumi's Concept of Social Love

A central theme in Rumi's work is his concept of love. This concept goes far beyond the hearts and flowers of romantic emotions. It encompasses a love for humanity, for fellow human beings with whom we share the Earth where we all live. In Persian and Arabic, the word for this all-encompassing Social Love or Civic Love is *ishq*. In Greek, the word *agape* has a similar meaning—the love, or compassion, that brings people together in peaceful, constructive community relations, supporting each other and working together in harmony. *Ishq* is the social glue that binds people together in solidarity; this kind of love is a source of human relations. *Ishq* is a reflection of universal or divine love, Compassion, and Mercy whose source is Divine love. It helps people see beyond our ethnic, racial, or religious differences, beyond the narrow group with whom we identify.

Ishq is at the center of the action of **Lamya's Poem**. All of the story's central characters are on a journey, seeking peace, safety and well-being. Lamya is moving away from the violence of her homeland toward an unknown future; Rumi and his father are on a journey away from the chaos of the Mongol invasions and armies. Setting out, they are refugees fleeing danger, but soon they become pilgrims journeying toward a Sacred City, and toward the spiritual goals of learning and teaching others. Both seek *ishq*, the love that heals the human community torn apart by violence and war. Their parallel stories intertwine, as Lamya and Jalal (the young Rumi) seek protection, peace, and stability, and as they find ways to unite the people they encounter along the way.

Teaching and guiding youth is another theme that unites these two characters and their parallel stories. Lamya's teacher, who gave her the book of Rumi's poems, remains behind in Aleppo to teach students what is important and beautiful in their tradition, even after war has closed the schools. His sacrifice is an act of love, of *ishq*. Similarly, Lamya shares her book of Rumi poems with children in the dismal circumstances of the refugee camps. She clings to this book as a precious possession of love and spiritual strength. She teaches the refugee children to marvel at their own imagination, inspired by Rumi's verse. *Ishq* is everywhere in **Lamya's Poem**. Love is revealed through effort and struggle, in the two worlds of Rumi and Lamya—centuries apart, yet similar. Love is found in the human ties we can develop by allowing room for our imagination. Love (*ishq*) is expressed with Lamya's teacher, and her book, which holds the art and poetry of Rumi.

From Aleppo to Turkey to Greece and on, Lamya carries her teacher's gift, which step-by-step becomes the tool by which she discovers that she can meet the challenges she faces. Rumi's own struggles to overcome the trauma of uncertainty and fear revolve around his discovery of the power of poetry and self expression, and of sharing this form of Social Love with the world.





THEME THREE: Two Forms of Myth: Individual and Shared

Myths are stories that help to explain mysterious forces in human life and natural surroundings. They often involve supernatural beings and imaginary events that convey symbolic meanings. In the journeys of Lamyra and young Rumi, we see how imagination and myth-making provide a means to cope with hardship and conquer fear.

In **Lamyra's Poem**, the main characters face a difficult challenge: in order to survive their real world situations as refugees, they need to defeat their imagined monsters and keep their spirits whole. In the scene that opens the film, Lamyra creates an "Individual Myth" as she chases fireflies in a "field of dreams". This myth gives her hope in the midst of a grim situation. A little later and throughout the film, her imagination develops images that signal the danger and chaos she needs to overcome. Even the monster that scurries across her field of vision now and then is a way of taming a threat, by giving it shape and by naming it. By creating an image of what she fears and giving it symbolic form, Lamyra creates a "breathing space" that helps her master threats and survive them without psychic damage.

Throughout the film, Rumi struggles to write a type of poetry that creates Shared Myths. These take the form of lyrical insights and dramatic narratives that rearrange reality by creating metaphors which reflect healing meanings. The poet transforms existing myths and invents new ones. The film depicts young Rumi struggling to overcome his anger at the Mongols, who drove him from his home. The challenge in his predicament is to replace with *ishq* his resentment and desire for revenge. This struggle to free himself from hatred is bound up with his need to compose poems that Lamyra can read "on the other side of time," and to transform her understanding of the world.

