

Being with you makes me
better.

You look me in the eyes
and say I'm the most
beautiful woman alive.
Even when I haven't
showered for 2 days.

Thank you
for hugs in the kitchen when
I'm trying to cook
Kisses Morning, noon, and

You are never angry, even
when I got that \$80 speeding
ticket that should have gone
to a new crib.

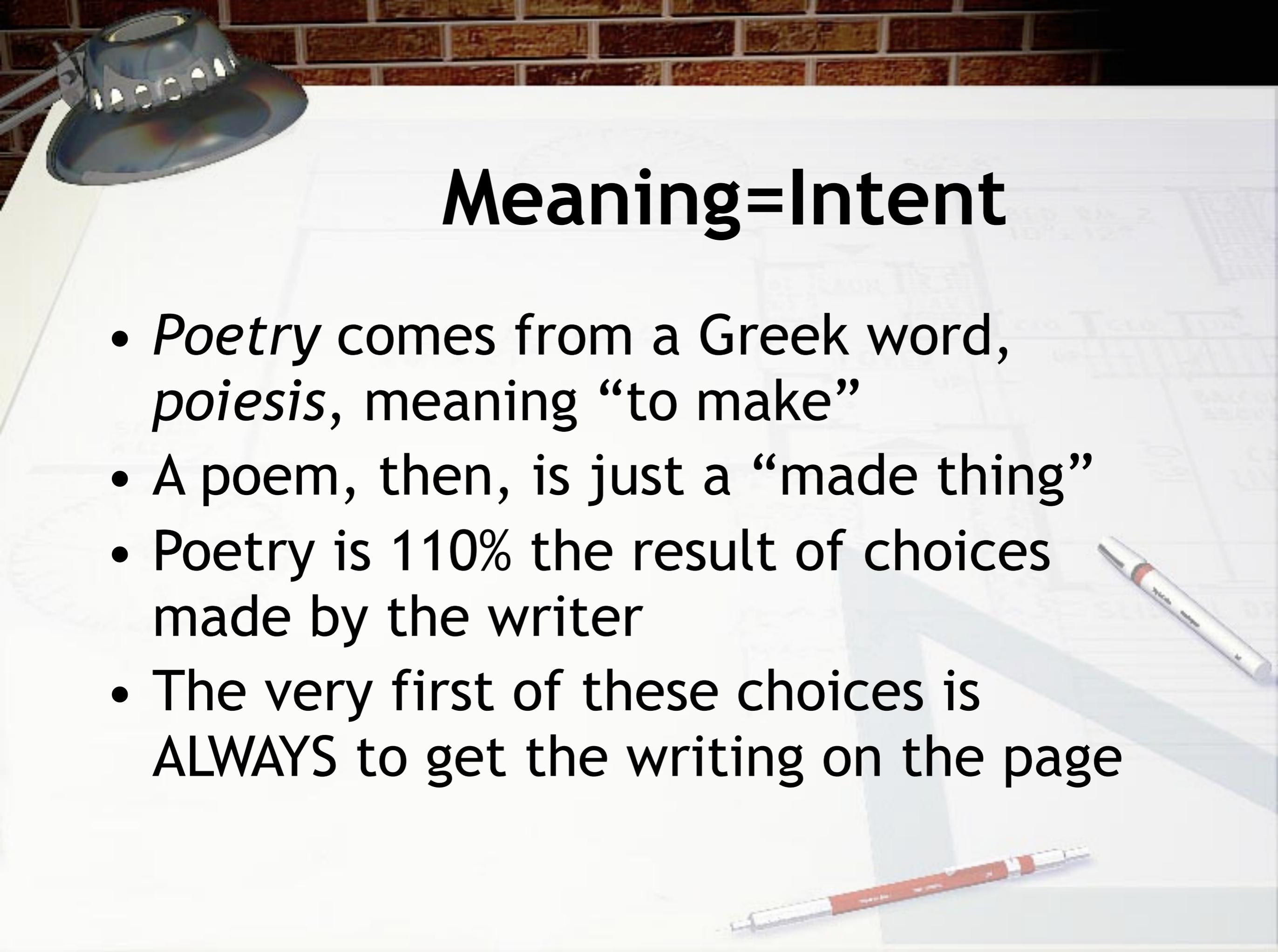
Then, I cried like a baby,
because I could see, smell,
Feel how much you loved
me.

