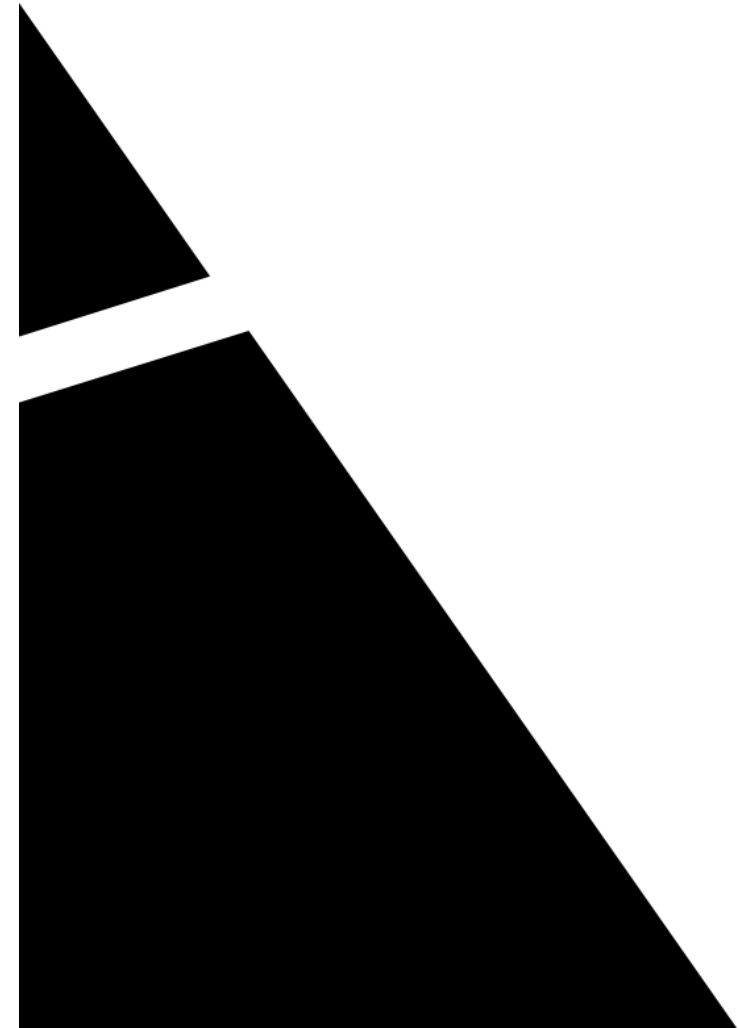


# CREATIVE WRITING AND READING PROMPTS

1. Tell bad drivers, rude customers, and evil dictators how grateful you are for what they've done.



2. Read: 'He Tells Her' by Wendy Cope. Ask the students to describe a time when they were right about something but someone told them they were wrong.

*He tells her that the Earth is flat—  
He knows the facts, and that is that.  
In altercations fierce and long  
She tries her best to prove him wrong.  
But he has learned to argue well.  
He calls her arguments unsound  
And often asks her not to yell.  
She cannot win. He stands his ground.  
  
The planet goes on being round.*

### 3. Re-write 'This Is Just To Say' by William Carlos Williams.

*I have eaten  
the plums  
that were in  
the icebox*

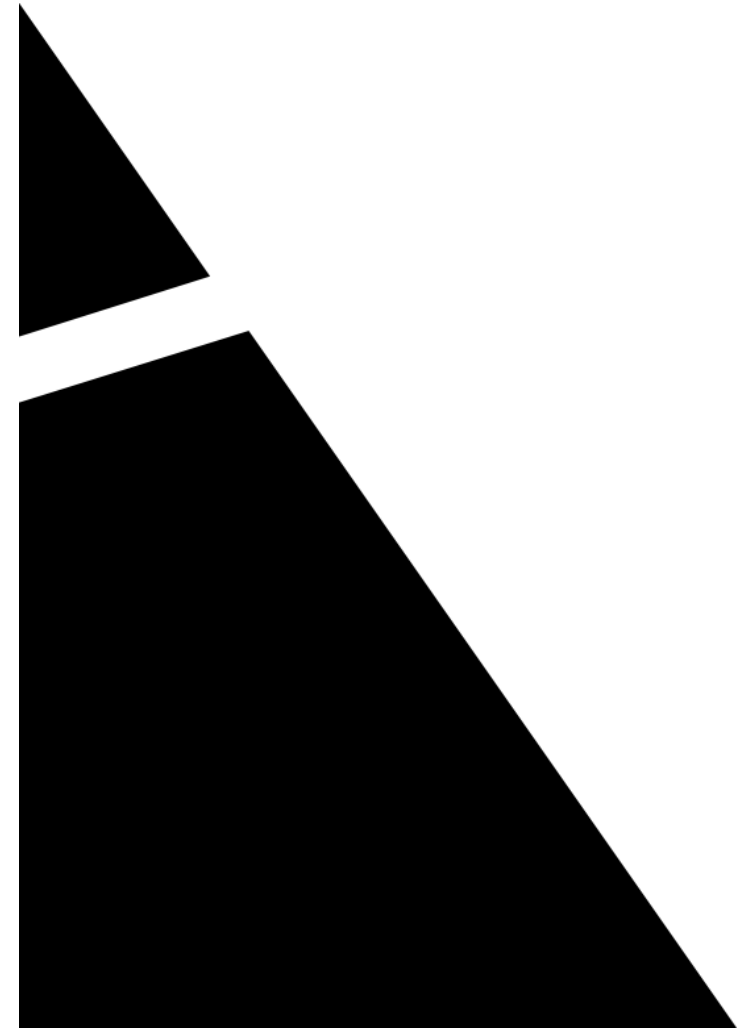
*and which  
you were probably  
saving  
for breakfast*

*Forgive me  
they were delicious  
so sweet  
and so cold*

4. Write about what you would do at night if you didn't need to sleep - would you be lonely? Would you miss dreaming? Would you ever feel tired?



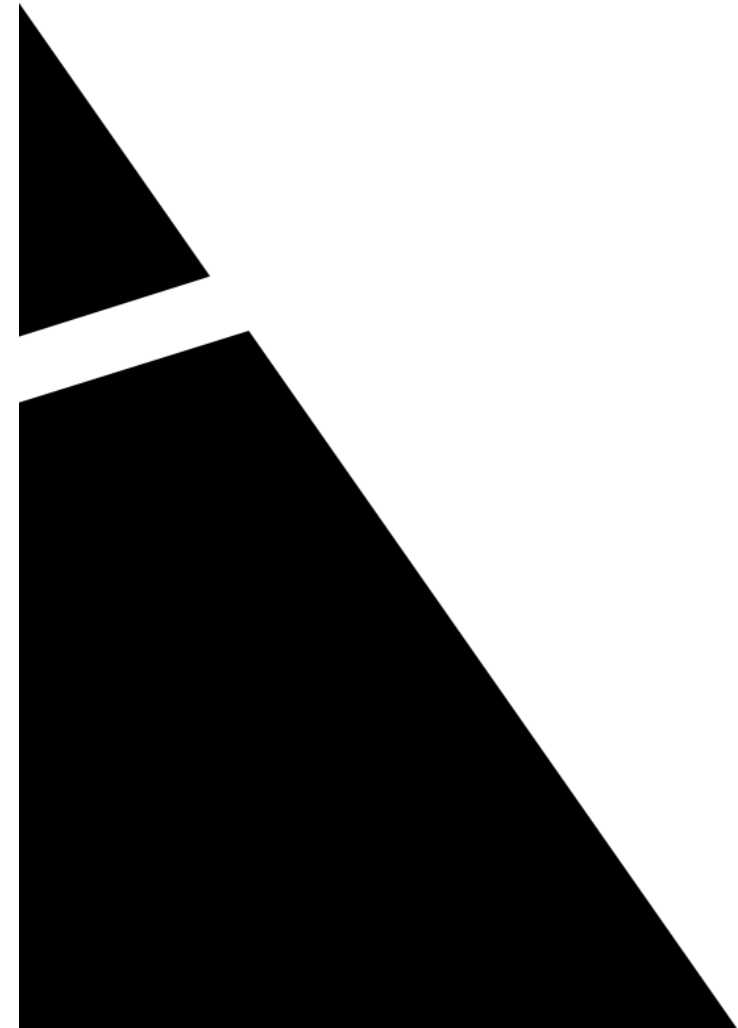
5. The Vessel: Write about a ship or other vehicle that can take you somewhere different from where you are now.



6. Write about something that grows or lives in an unexpected place, like in 'The Rose That Grew From Concrete' - Tupac Shkur.

*Did you hear about the rose that grew from a crack in the concrete? Proving nature's law is wrong it learned to walk without having feet. Funny it seems, but by keeping its dreams, it learned to breathe fresh air. Long live the rose that grew from concrete when no one else ever cared.*

7. Non-fiction: Write about a room you know well. What's in it, does it have a smell? How do you feel when you enter it? Is it a safe space, a happy one? Who else is in there?

