

# A PIECE



**STEPHEN EMMERSON**

**A PIECE**

~ V ≡ ⊃

**if p then q classics**

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The front cover colour is sampled from Robert Creeley's  
Collected Poems 1945-75

# SAMPLE PAGES

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One another and  
one another, two-faced,  
threefold.

One-armed bandit and  
one-armed bandit, two-handed,  
three point turn.



One-horse and  
one horse, twopenny,  
three score.

One-liner and  
one-liner, two-ply,  
thresh.

Oneness and  
oneness, twosome,  
threw.

One-night stand and  
one-night stand, two-stroke,  
thrifty.

One-off and  
one-off, two-way,  
thrips.

Onerous and  
onerous, tycoon,  
throat.

Oneself and  
oneself, tympani,  
throes.

One-sided and  
one-sided, tympanum,  
throng.



One-stop and  
one-stop, type,  
through.

One-time and  
one-time, typeface,  
throve.

One-to-one and  
one-to-one, typeset,  
throwback.

One-track and  
one-track, typewriter,  
throw out.

One-up and  
one-up, typhoid fever,  
throw up.

One-way and  
one-way, typhus,  
thrum.

Ongoing and  
ongoing, typify,  
thrust.

Onion and  
onion, typography,  
thulium.



On-line and  
on-line, tyrannize,  
thumbnail.

Onlooker and  
onlooker, tyranny,  
thumping.

Only and  
only, tyre,  
thunderclap.

Onomatopoeia and  
onomatopoeia, tyro,  
thunderous.

Onrush and  
onrush, tzetze fly,  
thurible.

Onset and  
onset, u,  
thus.

Onshore and  
onshore, ubiquitous,  
thy.

Onside and  
onside, UC,  
Thymus.



Onslaught and  
onslaught, udder,  
thysself.

Onto and  
onto, UEFA,  
tiara.

Ontology and  
ontology, ugh,  
tick.

Onus and  
onus, ugly,  
ticket.

Onward and  
onward, UHF,  
tickler.

Onyx and  
onyx, UK,  
tickover.

Oodles and  
oodles, Ukrainian,  
tidal.

Ookpik and  
ookpik, ulcer,  
tiddly.



Oolite and  
oolite, ulcerous,  
tide.

Oomiak and  
oomiake, ulster,  
tidings.

Oompah and  
oompah, ulterior,  
tie beam.

Oomph and  
oomph, ultimatum,  
tie-dying.

Oops and  
oops, ultra,  
tier.

Ooze and  
ooze, ultraconservative,  
tiff.

Opacity and  
opacity, ultramarine,  
tiger lilly.

Opal and  
opal, ultramontane,  
tighten.



Opalescent and  
opalescent, ultrasonics,  
tight lipped.

Opaque and  
opaque, ultrasound scan,  
tigress.

Op. cit. and  
op. cit., ululate,  
tilde.

OPEC and  
OPEC, umbelliferous,  
till.

Open and  
open, umbilical,  
tilt.

Open air and  
open air, umbilicus,  
timber limit.

Open-and-shut and  
open-and-shut, umbrage,  
timbrel.

Open cast mining and  
open cast mining, umfazi,  
time and a half.



Open day and  
open day, umlaut,  
time capsule.

Open-ended and  
open ended, umpire,  
time-honoured.

Open-eyed and  
open-eyed, UN,  
timely.

Open-handed and  
open-handed, unable,  
timer.

Open-hearted and  
open-hearted, unaccustomed,  
time signature.

Open-heart surgery and  
open-heart surgery, unadvised,  
time worn.

Open house and  
open house, unalienable,  
timing.

Opening and  
opening, unanimous,  
tin.



Opening time and  
opening time, unarmed,  
tinder.

Open letter and  
open letter, unassuming,  
tinfoil.

Open-minded and  
open-minded, unavailing,  
tinge.

Open-mouthed and  
open-mouthed, unawares,  
tinker.

Open-plan and  
open-plan, unbearable,  
tinny.

Open prison and  
open prison, unbeknown,  
tinpot.

Open secret and  
open secret, unbeliever,  
tint.