Baby, Baby, Baby

You gave me two
sweet angels
That look like You

Saying What you Mean, Meaning What You Say

Making Poems That Matter

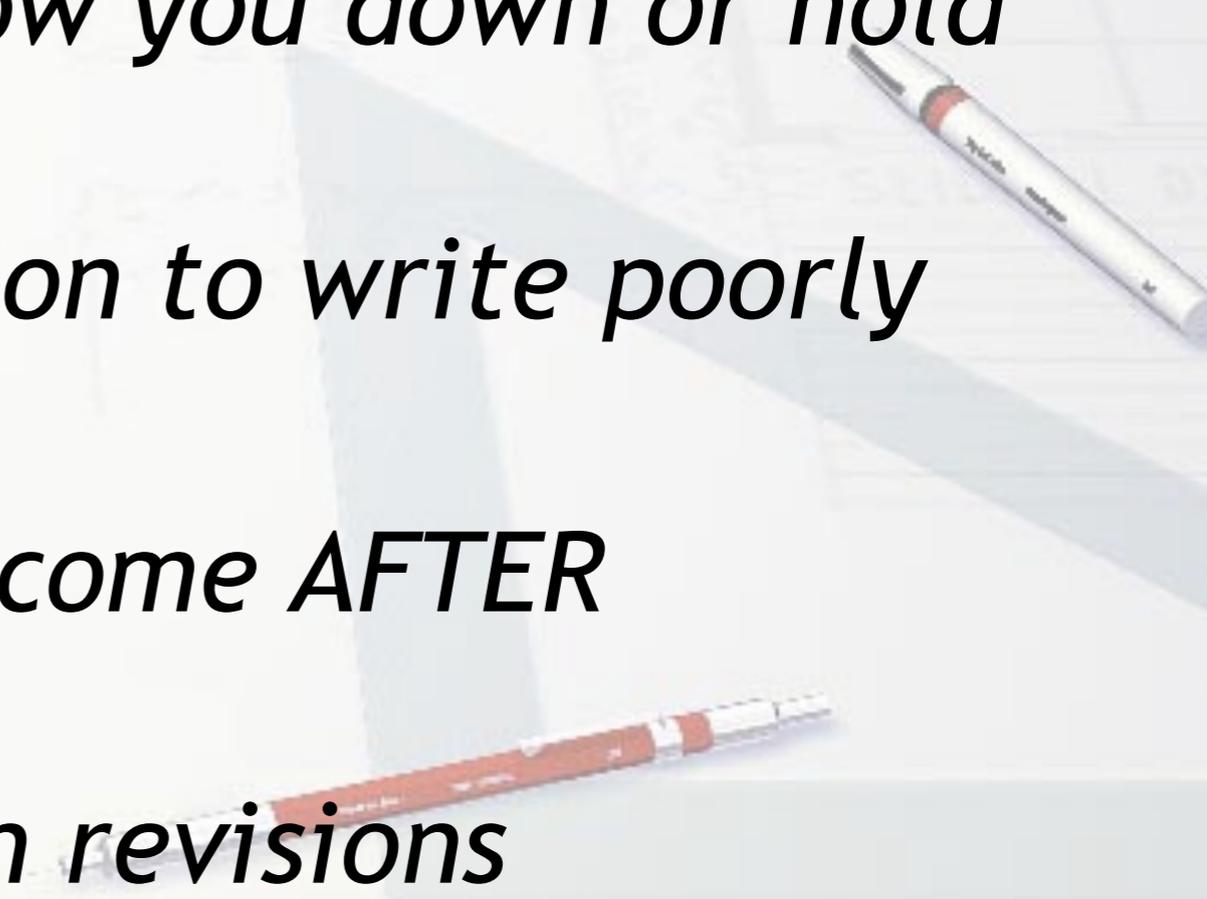
A desk with a lamp, a ruler, and a pen. The lamp is on the left, casting light on the desk. The ruler is on the right, and the pen is at the bottom. The background is a brick wall.