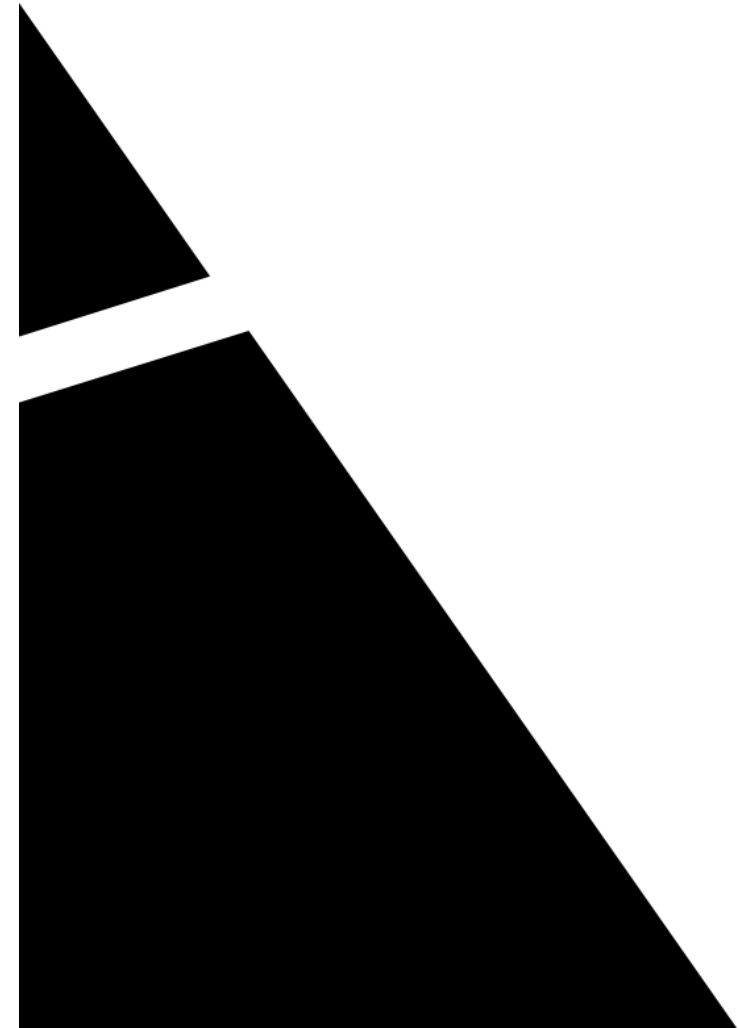




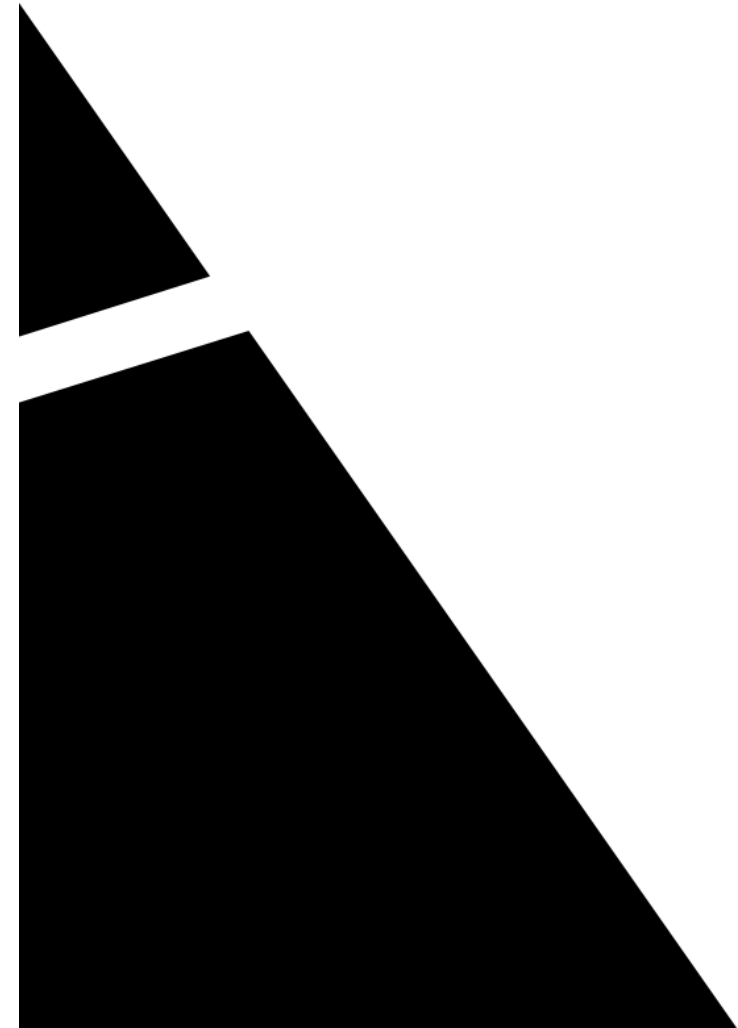
8. A child's imaginary friend needs to convince them he's real so he doesn't disappear.



9. Write about something you can't control, from the perspective of that thing.



10. 5,000 years into the future, how has technology affected the evolution of humankind?



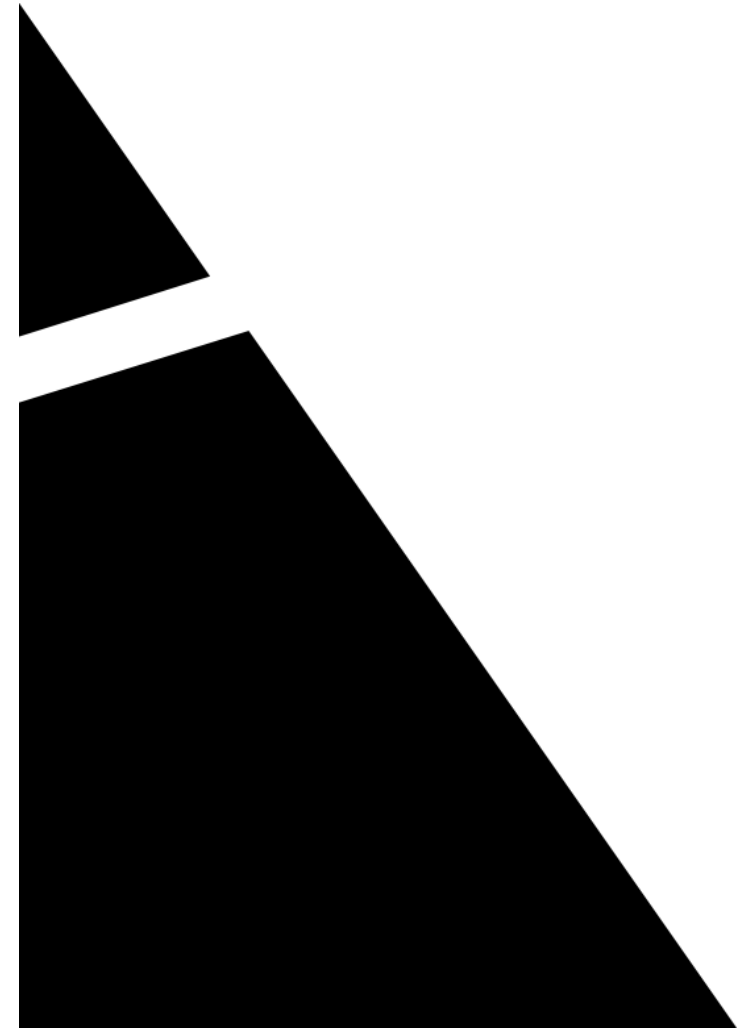
11. An innocent tweet about your breakfast spirals out of control, when a police squad arrests you for treason...