Open university and  
open university, unbending,  
tip.



Open up and  
open up, unbind,  
tipple.

Open verdict and  
open verdict, unbolt,  
tipsy.

Opera and  
opera, unbosom,  
tip-up.

Operable and  
operable, unbowed,  
tire.

Opera glasses and  
opera glasses, unbroken,  
tiresome.

Opera house and  
opera house, uncalled-for,  
tissue.

Operand and  
operand, uncared-for,  
titan.

Operate and  
operate, uncertain,  
titbit.



Operatic and  
operatic, uncial,  
tithe.

Operating theatre and  
operating theatre, uncivil,  
titillate.

Operation and  
operation, uncivilised,  
title deed.

Operational and  
operational, uncle,  
title role.

Operations research and  
operations research, Uncle Sam,  
titration.

Operative and  
operative, unclose,  
tittle-tattle.

Operator and  
operator, uncoil,  
tizzy.

Operculum and  
operculum, uncommitted,  
Tm.



Operetta and  
operetta, uncommonly,  
to.

Ophthalmia and  
ophthalmia, uncompromising,  
toad-in-the-hole.

Ophthalmic and  
ophthalmic, unconcerned,  
to and fro.

Ophthalmic optician and  
ophthalmic optician, unconscionable,  
tobacconist.

Ophthalmoscope and  
ophthalmoscope, uncork,  
toby.

Opiate and  
opiate, uncouth,  
Toc H.

Opine and  
opine, uncrowned,  
today.

Opinion and  
opinion, unctuous,  
toddy.



Opinionated and  
opinionated, undecieve,  
toecap.

Opinion poll and  
opinion poll, undeniable,  
toffee.

Opium and  
opium, underachieve,  
tofu.

Opossum and  
opossum, underarm,  
together.

Opp and  
opp, underbid,  
toggle join.

Opponent and  
opponent, undercharge,  
tohanga.

Opportune and  
opportune, undercoat,  
toilet paper.

Opportunist and  
opportunist, undercurrent,  
toilet water.



Opportunity and  
opportunity, underdeveloped,  
tokenism.

Opposable and  
opposable, underdone,  
tolerable.

Oppose and  
oppose, underestimate,  
tolerate.

Opposite and  
opposite, underfelt,  
toll.

Opposite number and  
opposite number, undergarment,  
tolu.

Opposition and  
opposition, undergraduate,  
tomahawk.

Oppress and  
oppress, undergrowth,  
tombola.

Oppress and  
oppress, underlay,  
tome.



Opprobrium and  
opprobrium, underline,  
Tommy gun.

Oppugn and  
oppugn, underline,  
Tom Thumb.

Opt and  
opt, underlying,  
ton.

Optic and  
optic, undermine,  
tonality.

Optical and  
optical, undernourished,  
tone down.

Optical character reader and  
optical character reader, underpass,  
tong.

Optical fibre and  
optical fibre, underpin,  
tongue-tie.

Optician and  
optician, underprivileged,  
tonic.



Optics and  
optics, underrate,  
tonnage.

Optimism and  
optimism, underseal,  
tonsillectomy.

Optimize and  
optimize, undersell,  
tonsure.

Optimum and  
optimum, undershirt,  
took.

Option and  
option, underside,  
toot.

Optional and  
optional, undersized,  
toothbrush.

Optometrist and  
Optometrist, understand,  
tooth powder.

Opt out and  
opt out, understate,  
tootie.



Opulent and  
opulent, understudy,  
topaz.

Opus and  
opus, undertaker,  
top dog.

Or and  
or, undertone,  
tope.

Oracle and  
oracle, undervalue,  
top-flight.

Oracular and  
oracular, underway,  
top hat.

Oral and  
oral, underweight,  
topic.

Orange and  
orange, underworld,  
topless.

Orangeade and  
orangeade, undesirable,  
topmost.



Orange blossom and  
orange blossom, undine,  
topography.

Orangeman and  
orangeman, undoing,  
topper.

Orangery and  
orangery, undone,  
tops.

Orang-utan and  
orang-utan, undreamed,  
topside.

Oration and  
oration, undue,  
top up.

