



9-1-1989

## Impromptu Essays (Poem)

Carol Carpenter

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.und.edu/tl-journal>

---

### Recommended Citation

Carpenter, Carol (1989) "Impromptu Essays (Poem)," *Journal of Teaching and Learning*: Vol. 4 : Iss. 1 , Article 6.

Available at: <https://commons.und.edu/tl-journal/vol4/iss1/6>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by UND Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Journal of Teaching and Learning* by an authorized editor of UND Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact [und.common@library.und.edu](mailto:und.common@library.und.edu).

# Impromptu Essays

*You write to me on desktops.*

*Jagged passions etched in wood*

*with steel paper clips and dry pens:*

*Lopsided hearts pierced with arrows.*

*Mary & John in '79 and class of . . .*

*Advice to one before*

*from one who sits now,*

*knees gum-glued to metal,*

*his motionless daydreams*

*(heavy against black oak)*

*explode in magic marker*

*expletives,*

*the permanent kind*

*as I pass out the mimeo sheets —*

*no peanut butter smudges*

*or erasures —*

*to cover the splintered hardness*

*of your fears.*

*The assignment*

*created in four nights*

*in my draped den*

*calls to your mushroomed souls*

*to write their spongy truths*

*in measured lines. How*

*can I tell you*

*my red pen's out of ink,*

*my text is coffee-soaked,*

*the grammar rules lost*

*in red maple roots?*

*You sweat spring rain,*

*build wadded paper glaciers*

*between us,*

*write pencil essays*

*in dictionary words.*

*Hand them in.*

*Now, carve your woodcuts  
until bells ring  
and I'll read  
your impromptu essays  
after class  
when I sit where you sat  
and touch  
your word slivers.*

*—Carol Carpenter*