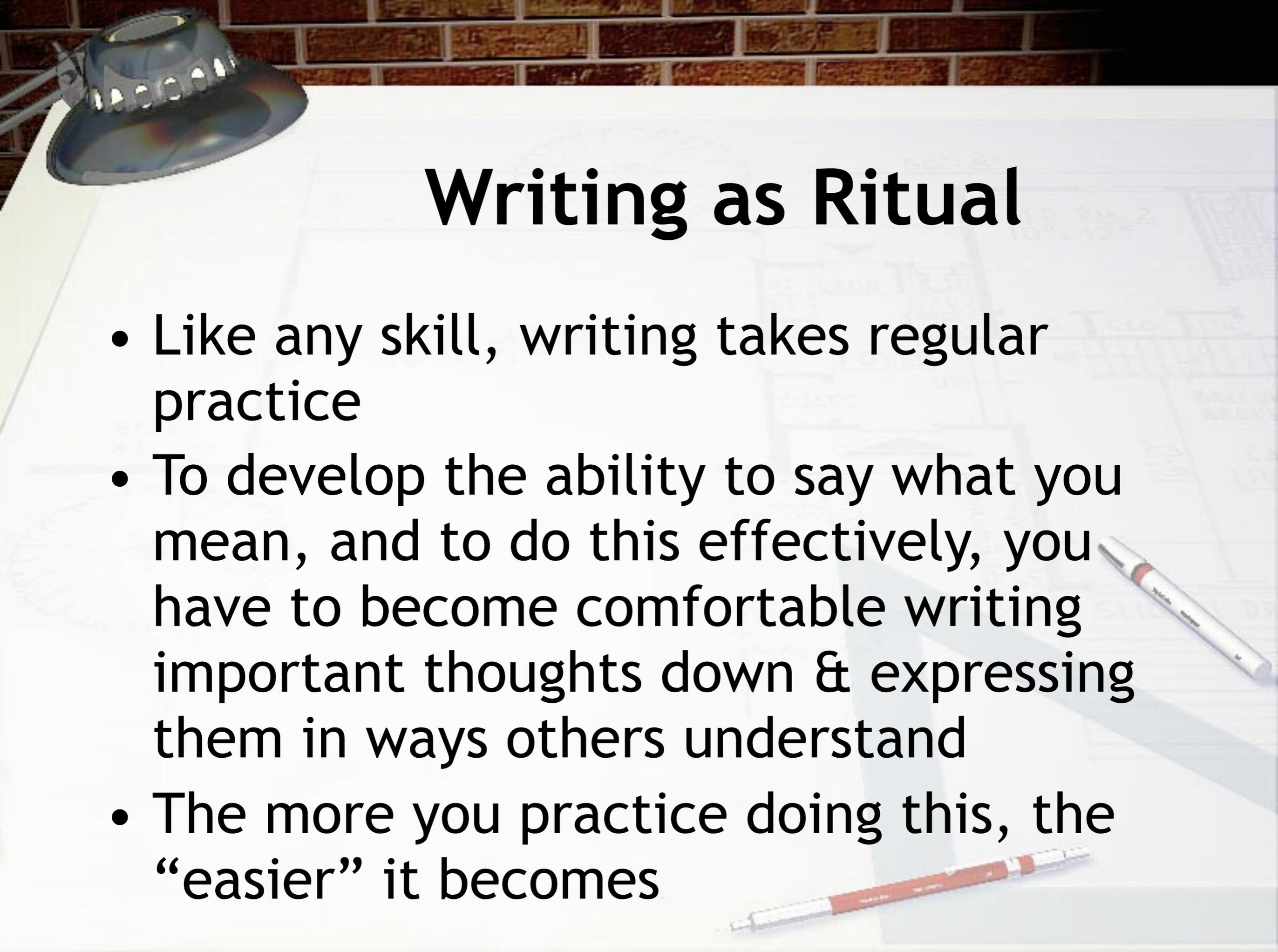
Meaning=Intent

- *Poetry* comes from a Greek word, *poiesis*, meaning “to make”
- A poem, then, is just a “made thing”
- Poetry is 110% the result of choices made by the writer
- The very first of these choices is **ALWAYS** to get the writing on the page



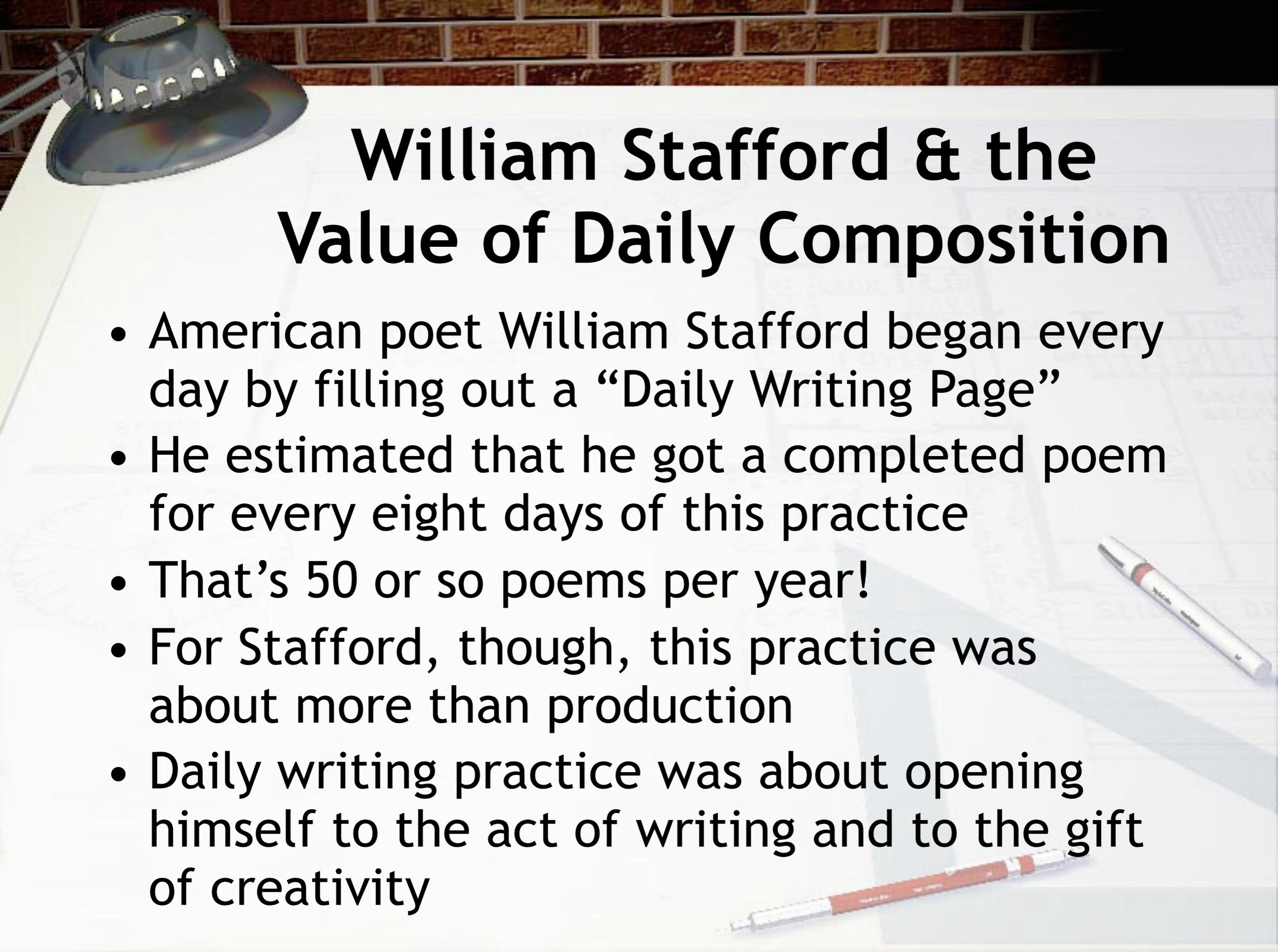
Habit & Art

- ***Writing is a habit***
 - *Make the choice to write as often as possible until it becomes part of you*
 - *Don't let judgment slow you down or hold you back*
 - *Give yourself permission to write poorly*
 - ***Revision is ART!***
 - *Craft and refinement come AFTER composition*
 - *There are NO limits on revisions*
- 



