P1.

25 Variations

Phase 1

Instructions

1. Choose an existing poem. It should be written by someone else — someone who is not yourself and someone you do not know on a personal level. As a general rule, the poem should also be able to fit on approximately one printed page (no epic poems).

2. You will be making 25 formal variations using this poem. Each variation will be a separate webpage. For each variation, you will focus on changing the poem's form through shifts in composition, typography, hierarchy, scale, and pacing. The poem's content must remain intact throughout all 25 variations.

3. The 25 variations are divided into 5 levels of 5 variations each. The levels start with my constraints and gradually allow more freedom.

Level 1

<u>Restrictions</u>

- Only use HTML (no CSS of any kind)

- In addition to the required `html`, `head`, `title`, and `body` elements, you can use any of the following HTML elements:

  ```
  p
  br
  ```

  You can also use ` ` to equal a visible space.

<u>Goals</u>

Focus on breaking up the text in different ways. How does the poem usually look? What happens if you present it more spaced out? More condensed? In a specific shape or form? What happens to the poem when you have to scroll to read it all?

Level 2

<u>Restrictions</u>

- Only use HTML (no CSS of any kind)

- In addition to the elements allowed in Level 1, use any of the following HTML elements:

```
div
span
h1, h2, h3, h4, h5, h6
strong
em
ol, ul, li
a
```
a (With the a element — do not link to external sites, but you can link to parts of your poem using an attribute to assign an id)

   Again, you can use ` ` to equal a visible space.

<u>Goals</u>

Focus on presenting the text in various hierarchies & scales using only HTML.

Level 3

<u>Restrictions</u>

- Use both HTML and CSS

- Only use the HTML allowed in Levels 1 and 2.

- Only use the following CSS properties:

```
padding
border
margin
position
display
float
top, right, bottom, left
height, width
```

Goals

Focus on positioning elements using CSS. Experiment with space and possibly try a very tall page or a very wide page.

Level 4

Restrictions

- Use both HTML and CSS

- Only use the HTML allowed in Levels 1 and 2

- In addition to the CSS properties allowed in Level 3, you can use any of the following CSS properties:

```
font-style
font-weight
font-size
font-family
text-align
line-height
letter-spacing
text-transform
```

Goals

Focus on typography using CSS. Experiment with hierarchy and scale.

Level 5

Restrictions

- Use both HTML and CSS

- Use any HTML element (except for `img`, `iframe`, and `a` via linking to external sites. This is a purely typographic & semantic project, so no external images, links, or other assets should be used.)

- Use any CSS property

Goals

Do something you haven't done before. Use colors. Test the limits of what you can do. Experiment with new CSS properties (including animations, if you want). You might also consider how your website is read on a screen reader

Overall project goals & background

This project is an iterative exploration of typography through HTML and CSS. Since you'll be making 25 variations on the same text, no one single representation of the poem is important than any other. This should allow you ample room for visual experimentation. You should aim to have a variety of visual treatments that responds to the poem's content. Additionally, by the end of the project, you will better understand the differences between HTML and CSS and see how each can be used in semantic and visual expression.

This project has you exploring formally from a primarily visual level. But we should remember that the web is not only visual — it is a democratic medium that allows anyone (regardless of disability or age) to access information, so we should keep this in the back of our minds — that visual is just one layer to experiencing the web. We will explore the semantics of HTML in the projects to come.

This project is partly inspired by Raymond Queneau's *Exercises in Style* (1947), which narrates a simple encounter on a bus 100 times, each in a different tone / style that alters — subtly or radically — how we understand the basic story. This project will allow you to see how style alters the message of a poem. In the later levels, this project might also expose you to the many different styles at large today on the web. By trying them out, you will learn how they were made and perhaps also why they exist so that you can apply them judiciously from here on out.

Credit

Thanks to my professor from RISD, Lucy Hitchcock, for inspiring this project with her print-based version.