12. It was the 25th of May when the clocks stopped. They needed more time. *Continue...*



13. Your hair, features and skin are gradually disappearing. What do you see when you look in the mirror?



14. Write a poem using three of the following words:

*expensive*

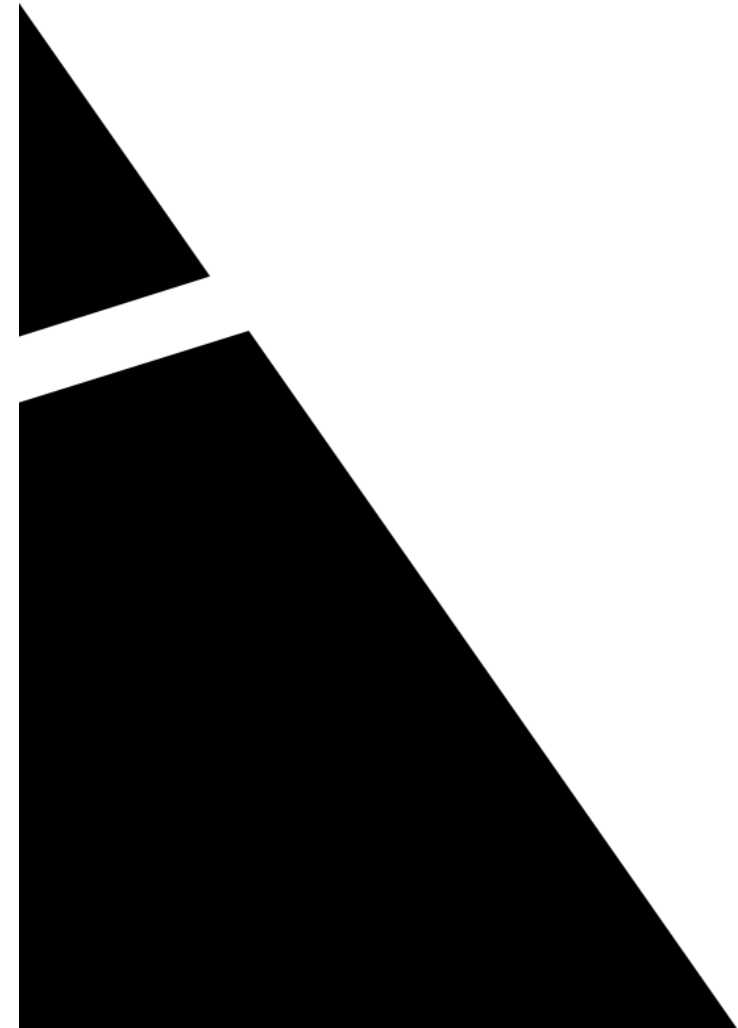
*lampshade*

*bruise*

*convincing*



15. Write a poem in the form of a message or letter to your future self.

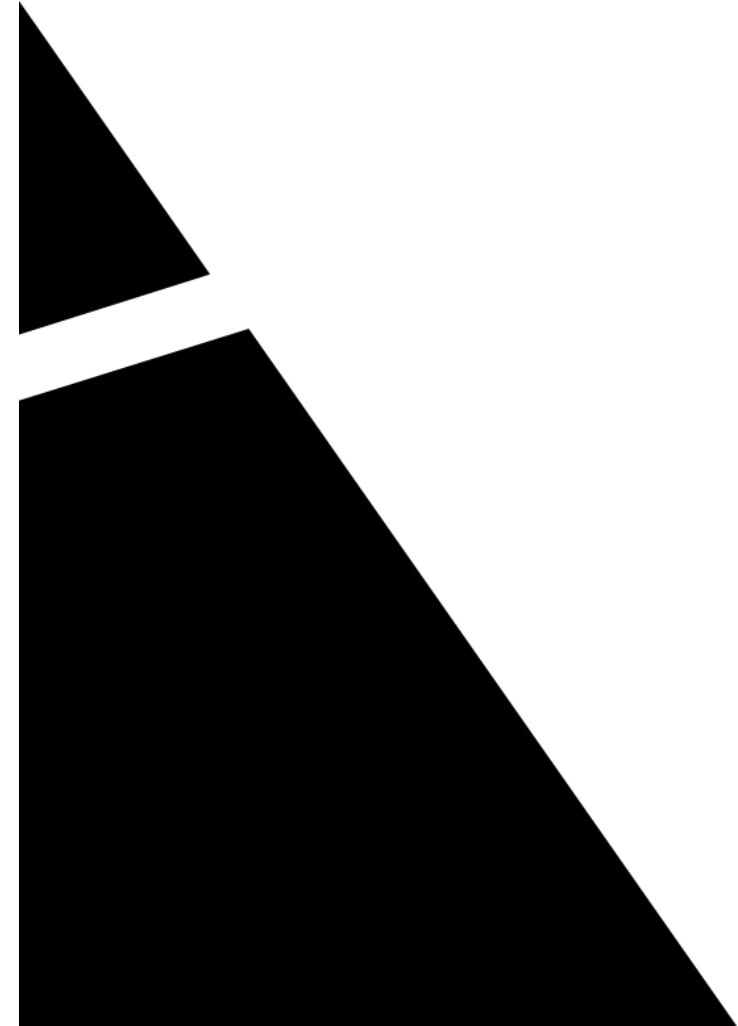




16. Write a poem about yourself in which nothing is true.

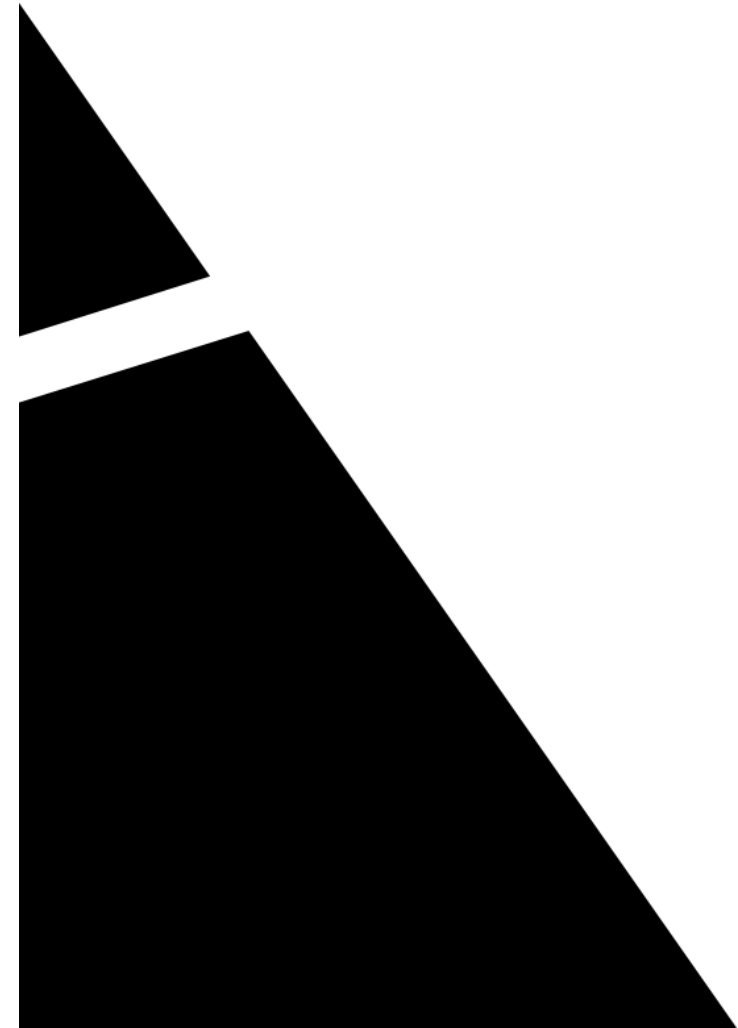


17. Write a poem in rhyming couplets about three wishes.



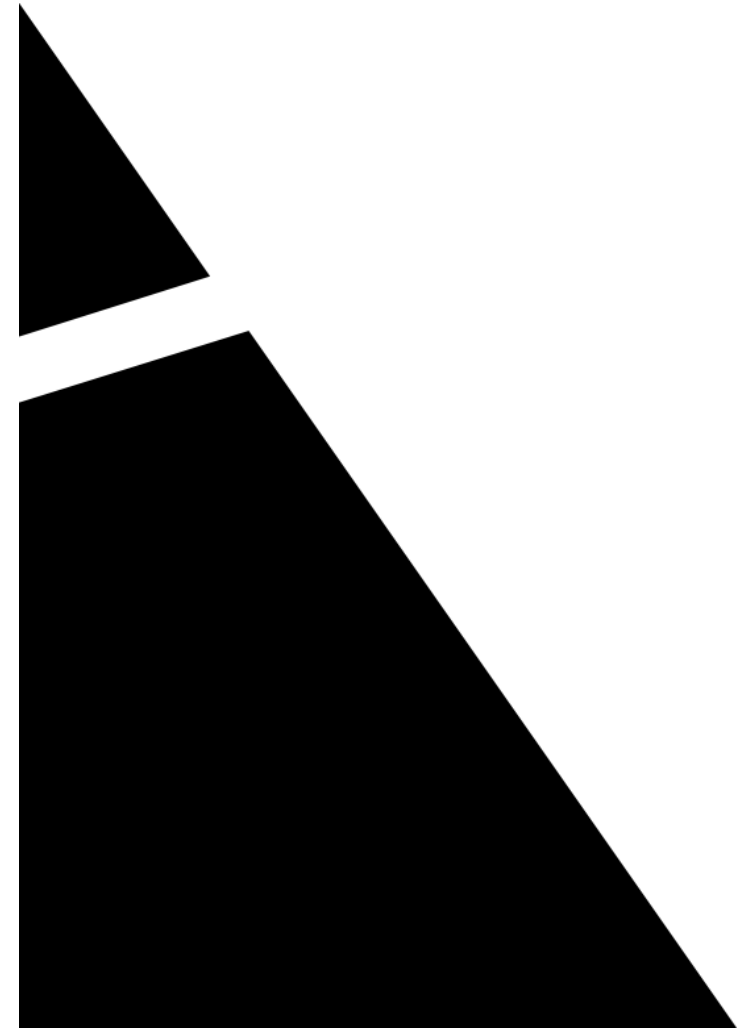
18. Write instructions for:

*how to cry*



19. Write instructions for:

*dreaming*



20. Write instructions for:

*peeling a peach*



## 21. Short story idea:

*A campfire, a scream, and a small lie that gets bigger and bigger*



## 22. Short story idea:

*An iPhone, a glove and a half eaten sandwich...*



## 23. Short story idea:

*The first day of school, a love note,  
and a recipe with a significant  
mistake...*

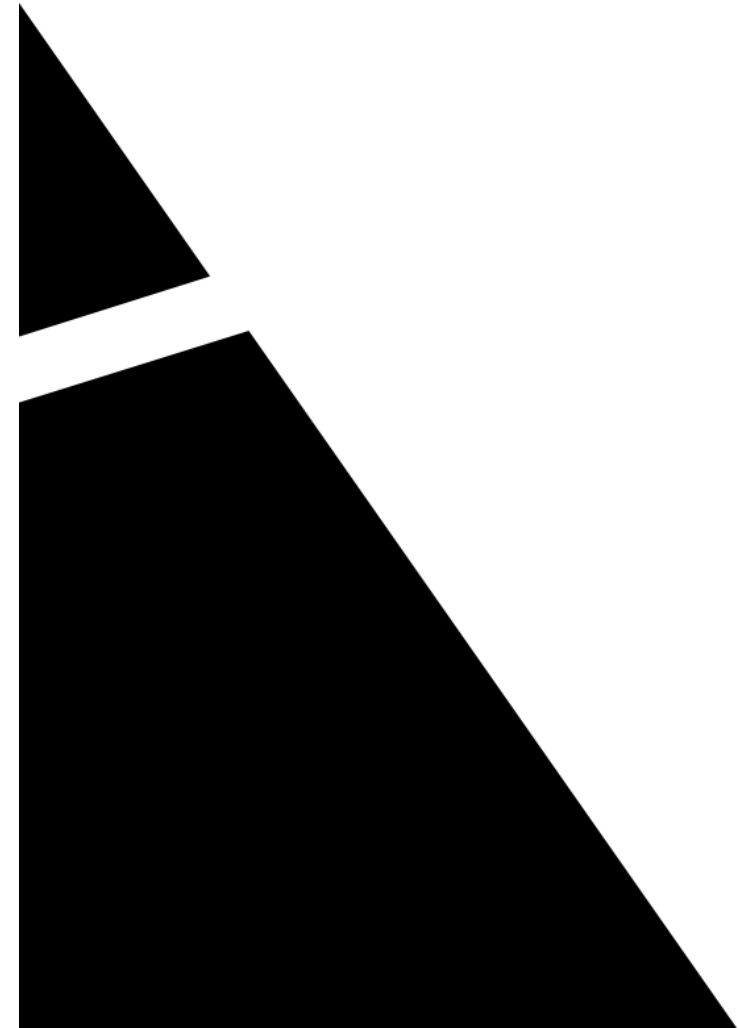




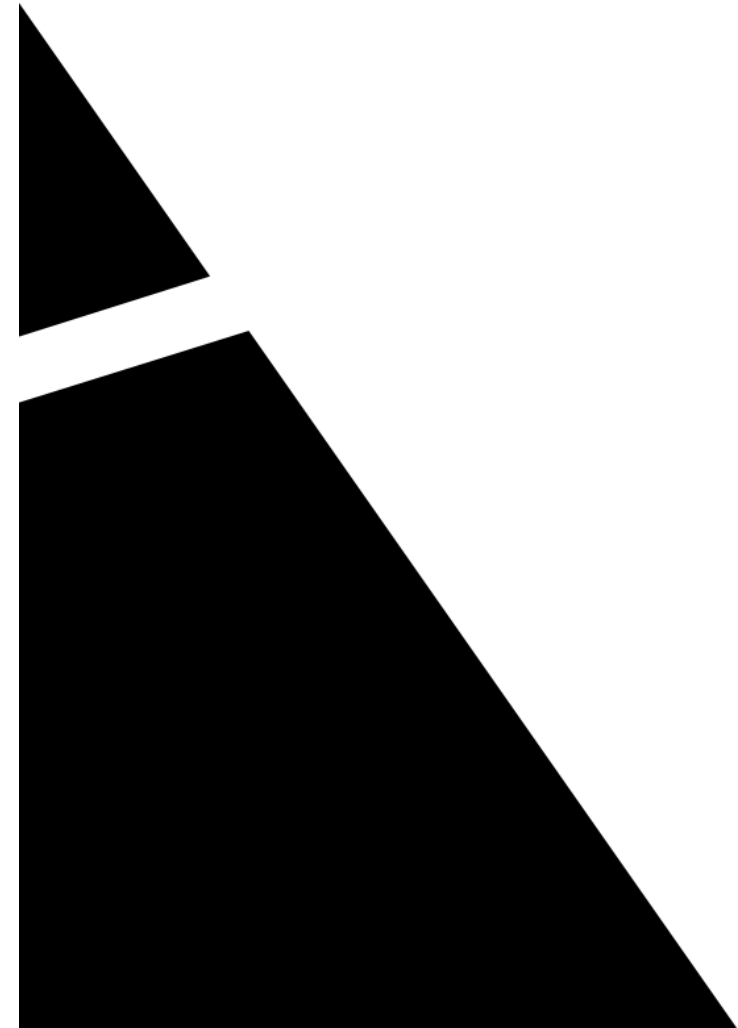
24. Write a scene of dialogue between your present self and your future self.