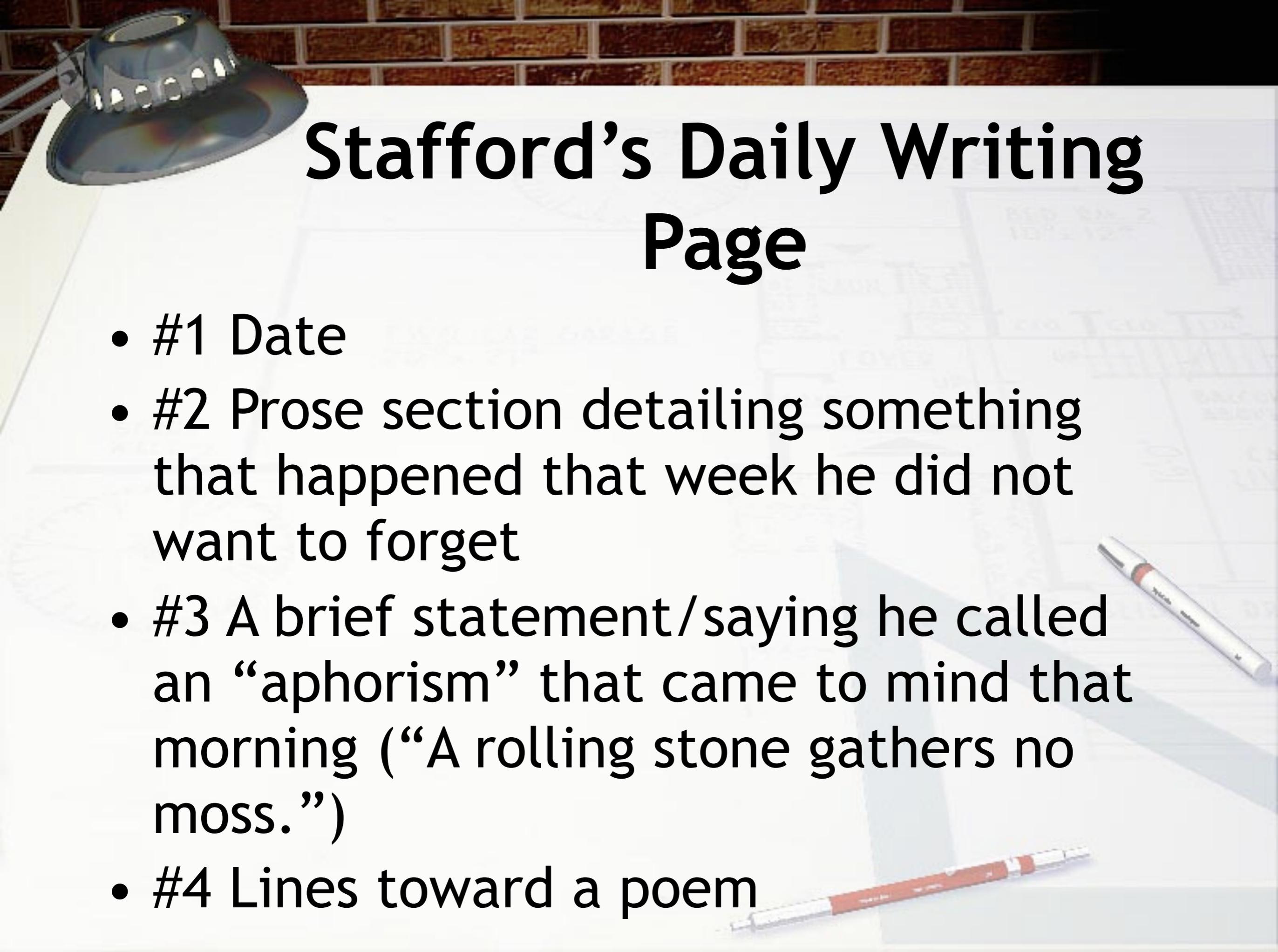
Writing as Ritual

- Like any skill, writing takes regular practice
- To develop the ability to say what you mean, and to do this effectively, you have to become comfortable writing important thoughts down & expressing them in ways others understand
- The more you practice doing this, the “easier” it becomes



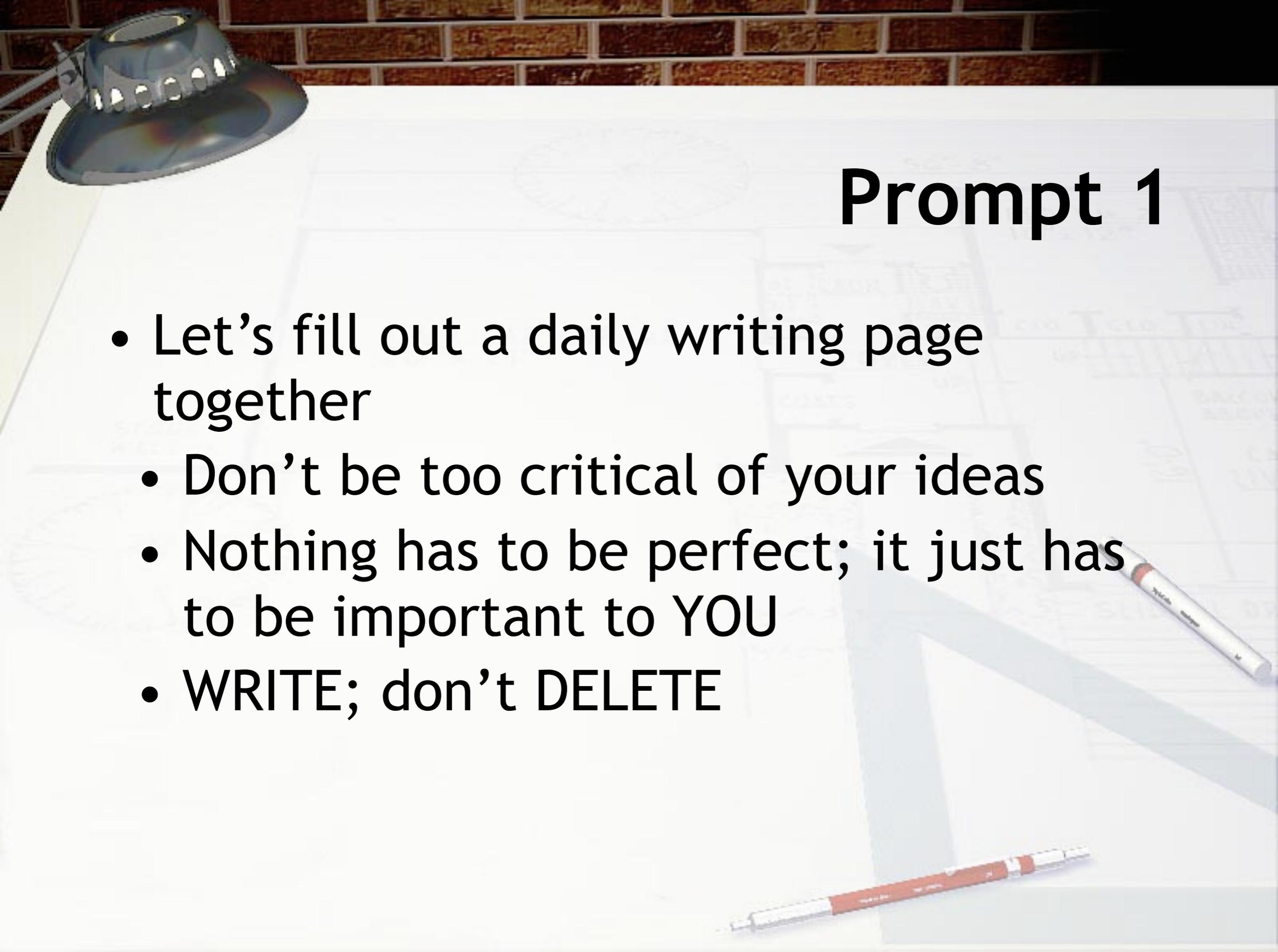
William Stafford & the Value of Daily Composition

