

breath poems

page
page
spreading sentence
sprawling breath

one notebook
four iterations
one poem

0.

Select a notebook from a time ago, that holds notes you would like to come back to.

1.

On a bright morning, hold a cup of tea between your hands, inhale, take a sip from the hot beverage, exhale, place the cup back on your desk, inhale –

or

After a time of being out of breath –

float your gaze as you flip through the pages of the selected notebook.

Close the notebook and open it once again to one two-page spread.

2.

Breathe diagonally across the two-page spread. Inhale, exhale.

Notate *a sprawling sentence* that emerges from this breathing.

3.

Explore *the exhale of the sentence* until it materializes in the time and/or space around you.

4.

Let a moment float by.

5.

Notate on one A4 page:

- the breathing process from which the sentence has emerged,
- the sentence,
- the breathing process of materializing the sentence,
- (one trace of) the materialization.

6.

With the same notebook, repeat the whole sequence (1.-5.) on three different occasions (four iterations in total).

7.

Condensate your four A4 pages into one breath poem.*

★

During the process, take pictures of the notebook, the two-page spreads, and the materialized sentences.

Coda

Two people ask for two pages and one long sentence to open materializations of extended time, expanding time, breath and capaciousness. As breathing animates both language and the body, they thought it might be appropriate as a starting point for a shared exploration of the way languaging and bodying in-charge each other.

They ask: how can breath crystalize into words? how can an emphasis on breathing effect a kind of reading across that floats diagonally, between slow blinking or the distance of a long gaze? which words arise from breathing?

Together, they devised a proposal which might be inserted as a pause into one's daily pursuits and nurture one's own interests. What if we think of the sentence as a space for living? How can a sprawling sentence carry a sense of present that is so large you can't see around it?¹ Their hope is to enable insights into the practices of others and pave the way for further explorations.

1. Renee Gladmann in conversation with Kate Briggs in *The Yale Review*, 2021 inspired these last two sentences.