25. Write a scene of dialogue  
between *[insert historical figure]*  
and *[insert historical figure]*



26. Write down as many words as you can in 5 minutes describing a person's voice *e.g. wobbly, thin....*



27. Write down as many words as you can describing sleep *e.g. deep, restless...*



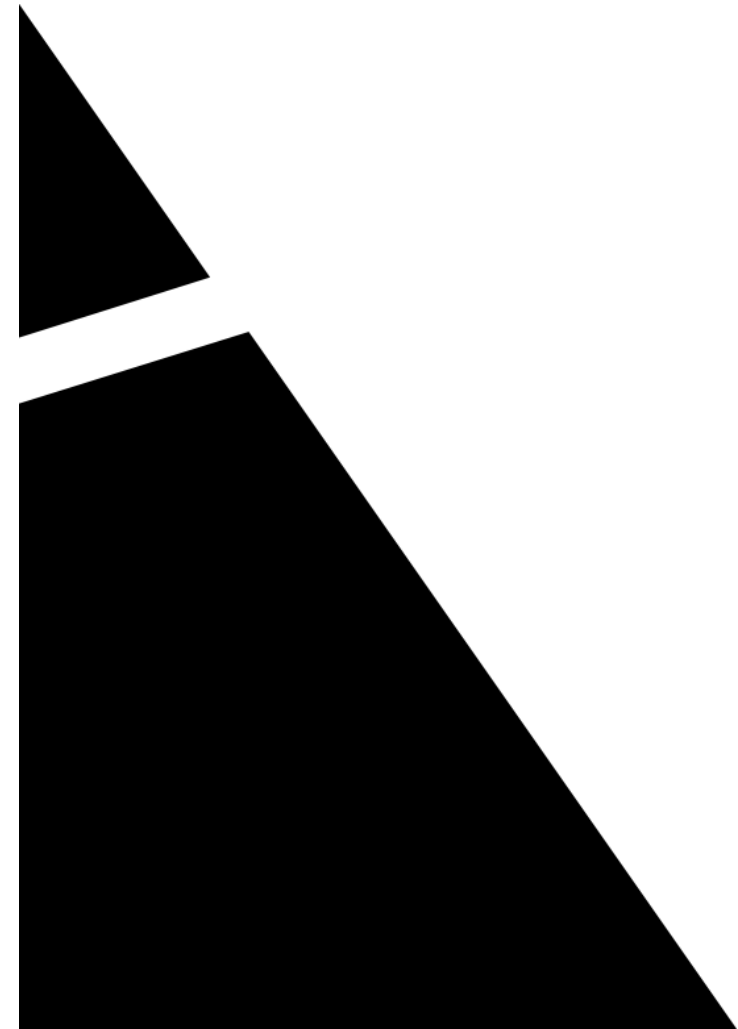
28. How many words can you think of instead of writing '*said*'?



29. Synonym  
Snap! Mix these  
words up and  
make pairs,  
using a  
dictionary to  
help.

centre	hear	stare	fight	pull
present	halt	fast	hurt	creek
damp	lump	paste	get	dislike
paw	hate	fire	grin	stream
lost	wait	receive	big	stay
listen	blaze	quick	little	lid
missing	unhappy	glue	sad	harm
wet	gift	foot	rush	pick
hurry	strange	choose	gaze	
middle	battle	silly	small	
chunk	tow	odd	smile	
stop	funny	cover	large	

30. Point of View: A character is moving to another city. They visit their favourite public place and see something that makes them want to stay. Describe this in 500 words, using third person POV (he/she). Then rewrite in first person, using 'I'.



# 31. Read this out loud, it's so satisfying!

This sentence has five words.

Here are five more words. Five-word sentences are fine. But several together become monotonous. Listen to what is happening. The writing is getting boring. The sound of it drones. It's like a stuck record. The ear demands some variety.

Now listen.

I vary the sentence length, and I create music. Music. The writing sings. It has a pleasant rhythm, a lilt, a harmony. I use short sentences. And I use sentences of medium length.

And sometimes, when I am certain the reader is rested, I will engage him with a sentence of considerable length, a sentence that burns with energy and builds with all the impetus of a crescendo, the roll of the drums, the crash of the cymbals— sounds that say listen to this, it is important.



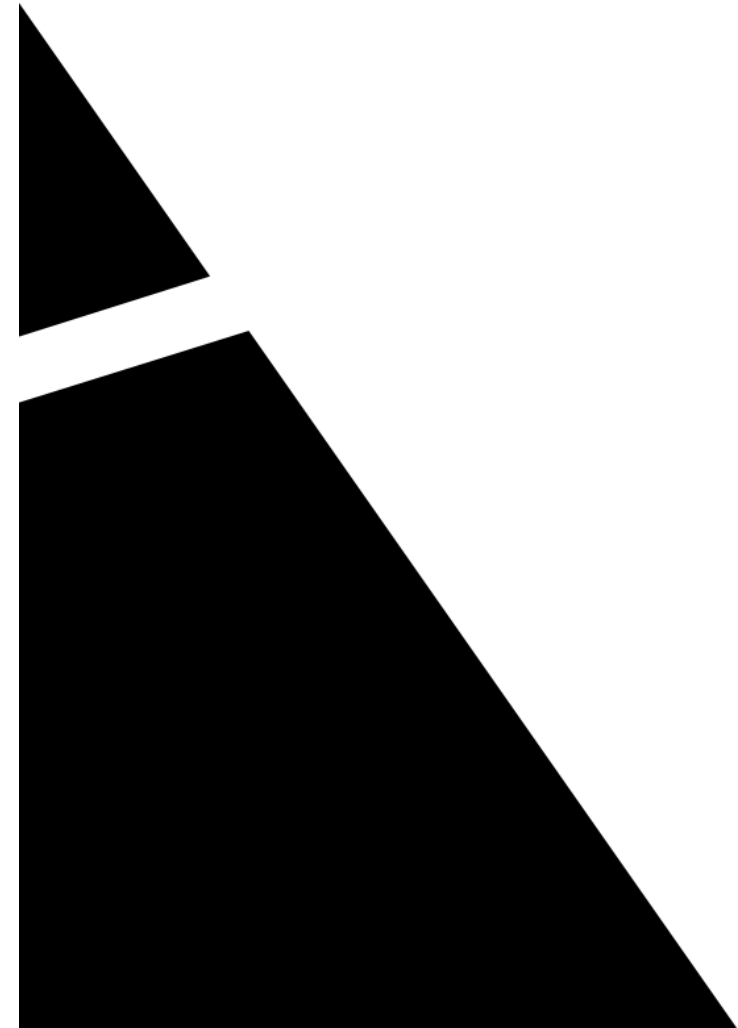
32. Shakespeare: You are trying to convince someone to go out with you from directly below his or her balcony. What do you say and how do you "proclaim your love?"



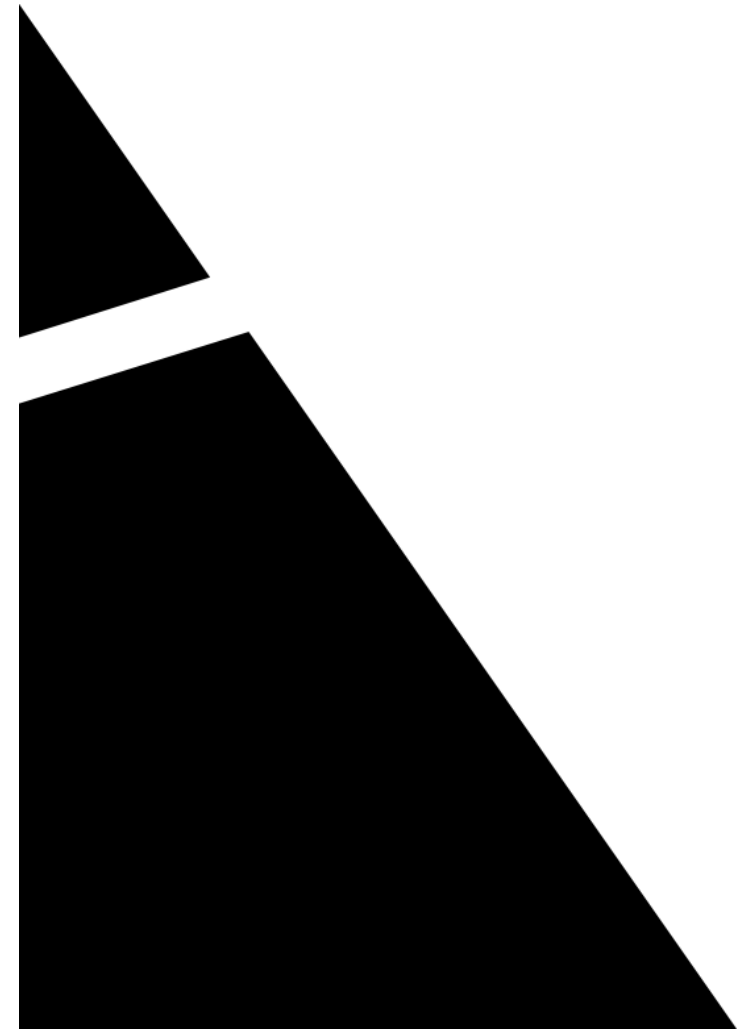
33. Dinner party: choose three characters from a play or book you are studying and have them sit around a dinner table making polite talk with one another. What do they talk about, are they happy to be there? What's going on inside their heads?



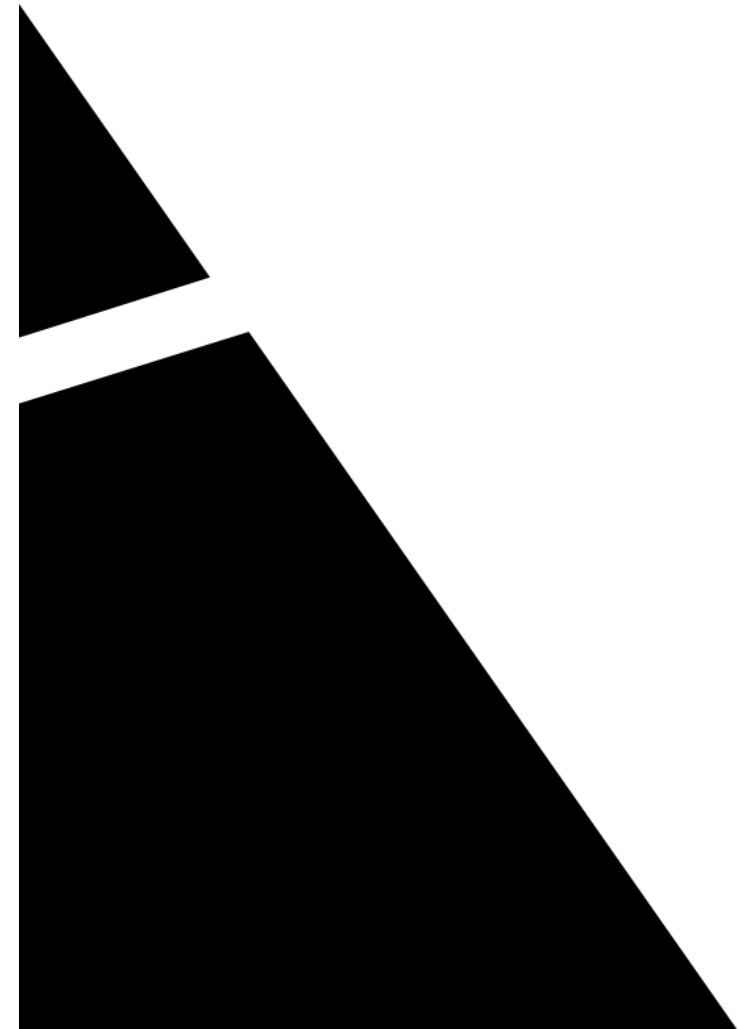
34. You're standing in a field in front of a huge hole. You can't see the bottom, so you lean right over. Suddenly you lose your footing and begin to fall and fall and fall. Describe what you're thinking after 5 minutes of falling. What about after an hour? A day?



