Baba Bloggin' (pages 9-11)
Helpful Tips for Creating "Found Poems"

What is a "found poem"?

A "found poem" begins with prose that someone else wrote. The poet is encouraged to read the original source carefully and to select meaningful phrases and ideas from that prose. These excerpts are reorganized and turned into poetry. The great thing about "found poems" is that that poet doesn't have to be poetic at all! The words come straight from something someone else wrote.

The "found poems" written in this lesson are to be based on writing by Israeli teens, expressing what they appreciate about living in Israel.

Instructions for writing a "found poem"

a. Choose ONE of the blogs that interests you the most and count the number of words in it. Write the number down. "Found poems" are based upon prose of 50-100 words.
b. Copy the blog in your notebook. Double space between lines so you have room to work.
c. Study the words in the blog. Cross out any word that is dull, unnecessary, or doesn't sound good. Your goal is to cut the original paragraph in half. If you began with 70 words, you want to have 35 left after you cut words.
d. Adjust the punctuation if necessary to make the poem read smoothly. You are not really supposed to add any words to the paragraph (that is why it's called a "found poem"). If necessary, you may add up to **two** of your own words to make the poem easier to read. You may also make other little adjustments to the original words: tenses, possessives, plurals, punctuation, and capitalization.
e. Review the draft of your poem and choose a title. Write the title on a clean sheet of paper.
f. Write the words of your poem on this clean sheet. Arrange the words of the poem so they look poetic. Decide where to break the lines. Remember, where you choose to break a line emphasizes key words and helps keep a reader's interest. It helps to read your poem aloud as you arrange the words. If it sounds good to your ear, it is good!

   You can space words far apart on the line or runthemtogether. You can <u>underline words</u>, **use bold face**, change the **s**tyle, or vary the size of your writing.

g. At the bottom of page, give credit to the source for the poem. For example, Alon's Blog, in BABAGANEWZ, Heshvan 5764.

Source: Dunning and Stafford. *Getting the Knack: 20 Poetry Writing Exercises*. National Council of Teachers of English, 1992.