

# 365\* Poetry Prompt Guide

**\*Plus a bonus day!**

*Month One - Prompts 1 through 31*

**#PoetryEveryDamnDay**

little infinite  
*Poetry for Life™*

## **With this guide, we hope you will learn:**

- How to build a habit of writing every day.
- How to find new inspiration from the world around you.
- How to conquer writer's block.

## **Find your tribe!**

As you work your way through this Poetry Prompt Guide series, share your work and your insights with us using **#PoetryEveryDamnDay**. We feature poetry from our community on the *little infinite* Instagram account.

## **Be inspired.**

The goal with this writing challenge is to push the boundaries of your art, to help you find or develop your voice, and to help you integrate a writing ritual into your everyday life. All you'll need to complete the writing challenge is:

- a notebook or computer
- a place where you can spend 15-20 minutes focusing on your writing

*Pro tip: Try to pick a place and time of day that intuitively feels natural to you.*

Don't worry if you miss a day. It certainly does not mean that you've failed. We don't recommend skipping a day to "catch up" so if you do miss a day, just pick up when you can, where you left off. The writing will always be there, waiting for you to come back to it. That's the beauty of the art we create.

## You are here.

Each month, you'll get a new batch of poetry prompts. Keep track of where you are in the writing process using this handy progress chart.

→ <i>Month One</i>	Prompts 1 - 31
<i>Month Two</i>	Prompts 32 - 60
<i>Month Three</i>	Prompts 61 - 91
<i>Month Four</i>	Prompts 92 - 121
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<i>Month Eleven</i>	Prompts 306 - 335
<i>Month Twelve</i>	Prompts 336 - 366

**#PoetryEveryDamnDay**

# Day 1

Sit down today... and give yourself a clean slate.

*Give yourself a fresh start. You deserve it.*

Take a deep breath. Settle into your writing space. How do you feel? How does your creative energy flow in your workspace?

**Set a timer for 10 minutes and journal about how it feels to be sitting down to write.**

Easy does it on the first day.

What are your goals for yourself?

What are you trying to accomplish?

# Day 2

Go outside, or sit beside a window.

Listen. *Just listen.*

*Open your ears and ready your pen.*

What do you hear? What do you feel? What scents do you notice?

What does the air remind you of?

How does the light fall?

What are the hues?

Write it all down-- in a poem, or simply in as notes to yourself. Get used to the noticing. The being quiet and sensing. Write what you sense. **Pay attention.** Get familiar with just **being**, and with translating human experience into words.

You'd be surprised at what changes when we let ourselves simply absorb **everything**.

# Day 3

Write a seven-line poem from the notes you took yesterday.

*One day. Seven lines.*

Review your notes or verses from yesterday.

What stands out to you the most? What remains the most visceral in your memory?

*Focus on one of the senses (scent, color, sound) and go from there.*  
Lay your verses out however feels most natural, not worrying about neat couplets or lovely lineation.

# Day 4

Find and challenge assumptions that you've made about yourself.

*Erase imaginary lines.*

Open a journal and finish these sentences:

"I always..."

"I never..."

"I disappoint myself when..."

"I disappoint others when..."

"People always say / think that I'm..."

Now take a moment (and a deep breath) and examine all those statements. **Challenge them.**

Journal or free write about whether you live your life inside imaginary boundaries that you've drawn around yourself.



# Day 4

Write a poem that's in a style you've never tried before.

*Goodbye, comfort zone.*

This is an exercise to pull you out of yourself. It's a point proven by contrast. It eschews the advice we give poets most often, which is to be true to yourself and your authentic voice.

Today, write what feels totally inauthentic to you. Write something using words you hate. Read and re-read the poem and ask yourself what about it feels unlike you? Its voice? Its content? Its emotionality?

The challenge is simple: **Get to know who you're not.**

# Day 5

Create a writing ritual that makes sense to you.

*Keep it secret; keep it safe.*

What sparks your creative energy?

Some poets like specific articles of clothing. Or a space that has a certain energy. Some have particular tools they use, pens and paper and notebooks. Some poets like to lay down and pretend they are dead (literally). Others get naked. Some take ritual baths, burn incense, or use specific candles.