- American poet William Stafford began every day by filling out a “Daily Writing Page”
- He estimated that he got a completed poem for every eight days of this practice
- That’s 50 or so poems per year!
- For Stafford, though, this practice was about more than production
- Daily writing practice was about opening himself to the act of writing and to the gift of creativity



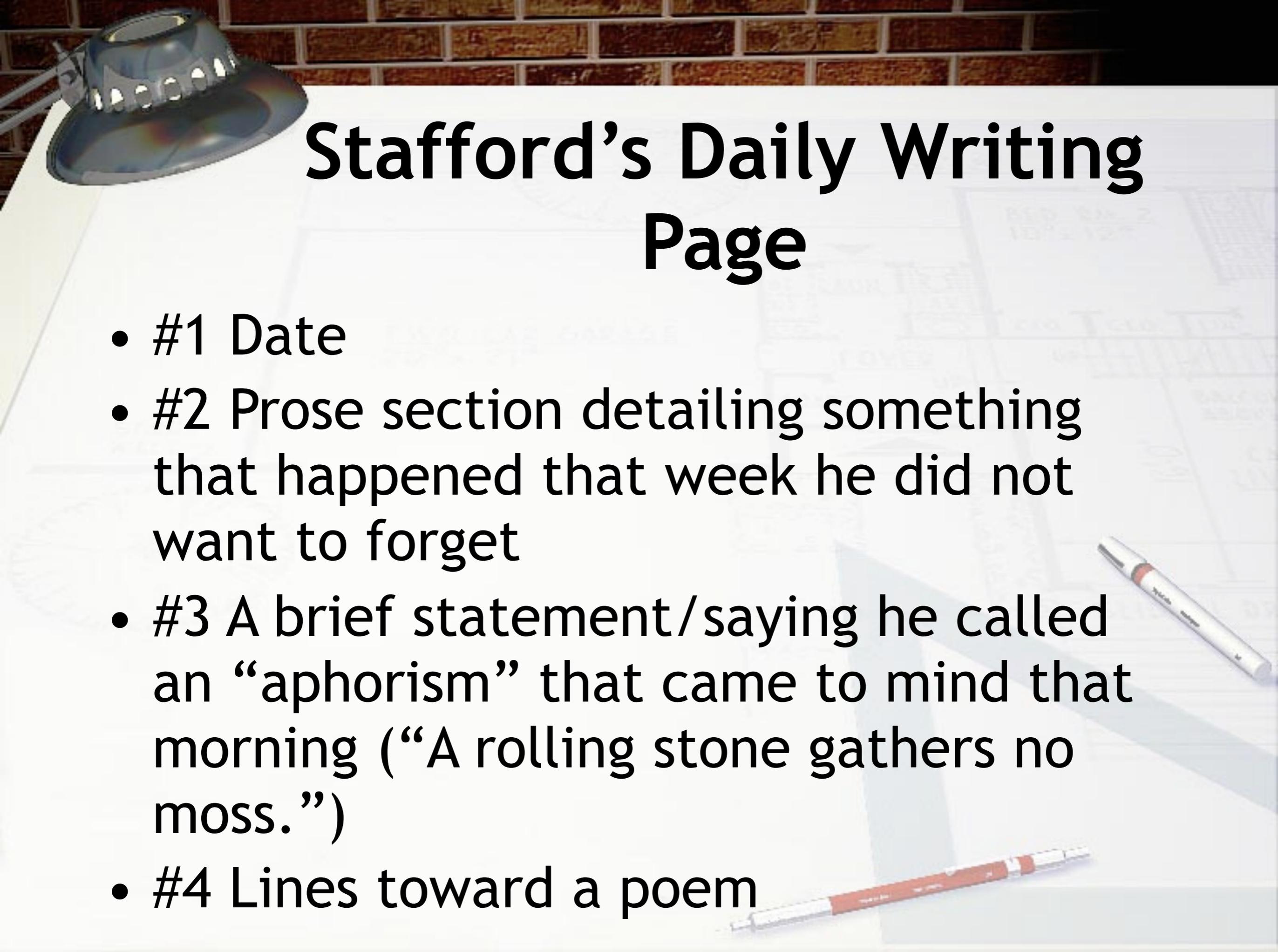
Stafford's Daily Writing Page

- #1 Date
- #2 Prose section detailing something that happened that week he did not want to forget
- #3 A brief statement/saying he called an “aphorism” that came to mind that morning (“A rolling stone gathers no moss.”)
- #4 Lines toward a poem

A desk with a lamp, a ruler, and a pen. The background is a brick wall. The desk is white and has a lamp on the left, a ruler on the right, and a pen at the bottom. The text is overlaid on the desk.

