

Changing the World With Words

A COLLABORATIVE POEM



Compiled by the Transformative Language Arts Network—Winter 2024

How can change be? The call of crow,
the ease of sudden rain, the way
you wake up to light

Caryn Mirriam Goldberg

when it comes—it
spins and slices, dropping new
thoughts—Catherine wheel sparks

Tracie Nichols

Nourish the spirits
who travel with you

June Sylvester Saraceno

May all of us write
forever from heart
to heart.

Sarah K Carey

Words have the power to transgress
and transform outside temporal
limits.

Joshua Weber

It all grows from the bottom up.

Elaine McMilian

Friends and family build the foundation of love

Dan Bugher

Love is a bird with lots of feathers

Joe Harrington

It's so windy, all my words blew away

Nadia Tijan

connections are found at every corner

Tracy S.

The best connections made when we're not even looking

Linzi G

Unlooking—shadows sunburnt into memory

C.E. Janeczek

Prosperity in the soul of self

J.L. Meyer

I won't die but it gets ugly

Jane Rosenberg LaForge

and the starlings fill the sky

Chris Nelson

Sweet break for any occasion

J. Baugher

In order to grow you have to let go

Tay Noushla

And give your body to the furious waves

Jay Grummel

My body is warm with food consumed

Merrick Glass

The voices in my head keep calling me to light

Barbara Ossini

Joining the world in warm joy

Michelle Oppong

Warming the world with words

Kathleen Wheaton

Surprising with words hot and cold

(anonymous)

Wandering and wondering if our words are real

Raegan Petuso

A promise that reality exists and persists beyond
human insanity

l chanaya scott

When you stare into AWP, AWP also stares into you

Sean S.

On the world's face we wonder

Becka Mara McKay

As lemon zucchini bread and kindness nourishes all of us

Kathleen McClung

with ingredients, no greediness.

Sierra Yetka

There are some things every family was made to never
say.

Olivia

Changing the world one ingredient at a time

a woman is not a woman any
more than she is a story.

Lynn

Savior in the sand I place my heart
In your orbit

Ann Caputo

On the glassy sea of your calming words

Abigail Mills

In the smooth palm of your hand

Grace

And the salty bite of your words

Josephine Napiore

The future is freer inclusive!

(anonymous)

Every word, every breath, reaching out to touch

Kirk Glaser

The delicious zucchini bread

Lizz Danpon

Me, you, changing the world with words

Moving together a dance a word at
a time

Debrah Johnson

I hope my mother is proud of me

Holly Walker

And that my father is not rolling in his grave

J. Daugherty

He said you changed my life with your English tutoring sessions—

I said-oh, so that? What we're calling it now, but you changed me
with your touch.

Olive Sullivan

I'm sorry, Dad
But you never did a goddamn thing right.

(anonymous)

Right, I wish I had even felt I was in it.
Today, I'm swimming with dead stars—

Victoria

They keep telling me to jump

Josiah

A heart beats without knowing it, over and over

(anonymous)

It's hard to have words when I am eating bread

CE Young

We change the world with words even when
we cannot find the words, we listen

(anonymous)

listen—you can hear the heartbeat, the earth beat

(anonymous)

—but listen with care, for the beat falls soft

(anonymous)

the beat whispers a dirtsoft song only still can listen

(anonymous)

Changing the work with words but what if the word changes?

(anonymous)

Change the way we view others.

and if we change ourselves first, the chop and hew of our
feckless hearts softening with love,

J. Trimble

The crab isn't born ready for the world,
listen listen, listen again

(anonymous)

The yellow light means to slow down! Not to go really
really fast!

(anonymous)

Sometimes words fail us. Sometimes we fail ourselves.

(anonymous)

Sometimes the light fails us. Sometimes it blinds us with a
truth we had missed.

(anonymous)

If people would hear—if I could just convince them to open their ears,
Then maybe they'd know the love of their neighbors.

Airic Fenn

Be powerful, + forceful

Stay positive

Be the light

Linda Kleinbus

If you want Change

You have to make

it

Zarea B

Let's hold earth other

in the light—

with ethereal and earthly

embrace

Brenda Bancroft

Teach them to use

new eyes

Melanie Burdick

Where is the power, where—the words?

Klandjie

It lies between the spoken word and...

Joshua H.

Sits on the edge of a beauty that stirs horror,

(anonymous)

Waiting for you to claim it as your own.

Jess W.

Inscribing myself onto the empty air,
and evaporating

Allie

Like a steeped chamomile tea bag.

(anonymous)

Teacupped in my own palms,

Kahlo

These words are all that's left,

Michael

Words and air, and a surge in the gut,

(anonymous)

I skimmed your hair and you turned;

I row through black water, haul in my nets
and spill over, nothing to show

(anonymous)

But the word says the word needs
No more words says the word in
Need of a word.

J. Bradley

I could roll them smooth on my tongue or let them
fall, grow past me.

(anonymous)

I honor every human being's right to existence.
It is only when we can acknowledge each other's right
to exist that we can live in harmony.

Jen Minotti

Stand in a circle, speak the names,
count the dead, embrace the living

(anonymous)

Move the body, notice
how the words begin to flow,
a waterfall, a river rushing

Marianne Zarzana

A flow of phonemes tumbling over each other

Robyn Groth

the point with a water cross organ
thundering in the chest of a child
who has not yet learned the meaning
of grief and love

Abigail C Byrd

And we take the flames, let
them burn, let them hurt

and diminished to ash, we're spread
by the wind.

S.A. Cornwell

But even the wind dies sometimes

(anonymous)

Until we circles back
freshly, renewed, unknown.

(anonymous)

And when we came together the
words began to gather from all
corners, some rushing, some slowly,
but all coming to center in the heart.

Cheryl Kane

Where we can hear the beat
and the rhythms

(anonymous)

Blood + oxygen + life reminding
us that we are all connected

Amanda Roth

The sound of a river, many voices

(anonymous)

Pulse a breath between your tongue and mine.

(anonymous)

Let's pulse and pulse until the poppies bleed

(anonymous)

And remember, no one is left behind

(anonymous)

Where there is darkness, the illusion is bright

(anonymous)

Could be day, could be night
Sometimes wrong, occasionally right

Steve Budd

Writing words with others, together
in our collective, creative, community of spirit.

Joel Roth

I see you. I hear you. I feel you. I love you.
We don't have to agree. We aren't the same.
We only have to love and be loved.
Say it again: I see you. I hear you.
I feel you. I love you.

Erin McGrane

