

Writing exercises - poetry - Lorsung

One meter²

Go outside and choose any location. Mark out (visually or materially) an area of about one square meter (yard). Set a timer for 30 minutes. During that time, catalogue every object and phenomenon within the area in as much particular detail as possible. Include the space of the air above the marked-out square meter. Use drawing, writing, or a combination of both.

Temperature / light / humidity / color / form / relation / pattern / balance / proportion / scale / etc.

If going outside is not comfortable, this can be done indoors.

When you return, make a gridded lexicon with one observation (object, phenomenon—a word or short phrase) per space. We will use this lexicon to make poems throughout the semester, repeating as time goes by to generate lexica that respond to the season's emergence.

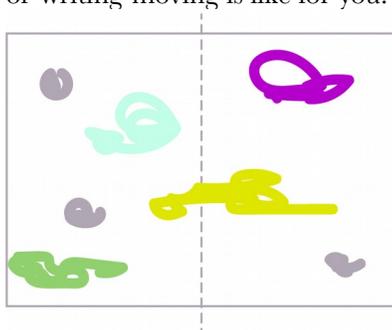
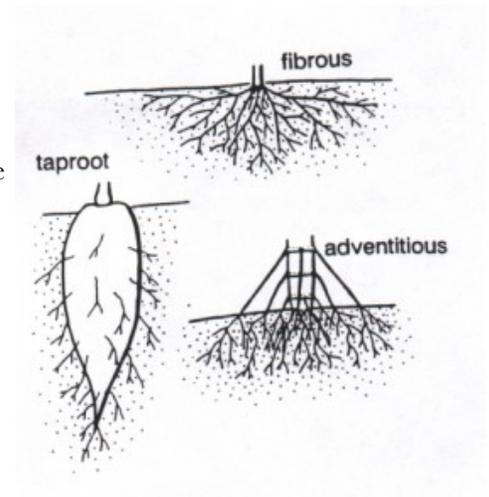
Node form / line form

This exercise will use the plant matter you collected in an earlier exercise as a basis for observational writing.

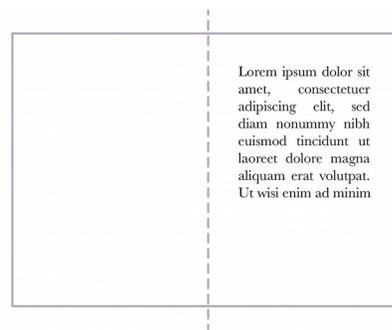
Plant morphology gives us images that can suggest page forms and line forms. For example, the singularity of the taproot suggests unbrokenness, fullness, unified directionality, linearity, while adventitious roots (which develop from stem or root nodes) suggest mobility, jointedness, plurality, network.

We can sometimes treat the page, especially the page on the screen, as a one-way street: top to bottom, left to right, a linear progression of sense-making. Working directly with the hand, we can move language and image in other kinds of relation. In so doing, we make new kinds of sense: associative, referential, repetitive, rhizomatic, nodal.

Working by hand on a two-page spread, and using Thomas A. Clark's poems/fragments from *Farm by the Shore* as formal inspiration, move **nodally** around the space of the page. Observe the plant matter you collected in detail, composing your own fragments. Allow yourself to leave ideas unfinished and (possibly) pick them up elsewhere on the page. Pay attention to color, form, pattern. Let your language be plain. Elide anything (don't feel you need to be grammatical). Repeat anything (as often as you want). Notice what this kind of writing-moving is like for you.



Nodal movement



Linear movement