

8. What is the poem being compared to in “Poems with Disabilities”? In what ways is a poem like a car? In what ways is a poem unlike a car? In what ways is a poem like a person? In what ways is a poem unlike a person?
9. What do you imagine changes in line 18? How does it happen?
10. How is it that a poem could earn one of the “best spaces in the book”? How is it that the poem in question earns that prime position?
11. What makes this a poem? How would your experience of it be different if it was simply written out without line breaks?
12. In her poem “Poetry,” the 20th-century American poet Marianne Moore called for poets to present “imaginary gardens with real toads in them.” In “Poems with Disabilities,” what is the imaginary garden? And what is the toad?
13. How does the length of each line impact how you experience the line? When you read the poem aloud, do you speed up, slow down, or pause at the end of the line? Why do you think the lines become much shorter about halfway through the poem? Why are the lines at the end the shortest in the poem?

Writing Activities

- Write about a time when people treated you like you didn’t belong someplace even though you knew you belonged there. How did you know they didn’t think you belonged? How did you act? How did you feel?
- Poetry has been described as “the art of the unsayable.” Write a poem in response to this one, in which you try to say the unsayable.

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