**What might a ritual look like for you? What gets your creative juices flowing?**

After adopting this ritual, write a poem. How has that changed the writing experience for you? Is it too structured, or were you empowered by this structure that had been lacking before?

# Day 6

Write a stream of consciousness.

*Just write. Don't think. Write.*

This doesn't have to be a poem. **Just pick up your pen and write whatever comes to mind.**

Don't use line breaks - no stanzas.

Don't use punctuation.

Just write one long run-on sentence and end it when it feels right.

# Day 7

Turn yesterday's stream of consciousness writing into a poem.

*Focus through the fog.*

Take what you wrote yesterday and break it up into a poem.  
Play with sentence structure and punctuation.

Consider what words make a powerful impact.

Move parts around.

**Avoid removing too much**, but don't be afraid to edit or focus parts.

Avoid adding anything.

# Day 8

## Reflect on your first week.

*Stay on your game.*

Now that you're a week in, take today's writing time to pause and reflect.

Set a timer for 10 minutes and either free write or meditate on what the first week of writing has been.

What have you gained?

What have you sacrificed?

What's working so far?

Where is the edge of your comfort zone?

Is there anything you need to change?

**Is there something you want to press deeper into?**

# Day 9

Write a poem about the sea.

*Her soul is fathoms deep.*

How does she move?  
What does she speak?  
What does she want?  
And how does she treat you?

# Day 10

Write a poem about the energy  
flowing through your body.

*Channel your peak energy.*

Set a timer for five minutes and sit with your body. Can you feel the energy flowing through you?

With your eyes closed, work from the top of your head to the tips of your fingers and toes. **Where does energy flow?**

**Where do you feel tension or blockage?** How does it move through you?

When the timer rings, set another for 20 minutes. Write a poem about the energy your body holds, carries, moves, and radiates.

# Day 11

Write a poem about the sacredness  
of your body.

*Be your own sacred space.*

If it were a temple or a church or an altar, **which parts of your body would be worshipped** – and how?

**Bonus Prompt:** Is this poem the same written by someone else? Which parts do you think a friend, lover, partner, or enemy would feature?



# Day 12

Write a poem about a number that stands for something important.

*Check one, two...*

What number follows you around? What is its numerological meaning?

Sit today and write a poem about the digit and the way it's worked into your life.

How has it presented itself to you?

How has it impacted your life?

# Day 13

Write a 3-line poem about something grand, divine, or religious.

*Un-gild the lily.*

How can you make the ornate simple?

Use conversational language to capture something marvelous in every day words.

# Day 14

Write a poem about the way the  
light falls into the room.

*Light up your writing.*

Look around you. Observe the light.

What does it feel like, how does it look?

What does the light do to you?

Is it afternoon light, evening light, or sunset light?

What story does the light tell you?

# Day 15

Write a poem to your younger self.

*Dear Me...*

This doesn't have to be a love letter.

You can only describe as yourself as “you.” You cannot use names, places, or identifying details.

**What do you want to tell yourself? Say it straight.**

# Day 16

Write a poem that approaches language from a place that you do not feel comfortable with.

*Another word for push.*

If you write minimalist poetry, write a lush, baroque poem. If you write ornate, floral poetry, write a simple poem that embraces, everyday language and minimal imagery.

We all have one kind of poetry that makes our stomachs knot up. Whatever style just jumped to mind... write *that*.

# Day 17

Write a poem about the things you  
are continuing to let go.

*Release. Rinse. Repeat.*

Letting go is a process. It's something we all must learn.

Today's poem should focus on the things that you've committed to let you but haven't been able to release yet.

Explore in ten lines what you're still holding onto, why you haven't let it go, and what release would look like.

# Day 18

## Journal about something that's been on your mind.

*Leave it on the page.*

Perhaps it's an issue you're grappling with, internal to yourself or within our larger society.

**Perhaps it's an emotion, something that keeps popping back up for you: joy, or fear, or guilt, or restlessness.**

Perhaps it's something uncomfortable or sad, or something you're afraid of unlocking. Don't sit in the pain or mythologize it. Just experience it, and write about it.

**Allow yourself 15 minutes, then stop.**

Be gentle on yourself. Deep pain doesn't have to be part of the writing process — but sometimes discomfort (and the willingness to feel it) can help you dig down to your truth. Journaling can help open us up to our own voices and truths; this truth helps us write the poetry we are meant to write.

