



Celebrating National Literacy Month

In early 2013, Center for Literacy gathered a group of adult students to explore poetry using the skills they learned during class. Poetry workshop participants wrote haikus, and to take the project a step further, Center for Literacy partnered with social innovator and creative mind, Rich Wakefield, to bring the haikus to life using word photos from his 6,000+ word library housed on the social media site **Instagram, #richwords**.



Center for Literacy students often come from vulnerable backgrounds and based on their individual journeys, it can sometimes be hard for them to express thoughts and feelings in words. Art is a widely accepted medium of self-expression that has the power to build confidence and help individuals adjust to new and changing roles. These qualities are useful to students when transitioning to the workforce or post-secondary education after Center for Literacy programs.

Participants valued the haiku workshop opportunity as a means to exhibit their creativity, and the resulting haikus were heartfelt, imaginative, and humorous.

“With words at your disposal, you can see more clearly. Finding the words is another step in learning to see.”— Robin Kimmerer

Each word photo helps students visualize and make connections with the words they see in their daily environments. Words help us understand our surroundings and art develops critical thinking skills. **By donating words to the Instagram word library, you can help Center for Literacy students create something beautiful while strengthening their literacy skills and building confidence.**

“To encourage literature and the arts is a duty which every good citizen owes to his country.”

— George Washington