

## Creative Project Proposal

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Unbelievably, the end of this semester and this class is almost here. Now that this course has provided us with a firm literary and theoretical foundation for us to build upon, we are about to pursue our own ideas and add our voices and opinions into the never-ending dialogue of the world of literary theory. We are going to do this through our creative project. For this project, we plan to write and present a slam poem. According to [www.urbandictionary.com](http://www.urbandictionary.com), slam poetry is a type of poetry that expresses a person's personal story and/or struggle in an intensely emotional style. This poetry is powerful, sincere, and moving. We plan to write our poem on a theme that the theorist Michel Foucault, the author Virginia Woolf, and many other writers and theorists have devoted much time and energy into discussing. Our poem will discuss our society's desire to be ever more productive.

So, we know what you may be asking. What are we trying to achieve with our slam poem? As young college students, we are on the brink of being thrown out into the cold harsh world to try to make it on our own. Ever since we were kids, we have been taught that we must always push ourselves to do more and more in less time. Everyone told us that this is what makes capitalism run. We hope to use our experiences with and feelings about this pressure in order to undermine our society's desire for ever increasing productivity. We will draw upon the ideas of people like Foucault and Woolf to help us in this task. In our opinion, after reading works in this class by many theorists and wise authors that highlight, target, and undermine social norms and stereotypes, we have come to the conclusion that using literature as a means to create and shape society and culture is what literature and literary theory is all about. Hopefully, our poem is going to allow us to do just that. We want to add our voices to the never-ending dialogue of the world of literary theory. One of the beautiful things about our poem is that it will be relevant to people inside and outside of the academic world. This poem will be relevant to theorists and sociologists who study society, who try to figure out its inner workings, and who try to use their knowledge to make it better. Our poem will also be relevant to society members in general. Hopefully, it will make people stop and seriously think about the rules of our society and their consequences. We also believe that it will allow people to clearly see the road that society's desire for productiveness is going to take them down.

In order to complete project, we will have to go through numerous steps. The good news is that, at this point, we have already gone through a couple of them. First, we decided what we wanted to accomplish with our project and what central theme of the course we wanted to relate it to. Then, we picked the form that we wanted our creative work to take. Now, we have to organize our arguments and write the poem. In order to collaboratively write this poem, we created a Google document. This is going to allow us to write our poem together without being in the same physical location. In order to make sure that our poem is informative and interesting to our target audience of society members, particularly college kids, we plan to ensure that our poem is not too long or short. When presented, we want it to be about three minutes long. This

means that each of us intends to contribute about a third of a page to the poem. After we have completed the poem and met with you about it, finally, we will meet up one last time to practice presenting the poem. We plan to present the poem live during class on presentation day. The last step of our process will be writing our reflection papers about it. Hopefully, after taking these steps, we will have created an awesome product.

## Productivity Slam Poem

Sometimes, I lay awake at night thinking, “Is this all there really is to life?” Since grade school, society has pushed me down a road that it believes is the “fast track” to “success.” To survive, as the theorist Foucault would point out, I have been taught to push myself to be ever more productive, to do more in less time. This is what makes capitalism work I am told. This is how you achieve the American dream. But, brace yourselves, because what I am about to say next might come as a shock. What if I don’t want the American dream? If forever pushing myself to do more and more and more in less and less time is what will get me the American dream, then I can definitely tell you that I don’t want it. The American dream is not my dream. I don’t want to wake up one day five years from now and realize that I have no clue where those five years went. I don’t want to dedicate my life to creating an empire of power, money, and what society calls “success” only to find myself all alone during my last hours sitting on my empire of dirt. All I really want to do is make an honest living, be happy, love, and be loved. To me, loving others and having an impact on at least one person’s life is what really defines success. But, no, productivity, productivity, productivity, productivity, we are told, is what makes this world go ‘round.

Alabama once told me, “All I really gotta do is live and die. But I’m in a hurry, and I don’t know why.” I think, at times, we all feel this way. We all feel caught in this rat race, and we feel like there is no escaping it. Society’s institutions have us cornered at every angle. As kids, we wanted to grow up to become things like ballerinas, athletes, and firemen, but these dreams were quickly cut down to size by our parents, teachers, the media, and other socializing agents in society. They know the rules of the game, and they want us to win it. So, now that we are college students, we find ourselves majoring in law, medicine, business, and other fields that

will allow us to be deemed “productive” members of society. We find ourselves in classes like Chemistry 224, Math 309, and Physics 442, because the class that we are really searching for, Survival 101, no one seems to offer. So, while depriving ourselves of sleep, we work and work and work to raise that GPA and boost that resume. Because pushing yourself to be ever more productive is what it takes to make it in society, right? That is what the American dream is made of. Well, speaking for myself, as I go further and further down this road that society is leading me down, I see the things that really matter to me, family, friends, and God, getting smaller and smaller and smaller in my rear view mirror. The further I go, the stronger the voice in my head telling me to “turn around, turn around, turn around” gets. Like the young Virginia Woolf, I find myself wondering, “Is this path that society has mapped out for me, this American dream of productivity, all that life really has to offer me? There has to be more. There’s gotta be. There’s gotta be.”