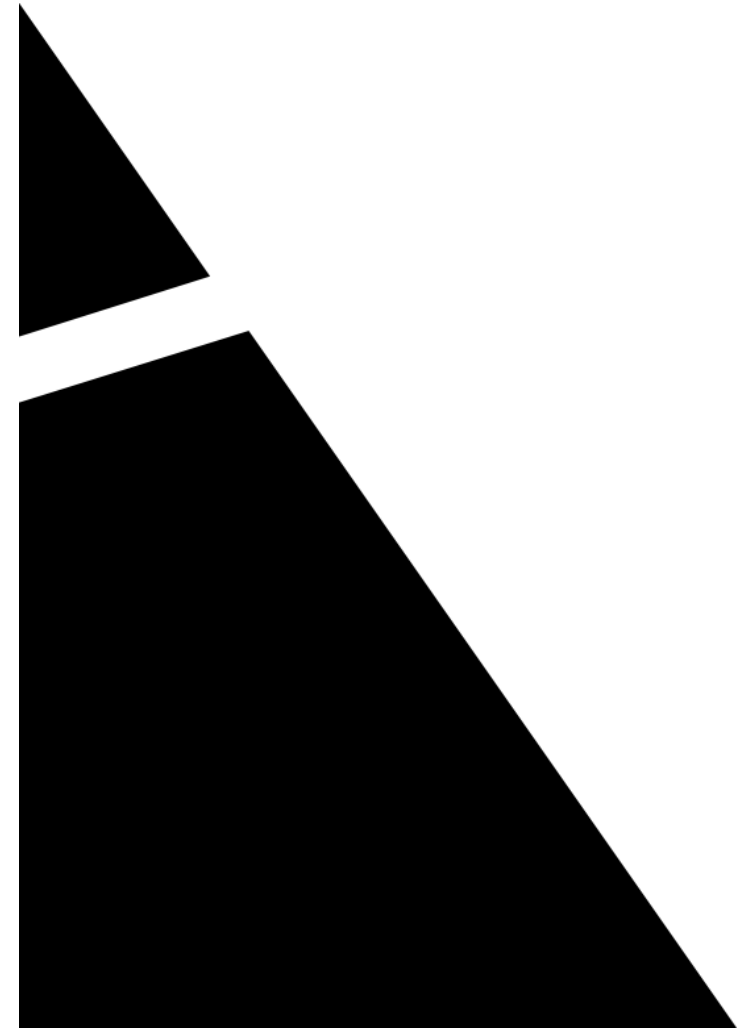
35. You're on a train, trundling through the city or countryside. You enter a tunnel when suddenly the lights turn out, plunging you into total darkness. Then, seconds later, you leave the tunnel and the light returns. What do you see?



36. Describe the process of eating your favourite food as if talking to someone who has never heard of it (for example, first take your fork and stab it into the edge of the spaghetti, then begin to rotate it slowly)



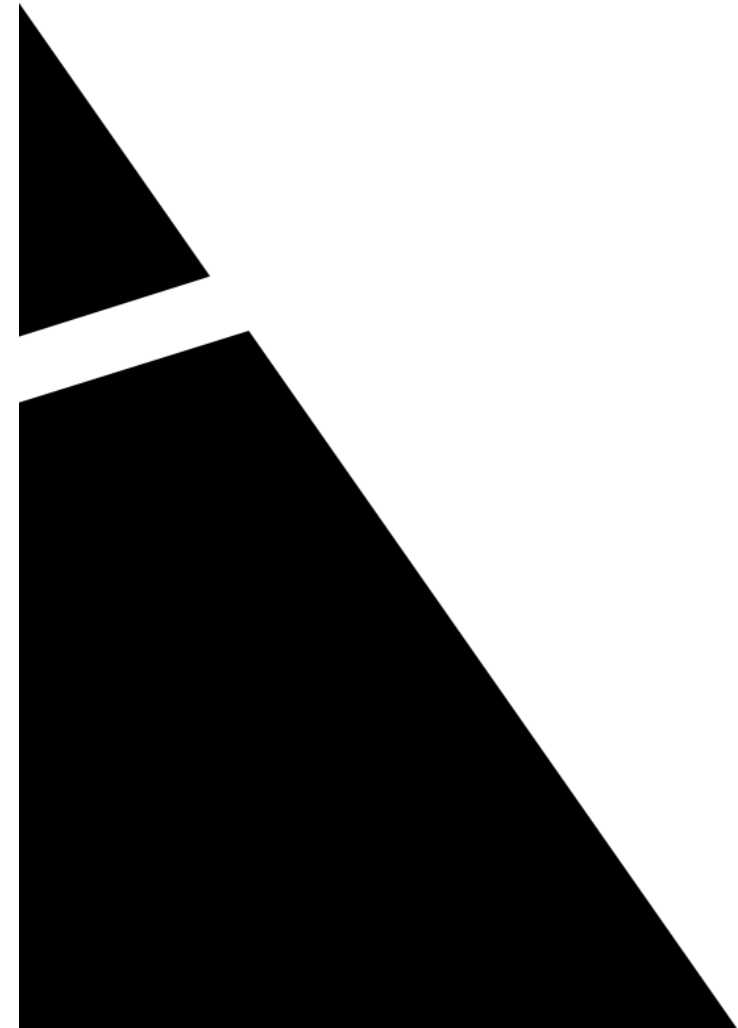
37. Describe someone you know really well in the style of a recipe.



38. Think about a small object that means a lot to you. Begin to describe it. Imagine first that you are looking at it. Then, pick it up. Describe its weight, size, texture, maybe even its smell or taste. Use all five senses to describe the object.



39. What does Time look like? How does Time spend its time? What is its favourite thing to do?





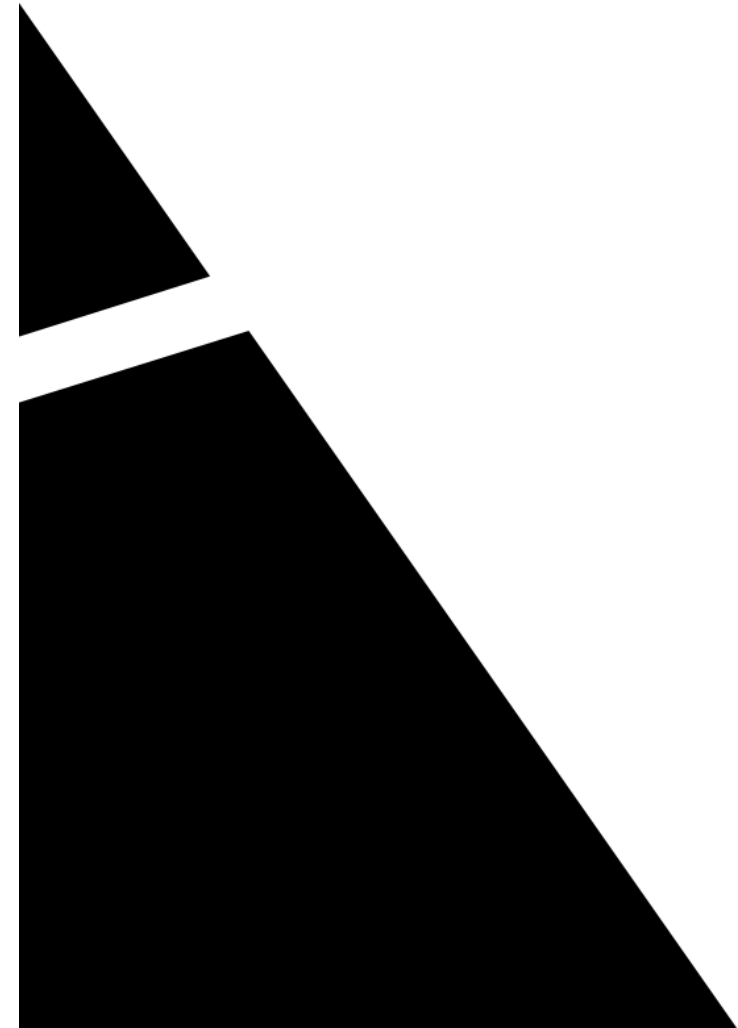
40. "Readers are plentiful, thinkers are rare" This is a portrait of Harriet Martineau; she is considered one of the first female social theorists. What do you think she meant by this quote?



41. An alien is planning a trip to earth and has asked you for advice. What three things would you tell it (this could be a place to go, something to eat, or explaining a human trait)



42. There's been a box in the middle of the city for as long as you can remember. No one ever talks about it and you're beginning to wonder what it's there for. Describe the box.



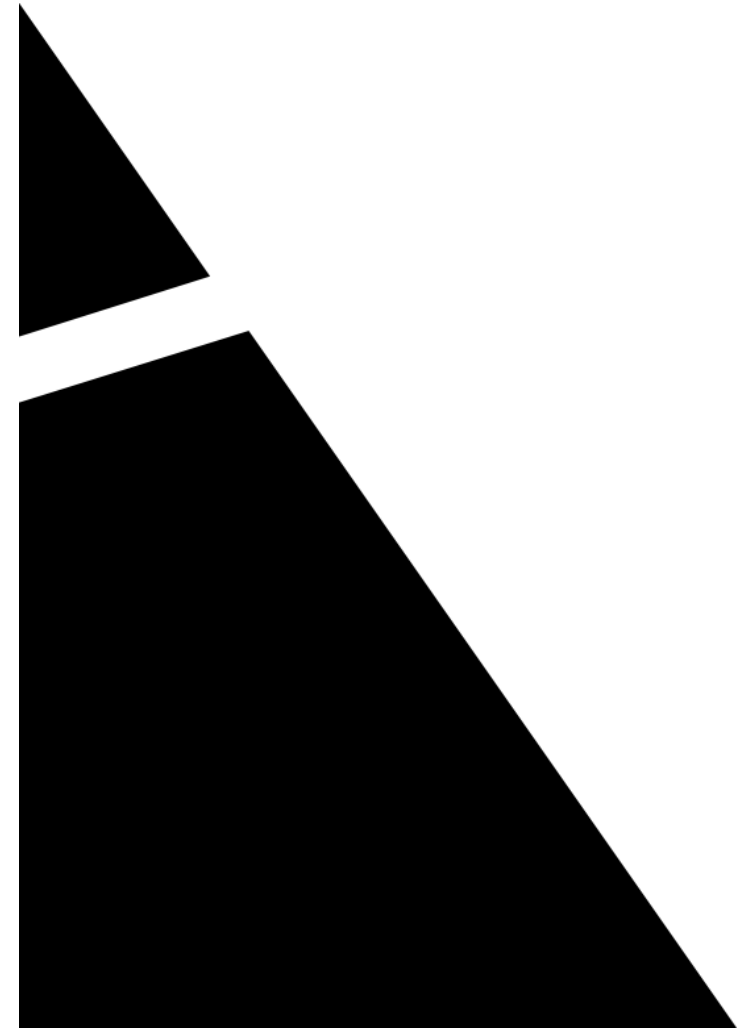
43. Think about two characters from a book or play you are studying. Imagine they're emailing each other. What would they say?