# Day 19

Write a poem from the perspective  
of a place.

*If these streets could talk.*

What would Spain say in the summer?

What would New York say during a storm?

What does your birth town feel right now?



# Day 20

Write a poem about social justice in the world today.

*Are you indifferent, enraged, or engaged?*

Set a timer for 20 minutes. Does the ticking clock put pressure on you?

Take ten couplets and write a poem about a current social issue that resonates with you.

**Explore your proximity to the issue.** Dig into what it means to you emotionally, physically, or spiritually.

Raise your voice for people who can't raise theirs.

# Day 21

## Write a poem backwards.

*Forward. Backward. Inside out.*

The end – whatever the end is – should start the poem.

How would the poem change if you write it backwards from where it “should” start in your mind?

The goal here is to let poetry be a **nonlinear, rule-breaking form.**

# Day 22

Write a poem that looks like a conversation.

*Two voices are better than one.*

Use the poetic form to write a dialogue between two people. That's all the prompt we're going to give you.

Well, that, and... **Don't be afraid to let it get weird.**

# Day 23

Write a poem in three astrological sections.

*You are the point of intersection.*

Write a poem with three distinct sections: from the perspective of your sun, your moon, and your rising sign.

You can learn what each of these are for you using the free **Sanctuary World** app, for example.

# Day 24

Write a poem about the seeds  
you've sewn in your life.

*Sow and you shall reap.*

Seeds sewn in soil are loaded with anticipation. But patience is one of those virtues that it can be real hard to come by... especially when you're putting in the work and waiting for results.

Today's poem should be about that period of waiting. What does it feel like for you? Is it excited anticipation? Or is it frustrated impatience? Something different? Something in between? Capture it in verse today.

# Day 25

Read one poem from three  
different poets.

*Immerse yourself in the words of others.*

Read three different poems.

Pick poems that have different topics and different tones.

Pick poets from different time periods.

Diversify your poets – men, women, people of color, non-binary, straight, gay, transgender.

Once you're done reading, write about how the poems spoke to you and why.

# Day 26

Write a response poem based on the notes you took yesterday.

*Call and respond.*

Choose one of the three poems you read yesterday and write a poem in response.

As you're writing, consider:

Who is the poet of the original poem? Are you responding to the poet directly?

Who is the speaker in the original poem? Are you responding to a fictional person?

What is the topic of the original poem? Are you offering a different opinion of the topic?

Are you continuing a conversation by responding to the poem?

Are you answering a question?

# Day 27

Write a poem from the perspective of your childhood self about what you hope to be when you grow up.

*So much potential.*

Don't just think about jobs or careers. Go deeper than that.

**What kind of person did you want to be?**

What drew you to those values in a person when you were young?

What did you fantasize about when you thought of your future?

Has any of it come true?

What would a younger you think about the current version of you?



# Day 28

Write a poem about yourself, from the perspective of someone important to you.

*Who knows your soul?*

Examine yourself from the perspective of someone who you value.

Do you know what experiences and feelings they might draw upon to answer the prompt?

Would this person write poetry? How? What would a poem look like from them?

What kind of language would they use?

What kind of imagery?

Capture your thoughts of their thoughts in verse.

# Day 29

Write a dialogic poem, where each stanza is different perspective.

*The gang's all here.*

The perspectives must be from your younger self and your current self. It could be strangers on a subway train. It could be a room of lifelong friends.

Don't simply go for dialogue, though. How can you use poetry to narrate a conversation without using quotes, italics, or obvious 'conversation' prose?

# Day 30

Write a poem in your mother  
language.

*La langue est belle.*

Write it freely and without concern for your reader's understanding.

The goal is to grant poetry permission to be a space for your whole self.

If your mother language is English and you'd like to try something outside your comfort zone, do this exercise in a second or third language you've studied.

# Day 31

## Take time to meditate.

*Deep breath in... and out.*

Set a timer for 10 minutes and meditate.

When you're done, free write about any thoughts and feelings that wandered into your mind while you were trying to clear your thoughts.

Why do you think those thoughts appeared? Did you spend time on them, or were you successfully able to set them aside and clear your head?



**Don't forget to share your  
poems with us using  
#poetryeverydamnday.**

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