



African Acrostics: A Word in Edgeways

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Ah, the acrostic: uninspired staple of poetry sessions in third and fourth grades. Well heres something to shake it up. These poems dont just spell out the obvious with adjectives, they ask questions, move diagonally, and contain whole sentences.

Now Listen to Me, Son

First, my fowl,

Avoid all humans, who only come

To gawk and giggle. They

Hanker for our ostrich plumes and

Envy how are swan-necks wiggle.

Really! Have you seen those people-toes?

Little tiny things in rows! How they

Yearn for ones weve got: so down to earth,

And second, esteem your lot.

Drink in the

View! Wear lofty airs!

Implant upon your brow a scowl.

Colored feathers? Well, who cares

Enjoy the gifts youve got, my fowl.

African Acrostics is inspiration for budding poets and their masters.

HEATHER SHAW (June 16, 2009)

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