

## POETRY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: A FOUND POETRY EXERCISE

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Invite students to find news articles that address a social justice issue. Encourage them to create "found poems" by circling words in their news articles and stringing them together to create a "justice poem."

### Step 1: Find an Article

Find an article, such as "Video Shows Grisly Aftermath of Fatal Shooting of Black Man in Minnesota" by Justin Worland (Time), retrieved on July 7, 2016 from <http://time.com/4396220/philando-castile-minnesota-shooting/?xid=homepage>.

### Step 2: Make It Ad-Free

Save it to a service such as Pocket (getpocket.com) so that you can show or print it later ad-free.

### Step 3: Read & Discuss

Project the Pocket version of the article; read and discuss together. Distribute ad-free print copies and have students circle key words for their found poems.

### Step 4: Circle Words

Using the circled words, write the found poem somewhere on the article or on a separate piece of paper. Another method is "blackout poetry," where writers cross out unwanted words, but a problem with this method is that sometimes a word or phrase doesn't appear "valuable" until the whole text is read (and it can be hard to retrieve blacked-out text).

### Step 5: Revise

Revise the found poem, allowing new words to be used.

Here are two versions of a poem based on the article listed above:

#### No Justice, No Peace

a found poem by Janet Wong,  
based on "Video Shows Grisly Aftermath of Fatal Shooting  
of Black Man in Minnesota" by Justin Worland (Time.com)

Shootings.

Protests.

*Please, officer, don't*

*tell me that you just did this to him.*

*You shot four bullets into him, sir.*

*He was just getting his license and registration, sir.*

No justice, no peace.

A traffic stop.

More than 120 black men have been killed by police  
in the U.S. in 2016.

*I'm right here with you.*

#### No Justice, No Peace (version 2)

by Janet Wong

Shootings. Protests.

*No justice, no peace.*

I am tired of the shootings.

I am tired of our protests.

But as long as the killings continue  
we will not have justice.

As long as the killings continue  
we cannot have peace.

So far this year

more than 120 black men  
have been killed by police.

Tuesday, July 5: Alton Sterling.

*I'm right here with you.*

Wednesday, July 6: Philando Castile.

*We're right here.*

As long as the shootings continue,  
we will be here, shouting:

*No justice, no peace.*

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### Related Websites

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eyesontheprize/tguide/elem.html>

PBS "Eyes on the Prize" site: lesson plans, video and audio clips, primary sources.

<http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/civil-rights-movement>

History.com link offers an abundance of information on a variety of civil rights topics.

<http://www.tolerance.org/kit/starting-small>

The "Starting Small" teaching tool at Teaching Tolerance is helpful and free.

<http://rg.bcri.org/gallery>

Birmingham Civil Rights Institute: oral histories, a timeline & images of primary resources.

<http://www.civilrightsmuseum.org/>

National Civil Rights Museum site: what it was like "Before the Boycott."

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/civil-rights/>

Library of Congress offers timelines and findings from primary sources.

### Based on:

Vardell, S. M. (2014). Poetry and social justice. *Book Links*. Sept., 24, (1), 16-21.

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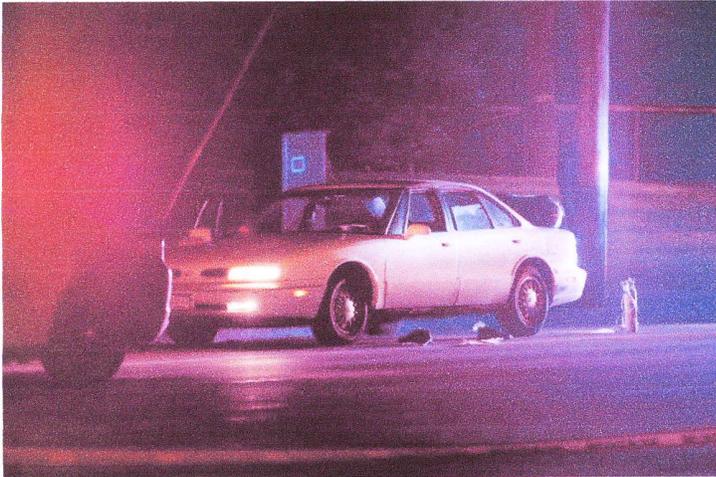
<http://www.booklistonline.com/Classroom-Connections-Poetry-and-Social-Justice-Vardell-Sylvia-M/pid=6953437>

And available at PoetryForChildren here:

<http://poetryforchildren.blogspot.com/2014/09/book-links-poetry-and-social-justice.html>

# Video Shows Grisly Aftermath of Fatal Shooting of Black Man in Minnesota

By Justin Worland, time.com



Leila Navidi—Star Tribune/AP A car at the scene of a shooting of a man involving a St. Anthony Park Police officer in Falcon Heights, Minn., on July 6, 2016. Photo by: Leila Navidi—Star Tribune/AP

## A female passenger streamed to Facebook Live after her boyfriend was shot

Police shot and killed a Minnesota man Wednesday evening following a traffic stop in an incident that drew protests in the state's capitol and parallels to other fatal shootings of black men including a shooting in Louisiana earlier this week.

A female passenger streamed the aftermath of the incident on Facebook Live showing Philando Castile, 32, bloodied in the driver's seat and a police officer with his gun still visible through the window. The woman's daughter sits in the backseat of the car.

In the video, the woman—identified by the Minneapolis *Star Tribune* as Lavish Reynolds—says the officer asked Castile for his license and registration. Castile reached for the information as requested and also informed the officer that he had a gun in the car and was licensed to carry, the woman says.

"I told him not to reach for it. I told him to get his hands up," the officer says in the graphic and expletive-laced video.

"Please, officer, don't tell me that you just did this to him," the woman says in the video. "You shot four bullets into him, sir. He was just getting his license and registration, sir."

The video continues as Reynolds and her daughter are detained and transported in the back of a police car. "It's OK," the daughter tells her mother. "I'm right here with you."

The shooting occurred around 9 p.m. in Falcon Heights, a St. Paul suburb, and Castile was declared dead at a nearby hospital less than an hour later, according to the *Star Tribune*.

The video—now viewed more than 2 million times on Facebook—gained immediate traction online over night. Protesters gathered in front of the governor's residence in Madison shouting "no justice, no peace." An investigation into the shooting by the St. Anthony Police officer is being led by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. The department's interim chief said he few details about the incident, according to the Associated Press.

The incident occurred as outrage continues in Louisiana over a video of a black man being shot repeatedly by police. In that video, the man—identified as Alton Sterling—had already been apprehended and appeared to be lying prostrate on the ground when an officer opened fire at point blank range. The U.S. Department of Justice is leading the investigation in that case. More than 120 black men have been killed by police in the U.S. in 2016.

- 1 No justice, no peace.
- 2a Shootings.
- 2b Protests.
- 3 "Please, officer, don't tell me that you just did this to him"
- 4 He was just getting his license + registration, sir.
- 5 No justice, no peace.
- 6 A traffic stop.
- 7 More than 120 black men have been killed by police in the U.S. in 2016.
- 8 I'm right here with you.