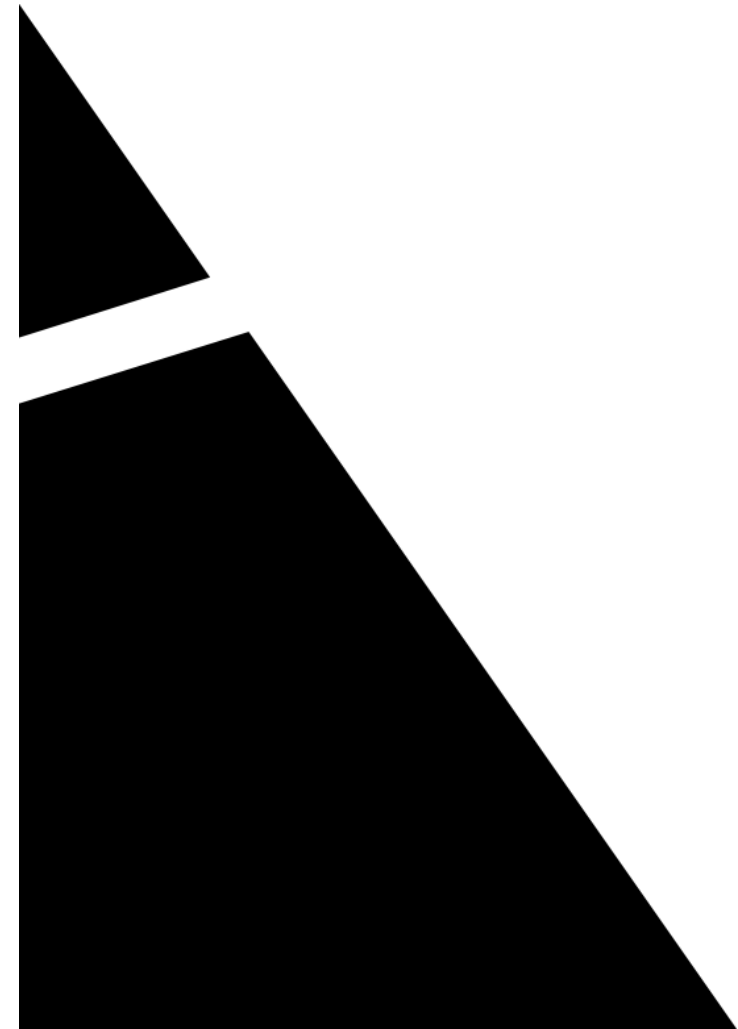
44. What does the truth look like?  
What colour is it? What can it see?  
What is it thinking about now??



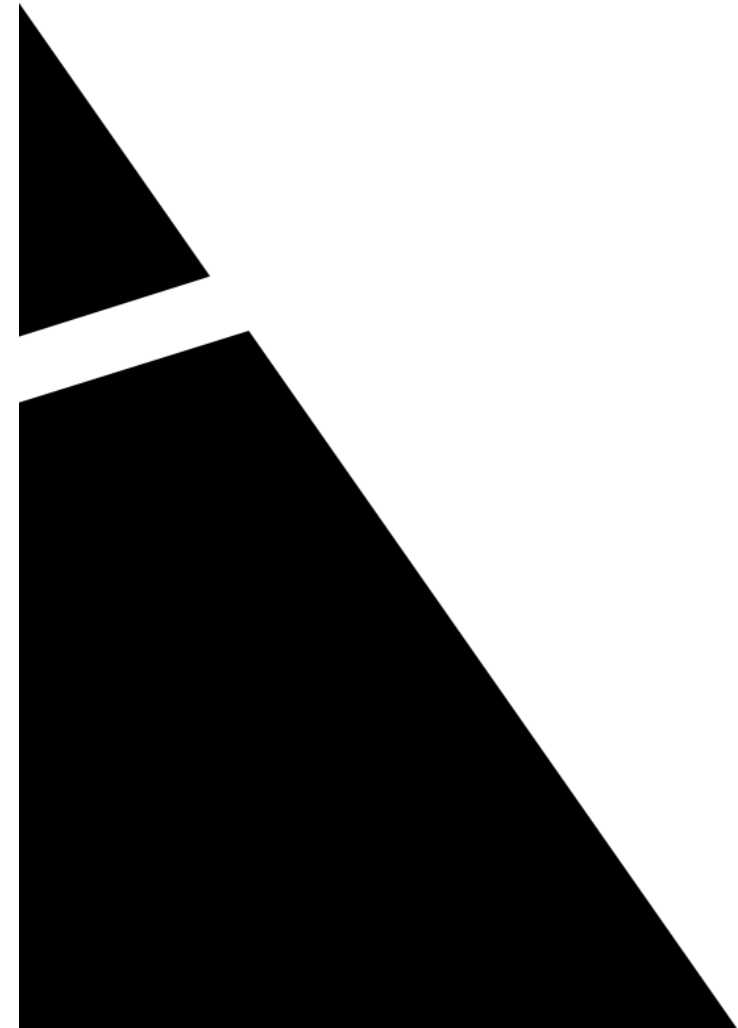
45. You live in a world where pictures have always been in color and only turn sepia when someone is dying before going black and white after they've passed. One day, you notice that some of your pictures have started getting their colour back... finish the story



46. You've got a super-power which means you don't feel pain and your body repairs itself if it gets hurt. You've taken up a job as a test dummy for products that could cause harm to others if faulty. Write about your daily life.



47. A serial killer pretending to be a Door-to-Door salesman knocks on the door of a serial killer who kills Door-to-Door salesmen. What happens next?

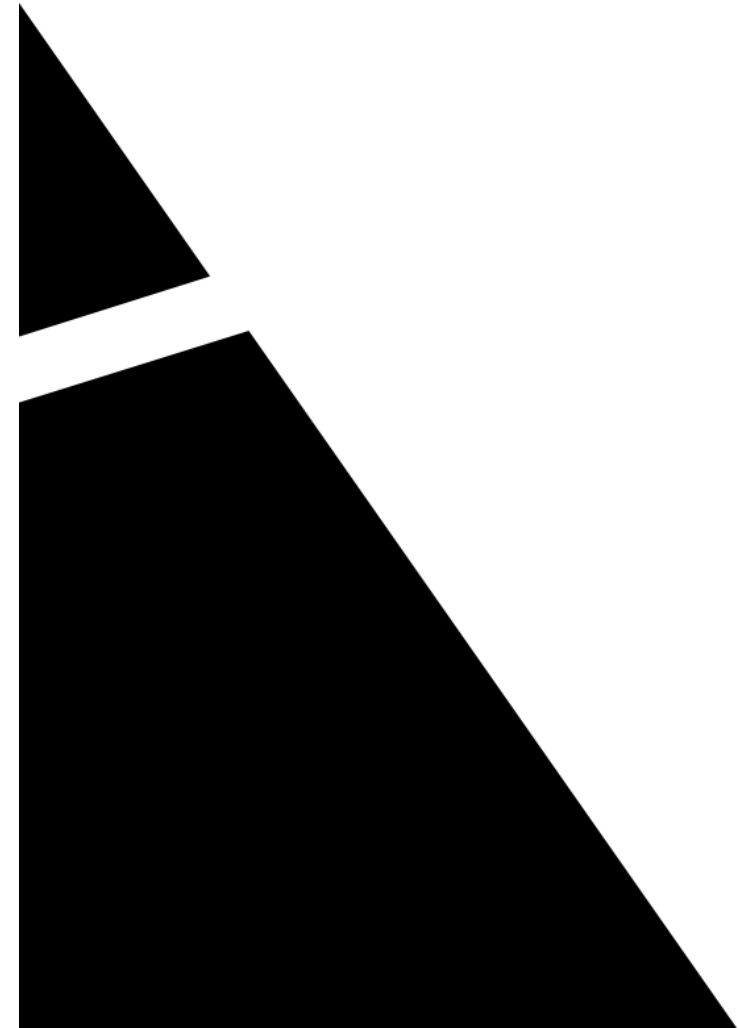




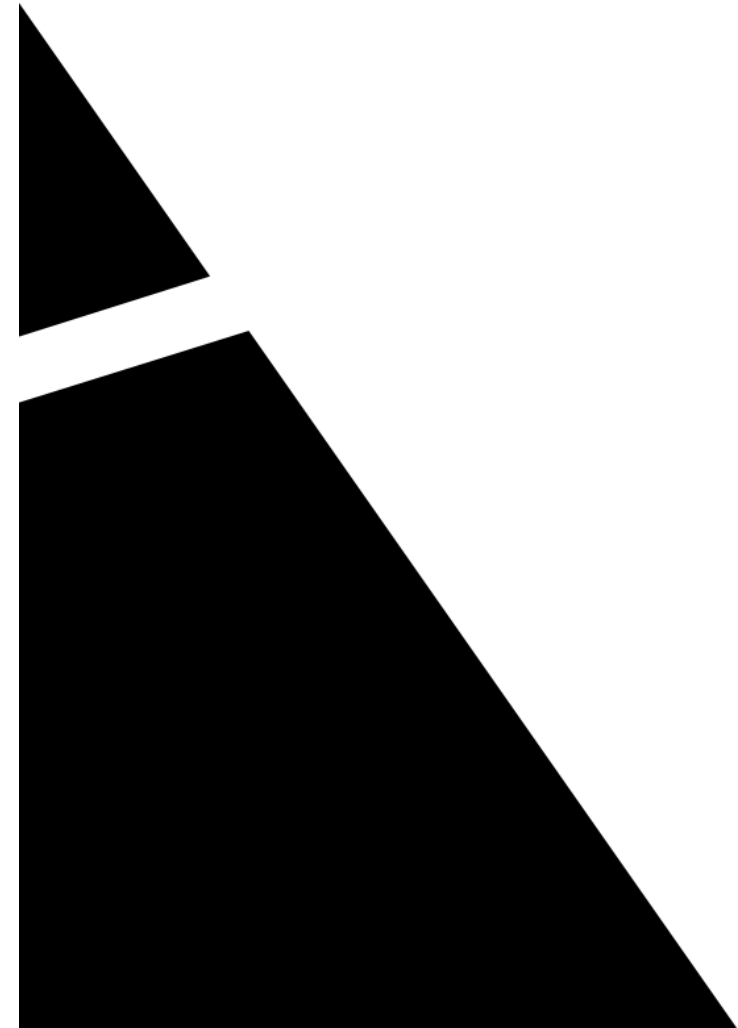
48. Describe the events leading up to this photograph:



49. Everyone always feared the day that the sun would go out, but no one was prepared for the night the moon disappeared... What happened next?