Young Rumi's poems embody the Shared Myths that save the film's two main characters and bind them together across space and time. Both transform through poetry their personal experiences of trauma brought on by a war and the chaos that they had no part in causing.



Reed Bed

THEME FOUR: Rumi's Concept of Separation and the Self

Change is a constant in human life, but separation—whether physical, psychological, or spiritual—is change at its most extreme. Rumi's poetic genius lies in forging metaphors and striking images that transform separation from a profound sense of loss to a process of self discovery. One of Rumi's most famous short poems, *The Song of the Reed*, provides both a metaphor and a series of powerful images that give a voice to the existential exile of the soul from its Creator. The reed tells its own story, in the poem and in the film, of being cut and removed from its "reed bed," its greater community, its source, its home, by a maker of musical instruments who dries, trims, and bores holes in its body transforming it into a flute—a *ney*, in the Islamic musical tradition— which ironically gives it the capacity to make music, to sing a song telling of its own displacement, but then, surprisingly, defining that painful alternation as the first step in becoming a more complete and useful self. From a hollow reed in a riverbed, one of countless millions, it becomes a flute and an instrument for creating beauty and being of service to others.



Iranian/Persian Ney Flute, Metropolitan Museum of Art

This challenge of separation and transformation is explored through every character in the film. In the character of Rumi, the related themes of physical and societal separation are addressed through Jalal's dream world, where his father encourages him not to give up his goal of inspiring others by writing poems. "Leave your home like a shepherd," he advises. Once on the road, his father encourages his flock of fellow refugees to see themselves as motivated pilgrims moving toward a fresh new goal, rather than as victims fleeing in fear of what lies behind them. In Lamyra's case, the film documents and dramatizes the theme of physical separation from the homeland, as a displaced daughter learns to accept her circumstances and connect with her young fellow refugees, as she does both with Bassam and through sharing Rumi's poetry with her friends.



Turkish Ney Music

Lamyra, her ex-classmates, young Rumi and Bassam all experience hardships unimaginable for children, yet they help each other to move toward a different future and a life of hope.

In the Islamic Sufi spiritual tradition, Rumi's metaphor of the reed invites his readers—his students—to separate from their lower self, which in Muslim spirituality is called the *nafs*, or self and ego. The journey toward consciousness of God is a journey toward union with divine love that requires a controlled separation of our anxiety over worldly concerns in order to see beyond them.

As so often in the work of Rumi, his world view echoes a well known Muslim tradition. In this case it is a saying of the Prophet Muhammad, who on the topic of separation and loss offered this advice: "Be in this world as if you were a stranger or a traveler." [*Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 8, Book 76, Number 425]



Main Forms of Poetry

Each session includes introductory icebreakers, group discussion on the themes, and individual creative writing practice time, in addition to the main lessons.

Unfold Your Own Myth gives participants a chance to work with four forms of poetry:

