



# BACON BLACKOUT POETRY

## Grade Level

4+

## Length of Lesson

45 minutes

## Objective

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to create poetry using non-fictional texts.

## Materials Needed

- Access to paper copies or online version of our AITC Pork Ag Mag
- Black markers

## Standards

### Common Core

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.2;  
RL.4.5; RI.4.7; W.4.5;  
L.4.4; RL.5.6; RL.5.7;  
RI.5.1; RL.6.4; CCRA.R.4;  
CCRA.R.6; CCRA.R.7

## Lesson Summary

This lesson is designed to introduce or strengthen students' skills of writing poetry. Blackout poetry is a great beginning to a poetry unit because it allows students to create a poem by removing words from an already written piece of non-fiction!

## Suggested Sequence of Events:

1. Read through the AITC Pork Ag Mag to learn more about pork and familiarize students with the text they will be using!
2. Complete the activity following the procedures:
  - Make copies of the different sections of the Pork Ag Mag and have students choose which section they would like to focus on.
  - Once students have chosen their section, have students read through it a few times to become more familiar with the material.
  - Students will begin to create a poem by "blacking out" any words and phrases that they do not want to use. The words that are left will become their poem. Note: For some students, it may be a good idea to have them start by using a pencil. Once they are sure of their choices, they can permanently black out the words with a marker.
  - Once students have chosen their words, they should start creating their poem on a separate piece of paper or on a computer. Depending on your students, you may want to create different parameters. Typically for blackout poems, students must use the words in order as they were originally written. Feel free to change this "rule" if necessary. You can also consider allowing students to change the form of words, such as allowing them to change verb tenses or making singular nouns into plural nouns. You can also encourage students to add any punctuation they feel necessary for their poem.
  - Once they're happy with their poem, students can use some of the words from their poem to create a meaningful title.
4. Whole class discussion and reflection of activity. Here are some discussion starters: What is the topic or focus of your poem? What did you learn about pigs and pork through this activity? How did your poem change from the original text? What did you find challenging about this activity?

# TEACHER RESOURCES

## Extension Ideas:

- Have students read their poems out loud to the class.
- Have students who chose the same section compare their poems.
- After students have blacked out the text to form their poem, challenge them to do another, and this time, create an image that relates to their poem.
- Use our “Ag Mag Scavenger Hunt” lesson to help your students analyze the text even further.
- Have students create other blackout poems using their choice of any of our [AITC Ag Mag](#) topics.
- Read “[Awesome Agriculture: Pigs an A-to-Z Book](#)” by Susan Anderson & JoAnne Buggy. Look at the pictures and have students analyze the images.
- Introduce or review the word ‘livestock’ to your students and talk about why farmers raise animals. What do we use pigs for?
- Learn about all the products we get from pigs. Why are pigs so important for us?
- Find various recipes that use pork products. Dig deeper and compare pork dishes from around the world.
- Watch a video that talks about what pigs eat and where they live. What do pigs need to be healthy?
- Learn about different pig species around the world.
- Invite a pig farmer into your classroom to talk about pig farming.
- Go to [agintheclassroom.org](http://agintheclassroom.org) to contact your County Ag Literacy Coordinator for free classroom sets of our Ag Mags!

# TEACHER RESOURCES

## Blackout Poem Example:

- *Here is the original text from a section of the Pork Ag Mag:*

### Farmers & the Environment

Farmers are always concerned about the environment around them. After all, their families live close to the farms. Agriculture researchers are constantly looking for new ways to improve the quality of the environment and reduce odor.

Sometimes you can smell manure on a pig farm. Manure is a very important part of the agriculture cycle. As plants grow, they pull nutrients up from the soil through their roots. Eventually, the nutrients need to be replaced. These nutrients can be replaced with fertilizers – like pig manure. Manure is a great source of nutrients that plants need to grow – like nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P).

Farmers inject manure into the ground about six to eight inches with a machine. This machine helps increase the nutrients in the ground and reduces the runoff and odor. Before the manure is applied it is held in large underground pits, lagoons or other storage facilities. These holding areas are lined with clay, plastic or concrete to make sure that none of the manure leaks into the ground. When the farmer is ready to apply manure, it is pumped into a manure tanker and ready for application.

- *And here is a blackout poem created from this section. Words were kept in the same order. The author chose where to place the line and stanza breaks and added punctuation throughout the poem.*

### PIG MANURE!

Farmers are  
concerned about the environment—  
constantly looking for new ways  
to improve.

Manure on a pig farm:  
a very important part of the agriculture cycle!  
Plants grow!  
They pull nutrients from the soil!  
The nutrients need to be replaced!

PIG MANURE! =  
a great source of nitrogen and phosphorus.

Farmers inject manure with a machine.  
Increase the nutrients in the ground,  
reduce runoff and odor.

The farmer is ready to apply manure.  
Ready for application!