



Playful Writing

In surrealism, the imagination and dream world hold as much credence as logic, reason and the outer world. The poets played games to liberate the mind of conscious control and to allow the unconscious to operate as a source of inspiration. They played with games that used random juxtapositions and chance to create totally new and often surprising results. One of their favourite games was the Exquisite Corpse.

The Exquisite Corpse is similar in style to the old game of consequences. In the game, each player adds on a new word, folds over a piece of paper to hide the word and passes the paper on. The simple formula of *adjective, noun, verb, preposition, adjective, noun* will produce something approximating a sentence which can then be tweaked. In this way, random and bizarre sentences are compiled. The grid below can be used in class. First, the children all write down three determiners then fold the paper to cover what they have written and pass to the left. Then they all write three adjectives, fold the paper and pass to the left. They carry on in this way until the grid is full.

The unfolded pieces will then reveal some weird sentences which can be tweaked. Everyone succeeds and sometimes the sentences are great fun or have surprising depth. Of course, this is also a grammar game. It is known as the 'exquisite corpse' because that phrase appeared in the very first time when the surrealists played the game.

Consequences - Exquisite Corpse

Determiner			
Adjective			
Noun			
Verb			
Adverb			
Preposition			
Determiner			
Adjective			
Noun			