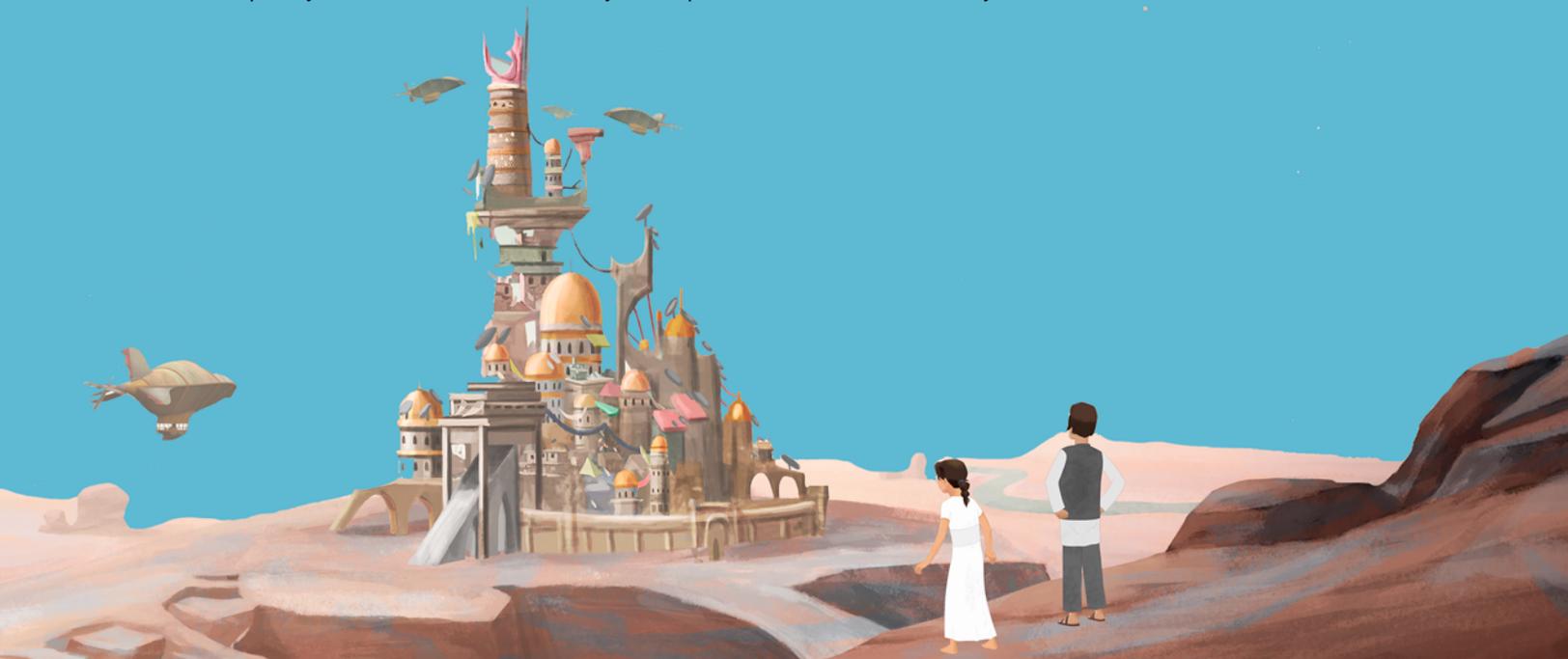
Journaling Informal prose almost like a diary.

Erasure A form of poetry where the poet takes an existing piece of writing or “text” and erases, blacks out, or obscures a large portion of the text, creating a wholly new work from what remains.

Haiku This short form only has three lines. It creates a “picture” that you can imagine—we refer to this picture as an image. Here is a haiku that is over four hundred years old:

*Wild roses by the roadside
Disappear one by one
Into the mouth of a horse.*

Spoken Word This poetic form uses rhyme, repetition, improvisation, and word play. Spoken word poetry frequently deals with issues of social justice, politics, race, and community.



How to Write and Perform Spoken Word Poetry

Spoken word is poetry intended to be performed. It can be published in written form, but it comes from an oral tradition. Spoken word poetry is the art of using powerful words to share the speaker's views on a topic intended for a live audience, presenting sound and ideas.

Spoken word may incorporate traditions such as rap and hip-hop, and musical elements of hip-hop, jazz, rock, blues, or folk music. It is a form of storytelling and theater combined. This kind of poetry is designed to evoke strong imagery to bring out issues about which the poet is passionate, to communicate messages about social justice, politics, race, or community.

Spoken word may use rhyme in whole or in part, and deploy tools like word play, repetition, and it may be improvised even though it is written out beforehand. It may be humorous or very serious and dramatic, with the words painting a picture in ideas and sound. The delivery of spoken word poetry incorporates movement of the body and the voice, rhythm, and even dance to connect the audience with the performance.

