

# Worksheet #2

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

please write legibly

1. What does it mean to “give form to an idea”? —in your answer, use an example from something you’ve read outside of class. Also, be as specific as you can. It would be easy to simply restate the phrase with other words; rather, keep in mind the difficulty of distinguishing form from content that we encountered last week.

2. How does the process of “giving form to an idea” relate to your own creative process of writing?

3. What makes a constraint *good*?

4. Put yourself in the position of Lars von Trier and Jorgen Leth in *The 5 Obstructions*: as Lars, conceive of three obstructions to rewriting something you’ve written (or made) that you really care about. What you conceive must be obstructions that cut into your soul, kind of. Write the obstructions below.

5. Write a bit about how the 3 obstructions in #4 would challenge you as a writer.

6. If you haven’t already done so on your “Piece,” describe the *content* —>*form* concept behind your creative work this week:

### 7. Critique.

For each piece that you critique today, begin by writing down a narrative response to your peer’s work (1-2 short paragraphs).

Include these written critiques with this worksheet

(you might write them on the back)

when you turn this in tomorrow.

Tomorrow (Thursday), you will turn in: This worksheet + your written critique of each peer’s work + your revision strategy + your creative Piece #2

# Creative Piece # 3

The work of this Piece is about  
STRUCTURE.

Structure is potentially everywhere: in anything that we can discern parts, those parts can be understood to be arranged in a particular, describable way—that arrangement of parts IS the structure.

Structure can be obvious, like that of an “A”-frame house. Or it can be difficult to perceive, like the lines, forms, and colors that balance a painting, or the complex departures and returns of a fugue.

To work on a given structure in writing requires a translation: the elements of the structure are “mapped” onto the elements of the writing.

The structure is a *configuration* that can be given to the chapters, the plot movements, conflicts, or the characters, where points and lines correspond to different elements of a text.

I want you to choose a *non-electronic child's toy with moveable parts* as your structure and build a text that uses that structure to guide the arrangement of its parts.

The choice of structure is crucial, like the choice of a constraint. The point is not to prove that anything will do. Look for an object that already seems suggestive to you, that already feels story-like.

We'll be reading *Cloud Atlas*, which could be compared to numerous toys, most easily nesting dolls.

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Today, brainstorm a number of structural objects.

Form a group to exchange ideas and discuss possible ways of translating from the object-structure to the structure of your writing.

Your group should be made up of people in your seminar only.