

Writing Exercise: The poetry of everyday sounds

Distill a mechanical sound and mimic it. For example, take the click-click of a blinking turn signal in a car. Lock the tempo and beat within you. Mimic the sound out loud. Take a walk for 5 minutes. At the beginning of your walk repeat the sound and rhythm over and over, but let it change into words – almost like a chant -- as your thoughts take on the rhythm. The world begins to align to your beat. This is metaphor as aural and visual stimulus.

Write down the sound as best you can (“skrtch-skrtch”; “clink-glub”). Write down some or all of the chant (“kick, skip, kick, skip, witches skirt”; “sick club, sick club, crinked neck”). Make a title for it.

Adapted from Twyla Tharp, “The Creative Habit”