Orator and  
orator, unduly,  
Torah.

Oratorio and  
oratorio, unearned,  
toreador.

Oratory and  
oratory, unearth,  
tormentil.



Orb and  
orb, uneasy,  
torpedo.

Orbit and  
orbit, uneconomic,  
torpor.

Orcadian and  
Orcadian, unemployment,  
torrent.

Orchard and  
orchard, unequal,  
torso.

Orchestra and  
orchestra, unequivocal,  
tortoise.

Orchestrate and  
orchestrate, UNESCO,  
torture.

Orchid and  
orchid, uneventful,  
toss off.

Ordain and  
ordain, unexceptionable,  
tot.



Ordeal and  
ordeal, unexpected,  
totality.

Order and  
order, unfair,  
tote.

Orderly and  
orderly, unfamiliar,  
totem pole.

Order of Merit and  
order of Merit, unfathomable,  
touch.

Order paper and  
order paper, unfeeling,  
touché.

Ordinal and  
ordinal, unfinished,  
touch judge.

Ordinance and  
ordinance, unflappable,  
touch paper.

Ordinarily and  
ordinarily, unflinching,  
touch up.



Ordinary and  
ordinary, unforthcoming,  
tough.

Ordinary level and  
ordinary level, unfounded,  
tour.

Ordinary rating and  
ordinary rating, unfriendly,  
tourist.

Ordinary seaman and  
ordinary seaman, unfurl,  
tournament.

Ordinary shares and  
ordinary shares, ungodly,  
tousle.

Ordinate and  
ordinate, unguarded,  
tow.

Ordination and  
ordination, ungulate,  
towel.

Ordnance and  
ordnance, unhand,  
towering.



Ordnance Survey and  
Ordnance Survey, unhealthy,  
town clerk.

Ordovician and  
Ordovician, un hinge,  
town gas.

Ordure and  
ordure, unhook,  
town planning.

Ore and  
ore, uni,  
toxaemia.

Oreg and  
oreg, unicameral,  
toxin.

Oregano and  
oregano, unicellular,  
trace.

Organ and  
organ, unicycle,  
tracer.

Organdie and  
organdie, unify,  
trachea.



Organ grinder and  
organ grinder, unimpeachable,  
tracing.

Organic and  
organic, union,  
tracker dog.

Organic chemistry and  
organic chemistry, unionist,  
tracks.

Organism and  
organism, Union Jack,  
tract.

Organist and  
organist, unique,  
traction.

Organization and  
organization, unisexual,  
trade.

Organize and  
organize, unit,  
trade name.

Organza and  
organza, unitary,  
trader.



Orgasm and  
orgasm, unite,  
tradesman.

Orgy and  
orgy, United Kingdom,  
trade wind.

Oriel window and  
oriel window, unit price,  
traditional.

Orient and  
orient, unity,  
traffic island.

Oriental and  
oriental, univalent,  
tragedian.

Orientate and  
orientate, universal joint,  
tragicomedy.

Orientation and  
orientation, university,  
trailblazer.

Orienteering and  
orienteering, unkempt,  
train bearer.



Orifice and  
orifice, unknown,  
training.

Orig. and  
orig., unlearn,  
trait.

Origami and  
origami, unlearnt,  
tram.

Origin and  
origin, unleavened,  
tramp.

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*A Piece* is a sequence of poems created using a dictionary and Robert Creeley's famous poem, *A Piece*.

The poems were composed using a variation on the Oulipo's method N+7. In N+7 the writer removes nouns from an existing piece of literature, finds those words in a dictionary, reads 7 nouns (or entries) down the dictionary's column and uses that new word as a replacement in the original text.

Using *The Collins Paperback English Dictionary*, published 1990, I selected both instances of the words 'one' in Creeley's poem and replaced them with the next entry in the dictionary; an N+1. I then found the entry for 'two', and moved two words forward in the dictionary; an N+2. Finally, I chose the entry for 'three', and moved three words forward; an N+3. For each of the poems in my versions of *A Piece* I repeated the process of N+1, N+2, N+3, using the new set of words as the starting point. The sequence ends after all the entries for the letter O — all the N+1s — were used up.

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