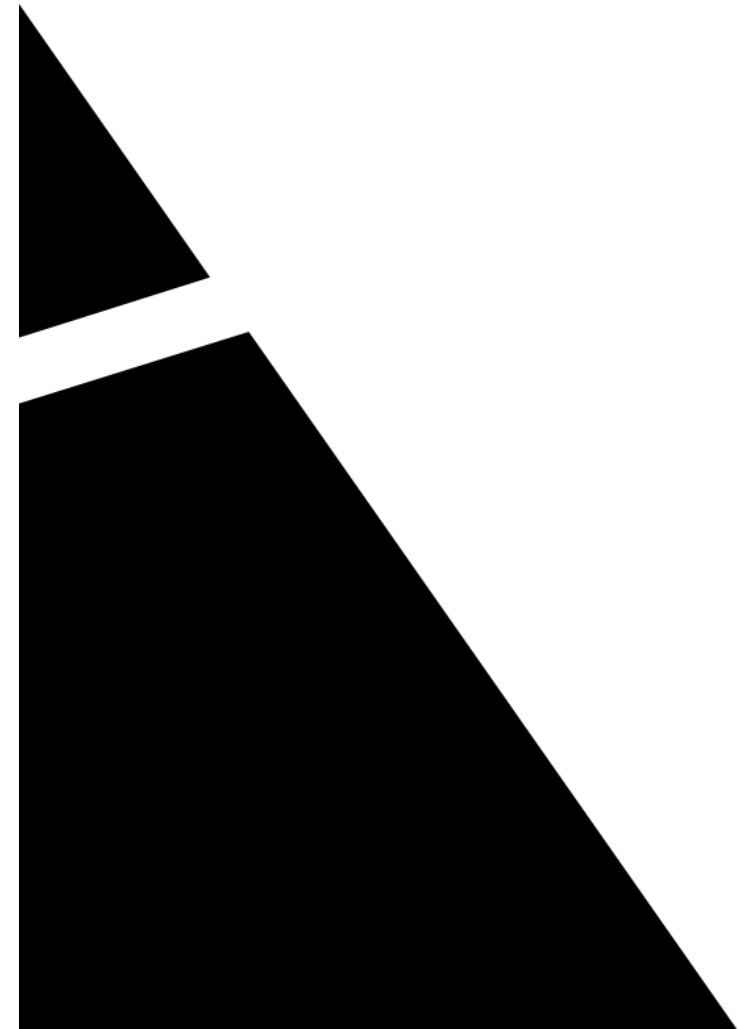
50. They say good literature should be timeless. So remove time. Write a story set in the void.



51. You're a scientist who has just discovered a brand new type of flower. Describe it using as many senses as possible.



52. You, a time traveller, accidentally introduced twenty-first century slang to Shakespeare. Rewrite one of his sonnets or soliloquies using modern slang.



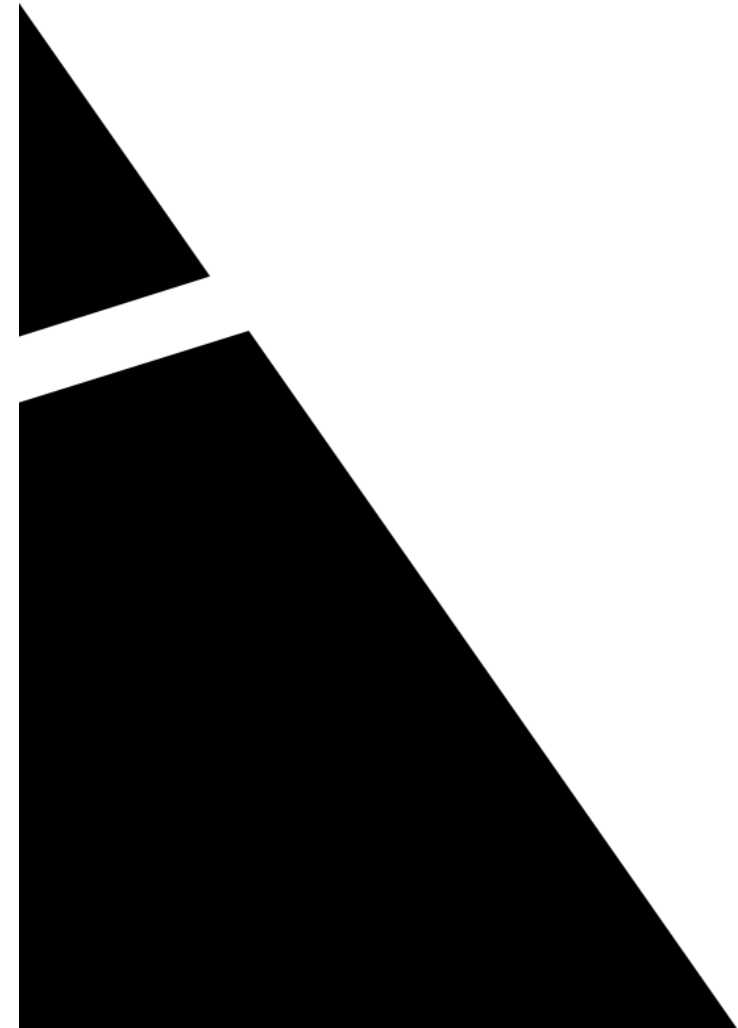
53. There is a gate in the middle of an empty field, with a sign saying 'please close the gate behind you'. One day, you walk past and see the gate has been left open - what is on the other side of the gate?



54. Look out of the window and describe the weather in one word. Now write a letter to your head teacher to convince them to let you have a snow-day, even though it isn't snowing.



55. Write a recipe for the best thing to do on a cold day.





56. Imagine you are part of one of those original Globe Theatre audiences for a Shakespeare play. What is it like? How does it smell? What's the atmosphere like, are people enjoying the play or heckling?

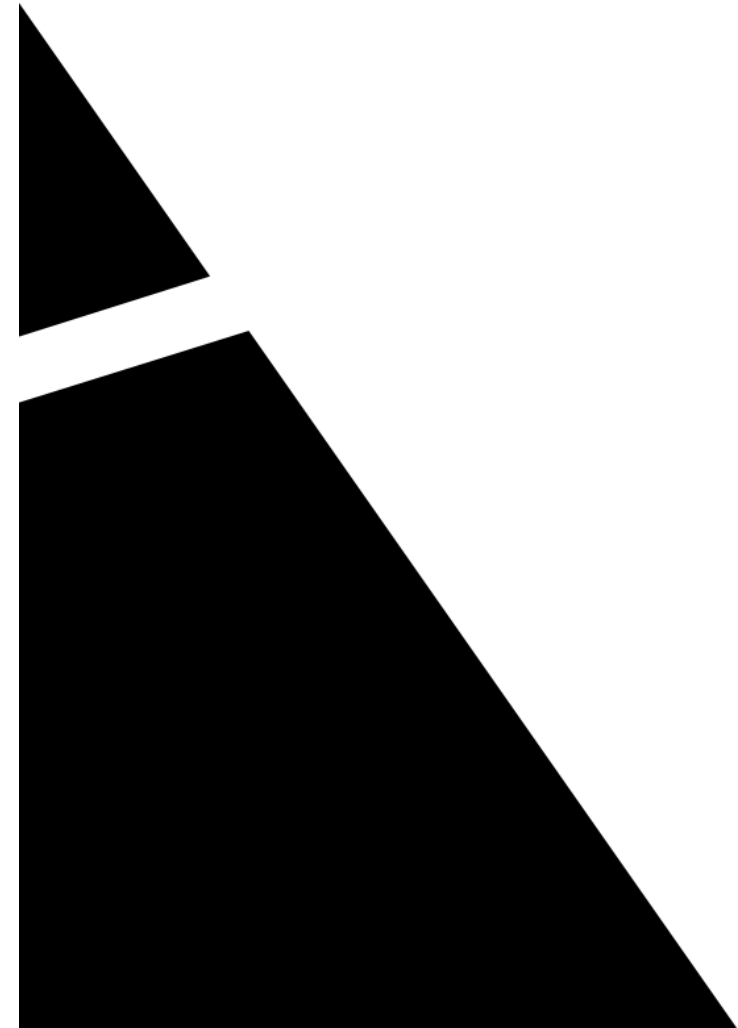


57. Finish the following sentence in as many different ways as possible in the next 2 minutes:

Winter wind is like \_\_\_\_\_



58. You are the team captain of a snowball fight. Write down your half-time speech.



59. You're giving the concept of imagination as a gift to your best friend. Describe the process of wrapping this present.



60. Describe the journey from your bedroom to your nearest Christmas tree in the style of a travel writer.



61. Make up a new word by picking two random words from a from a book. Explain what it means, or even what it does not mean. Give examples of how you could use your new word.

Age 9+

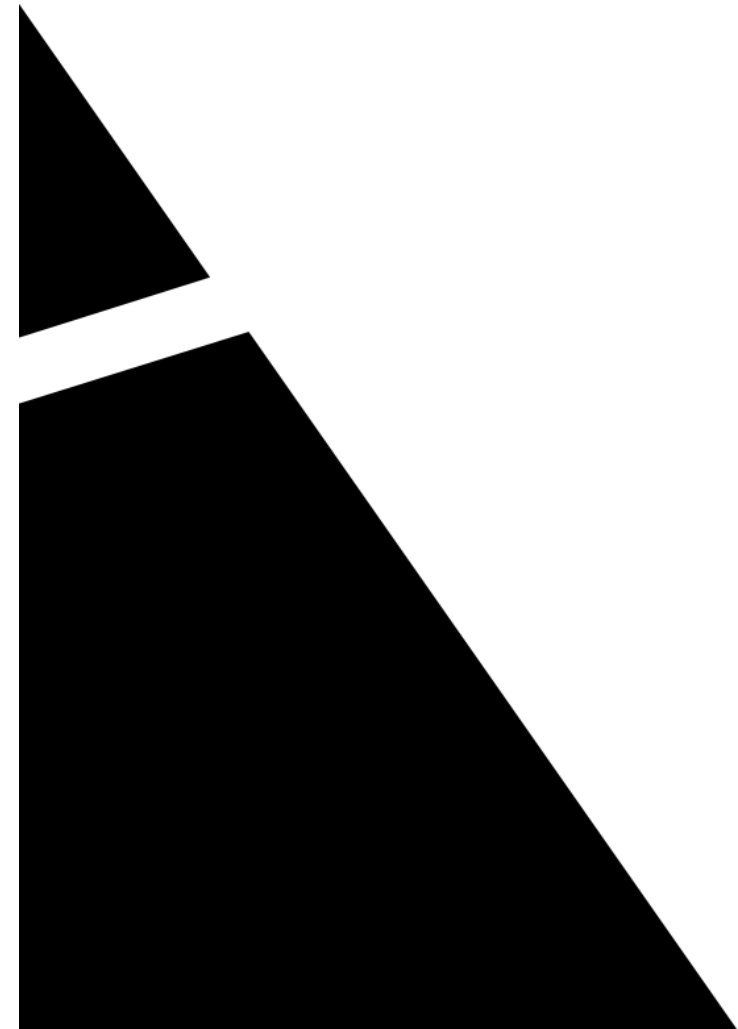


62. Flick through a dictionary, and choose two words next to each other. Imagine that these words have had a disagreement. What might it be about?