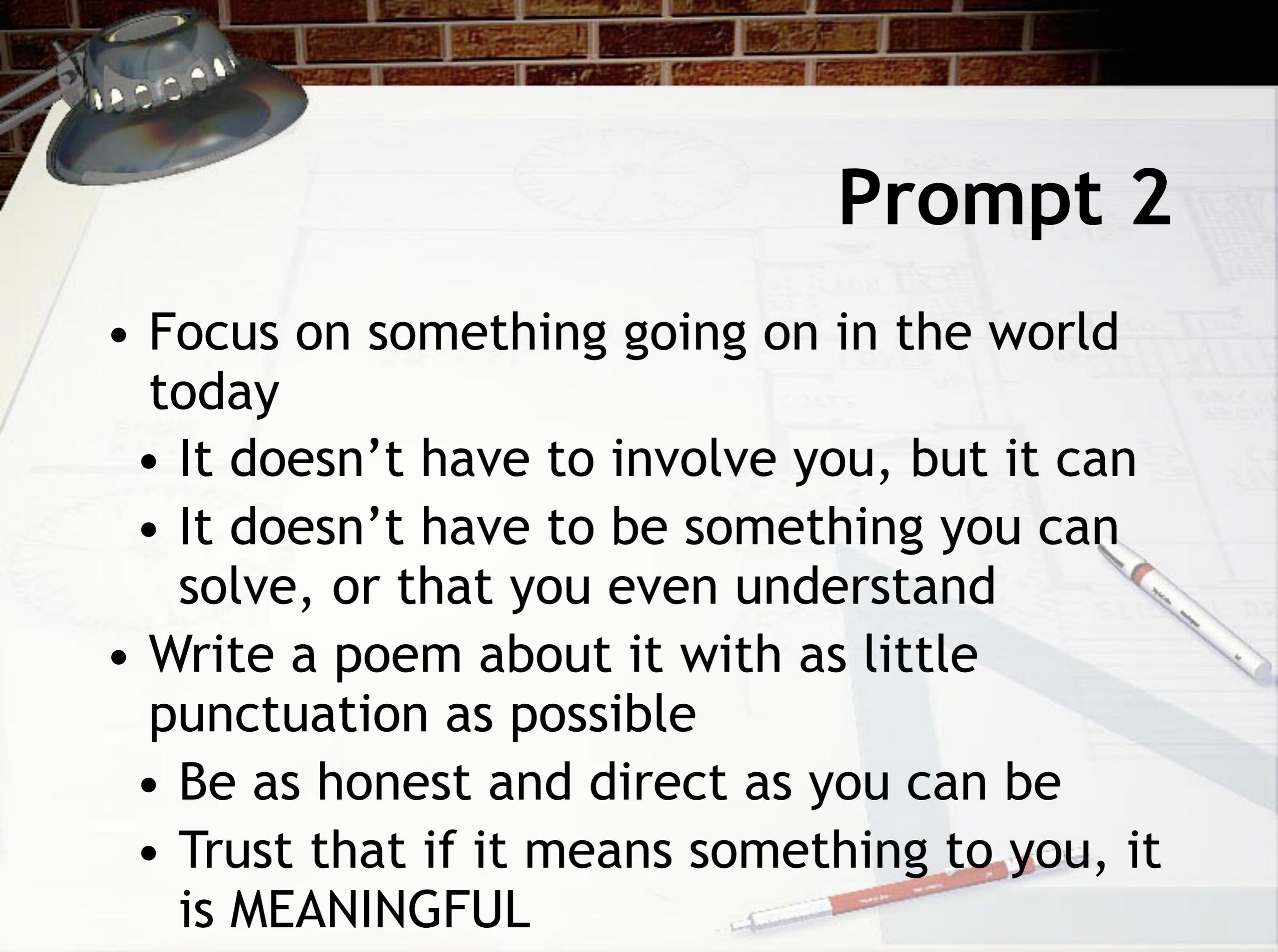
Prompt 1

- Let's fill out a daily writing page together
- Don't be too critical of your ideas
- Nothing has to be perfect; it just has to be important to YOU
- **WRITE; don't DELETE**