Choose a subject you care deeply about. Share your individual "take" on your topic with your feelings and opinions, and your own special angle on the subject. You dare to share yourself with the rest of the world. As you build your poem, you will gain confidence.

Build your spoken word poem around a central focus, concept, or person that can shape your thoughts. It can center on an experience that represents overcoming a challenge in a way that helped you to grow stronger. It might be built around a memory of something you witnessed or read about that caught your imagination and might have focused on an issue you care about.

Once you have an idea, write your opening, hook, or gateway line. This will grab the audience's attention and tell them what you will talk about. The rest of the poem should extend that idea, give more detail, tell a story, and build your message with powerful language that you can perform.

Choose simple, vivid poetic elements that help the audience use their senses and feel what you are describing. Try to create a world in the story. Repeating a word or phrase can emphasize an idea and get you started writing. Try rhyming words to build an image, and practice speaking out parts of your poem to test the effect. Think about colors, comparing things with similes (x is like y) metaphors (x is y), and symbolic language.

Read the poem aloud as you work, and play with the words to make them sound better. Try using words that mimic sounds, or create a mood. Work on how the words connect to one another with repeated letters (alliteration and assonance).

Write as much as you can, then pause to revise it. Your first draft will probably not be your best expression. Look at your own work or share with others, and make sure your ideas come across clearly. Let any new thoughts and ideas determine your direction, and don't be afraid to toss some parts and begin again. Think about how you will perform your words for an audience, and how it might impact your listeners. End with a solid conclusion—not a summary—that leaves your audience with an image to think about, and makes an impact they will remember.

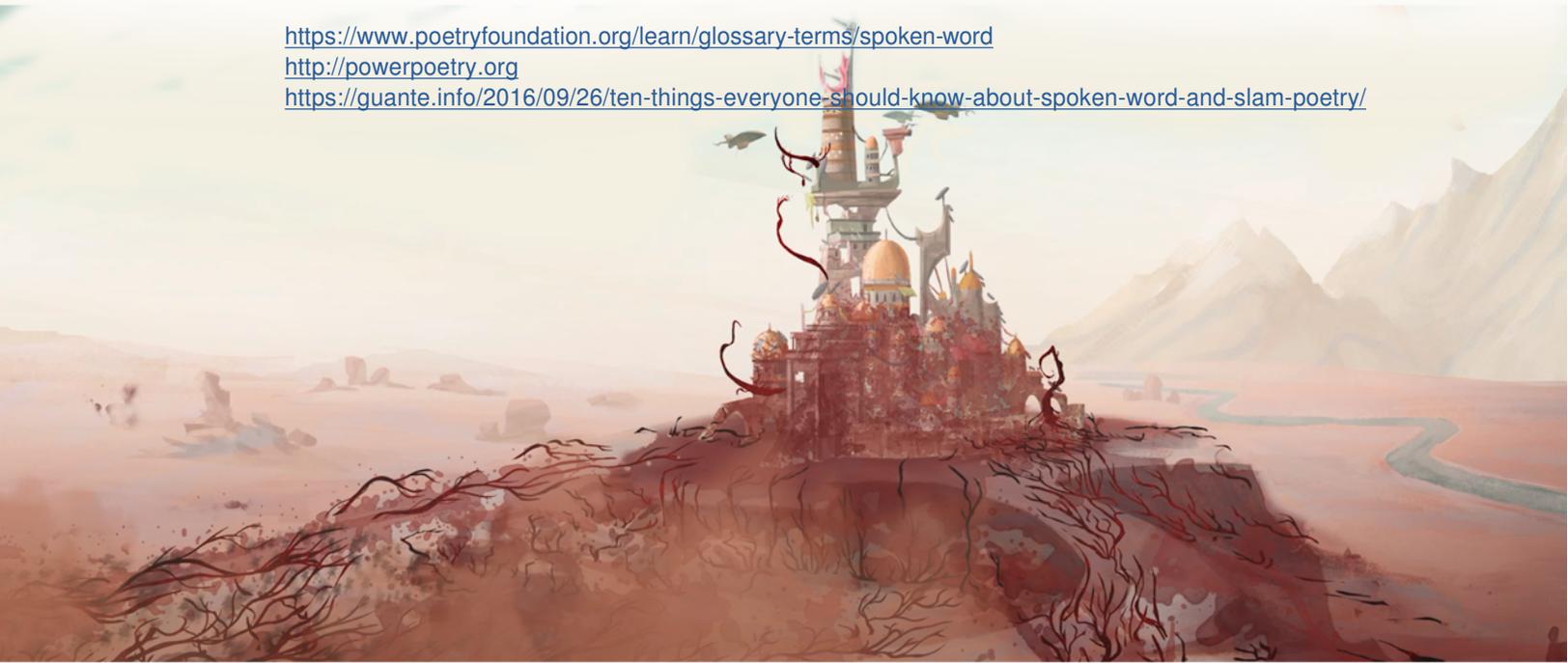
Practice your performance. Bring your poem to life by thinking about how you will use your voice, your facial expressions, and body movement. Practice rules of good performance: make eye contact and scan different parts of the room to connect with everyone. Project your voice and speak clearly and loudly, pronouncing each word and emphasizing the most important or dramatic words. Be animated to create the mood that fits your message. Don't keep the same emotion throughout, but build the impact by varying your tone and gestures, expressions and movement. Practice reading/speaking several different ways. You may need to memorize your poem, or leave room to improvise. That takes experience and confidence, so do what you need to feel confident.