Age 9+



63. Concepts - It's a warm summer's day. Two figures from different periods of history meet – perhaps they are politicians, musicians or inventors. Write the scene in dialogue.  
Age 12+





64. Words for wellbeing quote: 'I can shake off everything as I write; my sorrows disappear, my courage is reborn.' — Anne Frank  
Age 9+.



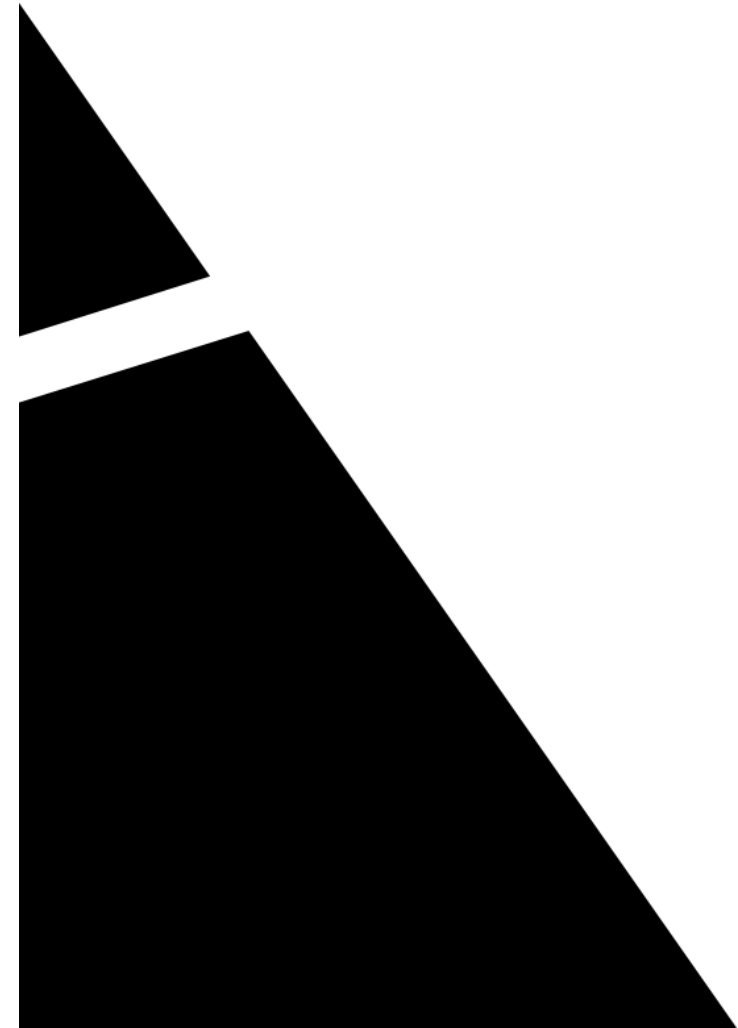
65. Words for wellbeing: Revisit a moment in your life that you feel you will never be able to forget. What about that moment made it so unforgettable?

Age 9+



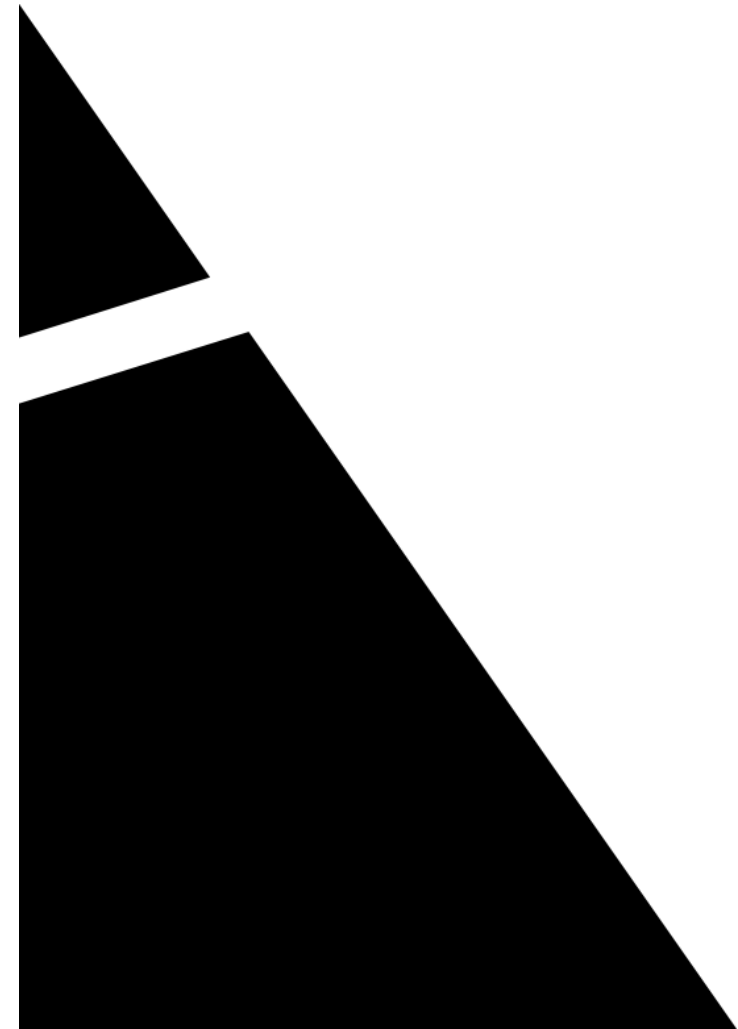
66. What if you discovered a portal to another world? Where is the portal? How does it work? What's on the other side?

Age 9+



67. You have forgotten everything you once knew. Write about a mundane task (e.g. brushing your teeth, sweeping the floor) as if you were doing it for the first time. Would you see the task in a different light?

Age 5+



68. You are at the beach,  
and you find some  
unfamiliar tracks in the  
sand. You follow the tracks  
- what do you find?  
Age 9+



69. Write about the place in which you feel most happy. Describe the location, your emotions, and why the place is significant.

Age 9+



70. Describe the hottest day you  
can remember.  
Age 9+



71. You're on the bus and you hear somebody having a phone conversation. What are they saying? Then, write the conversation from the other person on the line's perspective. What do you think they would say?

Age 12+





72. Who do you think might have lived in your house 100 years ago? If your house is new, what might've happened on the land where you now live?

Age 9+



73. Play a piece of music which does not have lyrics. Ask students to write continuously for 5 minutes in response to the music. Tip: to prompt writers, ask them to think about what emotions come to mind when they listen.

Age 12+



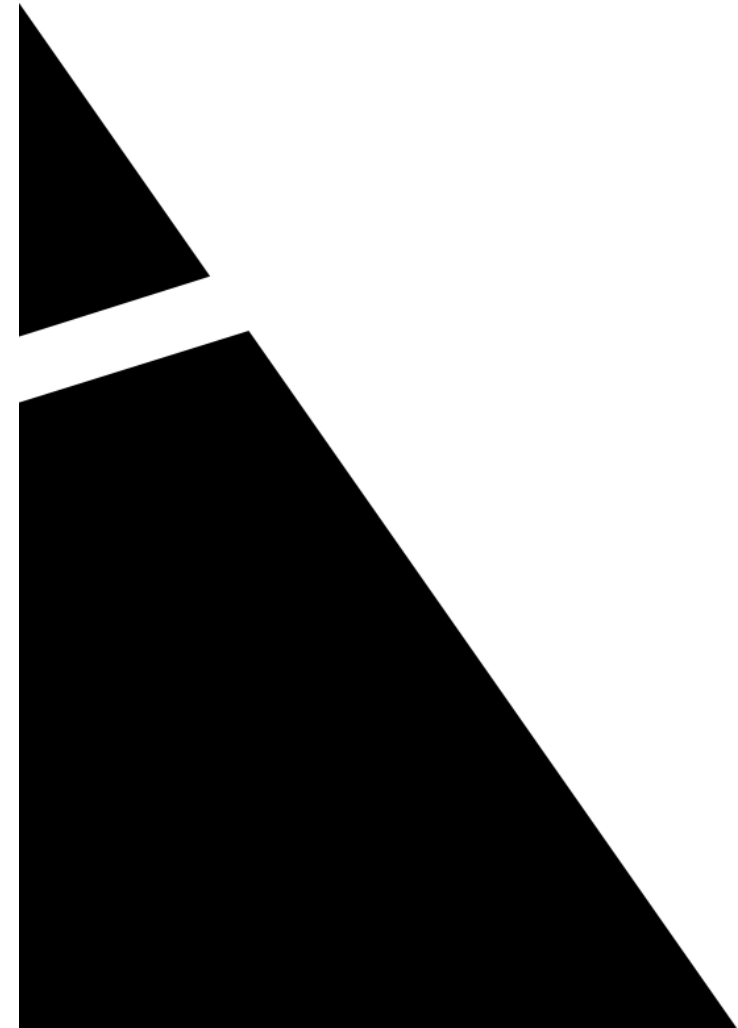
# 74. Read 'The Way it is' by William Stafford



75. Make as many words out of the word 'THREADS' as you can (there are many!)

5-15 minutes

Can you construct a sentence out of those words?



## 76. Writing for well being: Life Lists

1 - 5 minutes, age 9+

1. Write a list of 5 things you love
2. Write a list of 5 things you enjoy
3. Write a list of 5 things you are grateful for



## 77. Writing for well being: Life Lists #2

5 minutes, age 15+

1. Think about the person you were when you were X years old. Write a statement that tells that X year old about something they will achieve in their future.
2. Now write a piece of advice for that X year old
3. Now write a reassuring statement to that X year old

## 78. Writing for well being: 'The Journey' by Mary Oliver

15 minutes, age 15+

- Ask students to think about a personal change they have made or had to make
- Now read the poem or give copies out
- Ask students to pick out words or phrases that stand out for them and write them down as a list
- These words and phrases can now form the start of new lines of a poem about personal journeys students have made



## 79. Words for well being: My friend is as constant as the moon.

Age 12+

- Ask students to choose an emotion or feeling they are familiar with - it can be positive or negative (such as excitement / jealousy )
- Now ask them to write down
- What colour is that emotion?
- What size is it?
- If you touched it, what would it feel like under your hands?
- What does that emotion smell like?
- If it spoke, what would its voice sound like? A growl, a hum?
- Now ask students to write down things/objects/ that are like that emotion. Tip: the natural world is a good source for ideas
- You can extend this exercise as further by choosing a list of emotions to work on. By the end students will have a list of feelings/emotions embodied in metaphor.





80. Words for well being: an acrostic poem  
about Change

10 minutes, age 12+

Ask students to write either a word or  
sentence which begins with that letter that  
embodies how they feel about change.