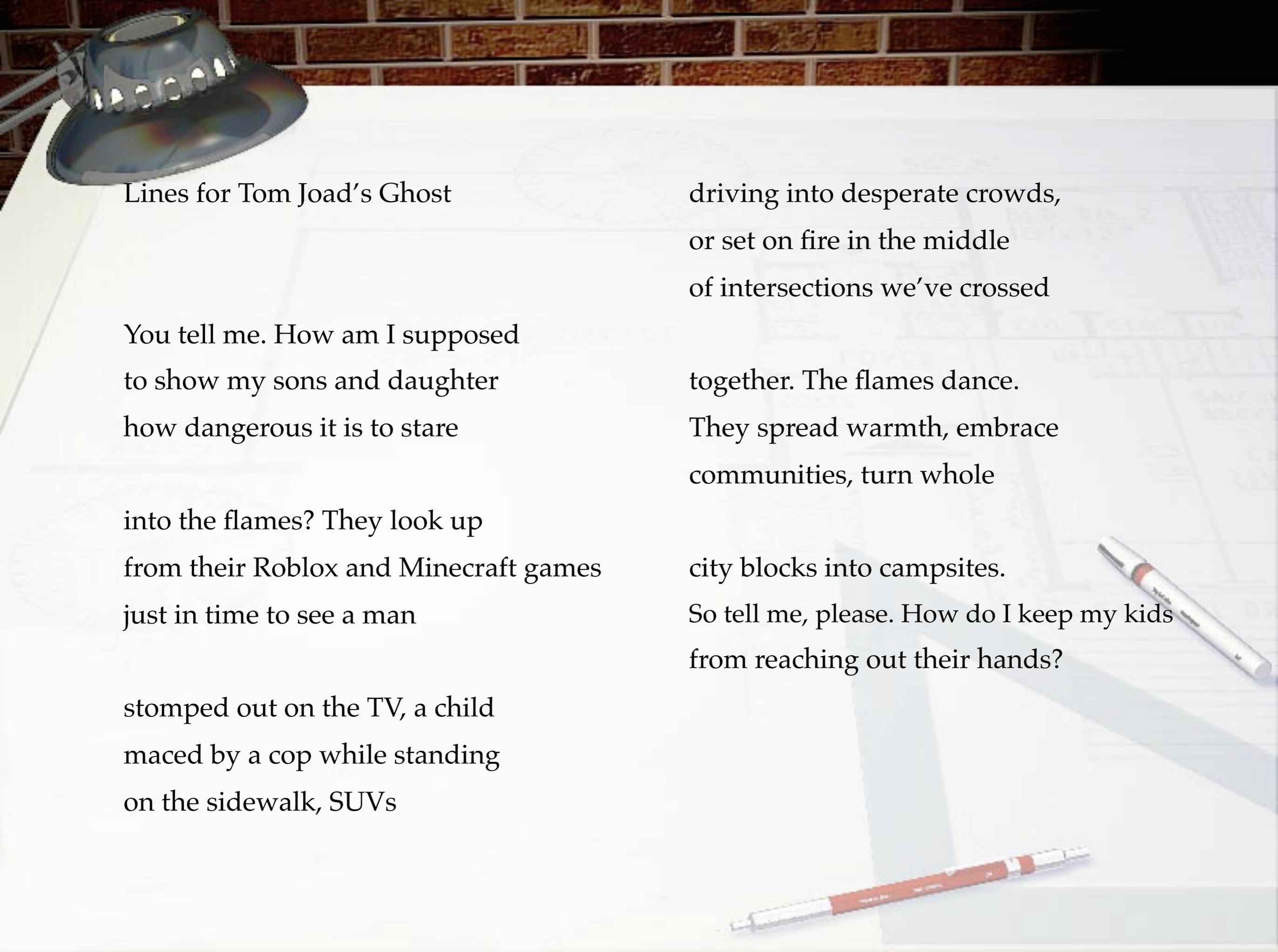
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Prompt 2

- Focus on something going on in the world today
 - It doesn't have to involve you, but it can
 - It doesn't have to be something you can solve, or that you even understand
- Write a poem about it with as little punctuation as possible
 - Be as honest and direct as you can be
 - Trust that if it means something to you, it is **MEANINGFUL**



Lines for Tom Joad's Ghost

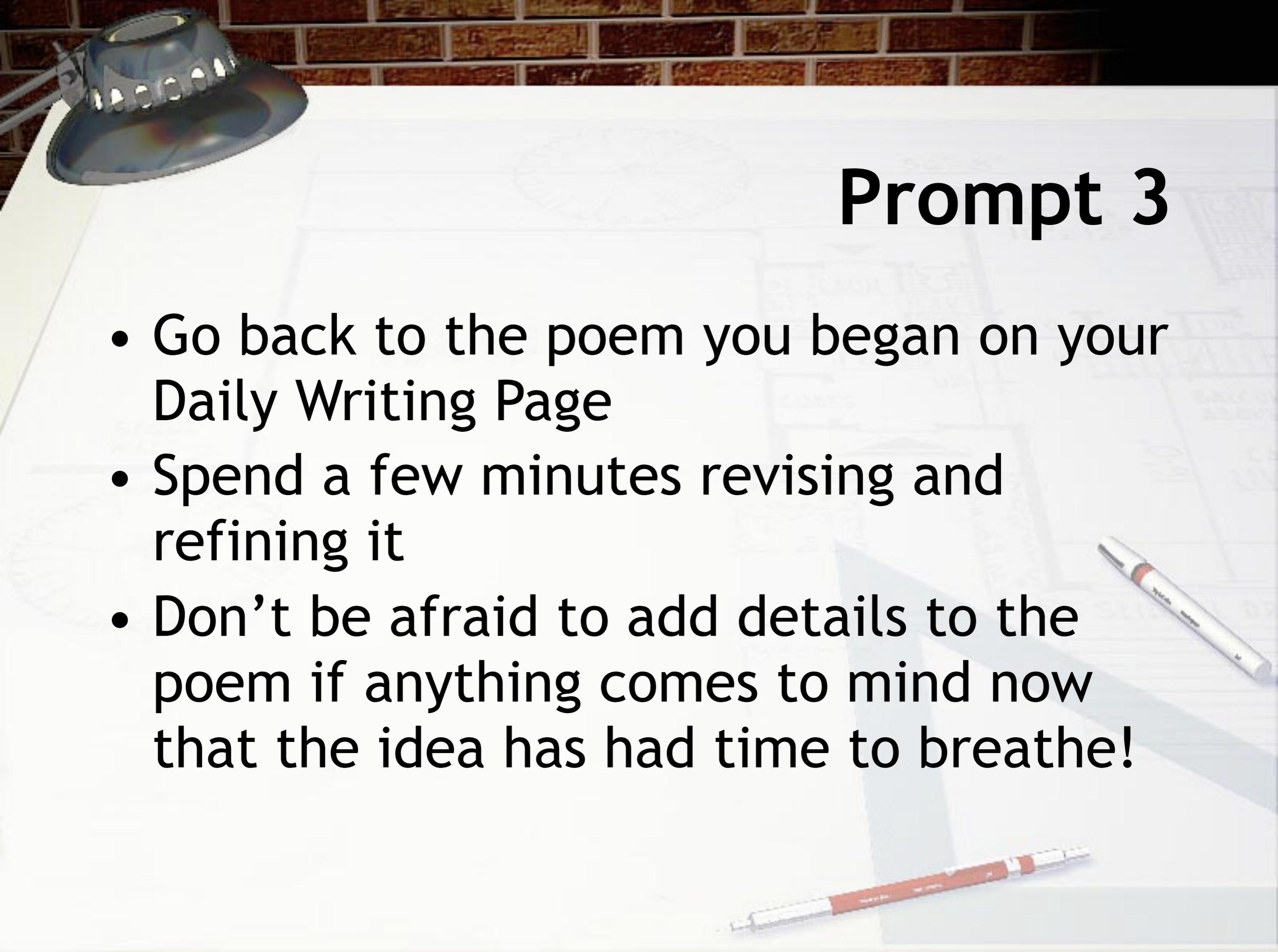
You tell me. How am I supposed
to show my sons and daughter
how dangerous it is to stare
into the flames? They look up
from their Roblox and Minecraft games
just in time to see a man