Sources and resources:

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/learn/glossary-terms/spoken-word>

<http://powerpoetry.org>

<https://guante.info/2016/09/26/ten-things-everyone-should-know-about-spoken-word-and-slam-poetry/>



How to Write Haiku Poems

This is an introduction to writing a haiku. Haiku is a form of short unrhymed poetry that creates an image in the mind of the writer and the reader. The haiku began as a three-line poem that set the scene for longer poems in Japanese literature during the 17th century (the 1600s). Later, haiku became a form of poetry on its own because its images were so terse and insightful, in contrast to long, elaborate poetic forms. The name haiku began to be used during the 19th century, and since then, this form of poetry has become internationally popular, and is written in many languages and variations.

Traditional haiku poems consist of words with a total of 17 syllables arranged in three lines of 5, 7, and 5 syllables respectively. A syllable is a word or part of a word that has one vowel sound. For example, the word "cat" has one syllable; the word "water" has two syllables.

Traditional haiku describes a moment in time using words that awaken the senses. These words should indicate a certain season of the year, describe something that the poet witnesses in a place, and capture a fleeting moment in time. Matsuo Basho, a famous haiku poet, described haiku as "simply what is happening in this place at this moment." Here is one of Basho's haiku:

*on this road
where nobody else travels
autumn nightfall*

(--Ueda, Bashō and His Interpreters, 406)

His words paint a picture of a time, a place, and movement, leave the reader with a mood, and give us something to think about.

Try writing a haiku using these traditional rules:

1. Haiku has only 17 syllables. A syllable is a word or part of a word that has one vowel sound. The word cat has one syllable; the word water has two syllables.
2. Haiku is composed of only 3 lines.
3. Traditional haiku have the 5-7-5 form of syllables. The first line has 5 syllables, the second line has 7, and the third has 5.
4. Center your poem on the page.

Variation 1: Use a pattern of 5-8 syllables in each of the three lines of your haiku. Center your haiku on the page.

Variation 2: A simpler form of haiku is called the lune. A lune can be on any subject. Instead of counting syllables, a lune uses a pattern of 3 words in the first line, 5 words in the second line, and 3 words in the third line.

Sources and resources:

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/learn/glossary-terms/haiku-or-hokku>

<http://powerpoetry.org>



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