

## BLACKOUT POETRY EXAMPLES

### Example 1: "I Ain't Got No Home"

I'm a  
worker  
And I got no home  
Rich man took my home  
I was poor;  
And I got no home  
I mined I gathered  
I been working since the day I was born  
Now I worry  
I see  
the gamblin' man is rich an' the workin' man is poor,

#### *Poem Explanation*

In this poem, the narrator, despite working hard their whole life, has no home. "Home" could be interpreted literally, as a physical house that they cannot afford, or figuratively, as a space in American society. The narrator has no home or space in society because American society values the wealthy and powerful and its capitalist economic system functions in a way that those with wealth benefit at the expense of the poor, creating significant economic inequality. Now that the narrator "sees" or realizes this truth, they are overcome with worry about their future. This poem reflects Woody Guthrie's political and social commentary because Guthrie used his music to speak out against this type of capitalist economy that rewarded the rich at the expense of the poor. Guthrie's music also supported people in their efforts to form unions to combat the excessive power of corporations and to protect the rights and dignity of workers.

Example 2: "Talking Centralia"

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dream myself up a lot of [REDACTED] dreams

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] one little wild spark of fire

One little spark [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

a spark hit

explosion

Keep on a-wondering how things would be

if a spark ever hits it just right

### *Poem Explanation*

In this poem, the narrator imagines how the world *could* be and acknowledges the power that a “spark”—one person or a small group of people—has to create an “explosion,” or a change in our society. The narrator concludes with the idea that if the power of the people can be harnessed, the creation of a better world is possible. This idea reflects Woody Guthrie’s political and social commentary because he believed in the capacity of people to organize and challenge those in power to create a more equitable society.