

## WRITING PROMPT: WORLD INTO WORD

CONTRIBUTOR: JANINE JOSEPH

“The pleasure of recognizing a described world is no small thing.” – Mark Doty, from *The Art of Description: World Into Word*

**First**, watch this video by Radiolab/NPR called, “Words”: <https://vimeo.com/16073784>

**Second**, read “Wrap” by Aimee Nezhukumatathil:

<https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/wrap>

Choosing one of the words from the “Words” video and using Aimee Nezhukumatathil’s poem, “Wrap” as a model, compose your own definition and redefinition piece. Begin with a free-write of all of the definitions of the word that come to mind, followed by examples of usage (ex: “as a mirror on a wall). Remember that the title of your piece will be the word itself, so think about the ways that you can demonstrate the word’s meanings through imagery.

Your goal will be to move from the more generally understood meanings and examples of your chosen word’s definition to the more personal. How have you, in short, personally experienced the meanings of that word?

Note that this is more than word association, where a single word triggers several others, but a digging deeper of a single word as if it were a storehouse of memory. Turn your attention away from a myriad of other words. Thus, in the last “entry” you will have claimed ownership of the word and will have, as Mark Doty writes, “arrive(d) at exactitude.” The word you chose will be seen in a new, refreshing, and personalized light.