stomped out on the TV, a child
maced by a cop while standing
on the sidewalk, SUVs

driving into desperate crowds,
or set on fire in the middle
of intersections we've crossed

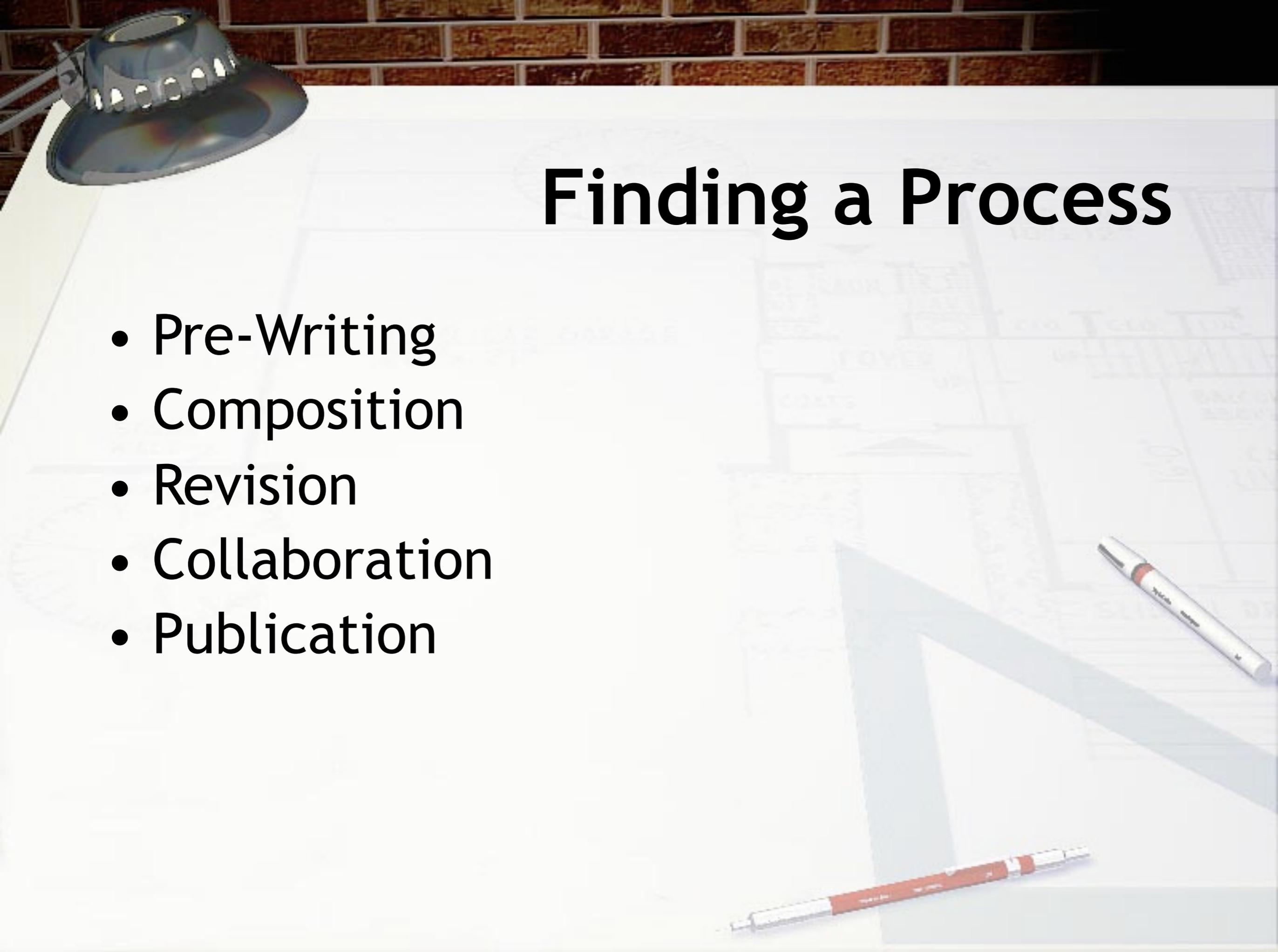
together. The flames dance.
They spread warmth, embrace
communities, turn whole

city blocks into campsites.
So tell me, please. How do I keep my kids
from reaching out their hands?



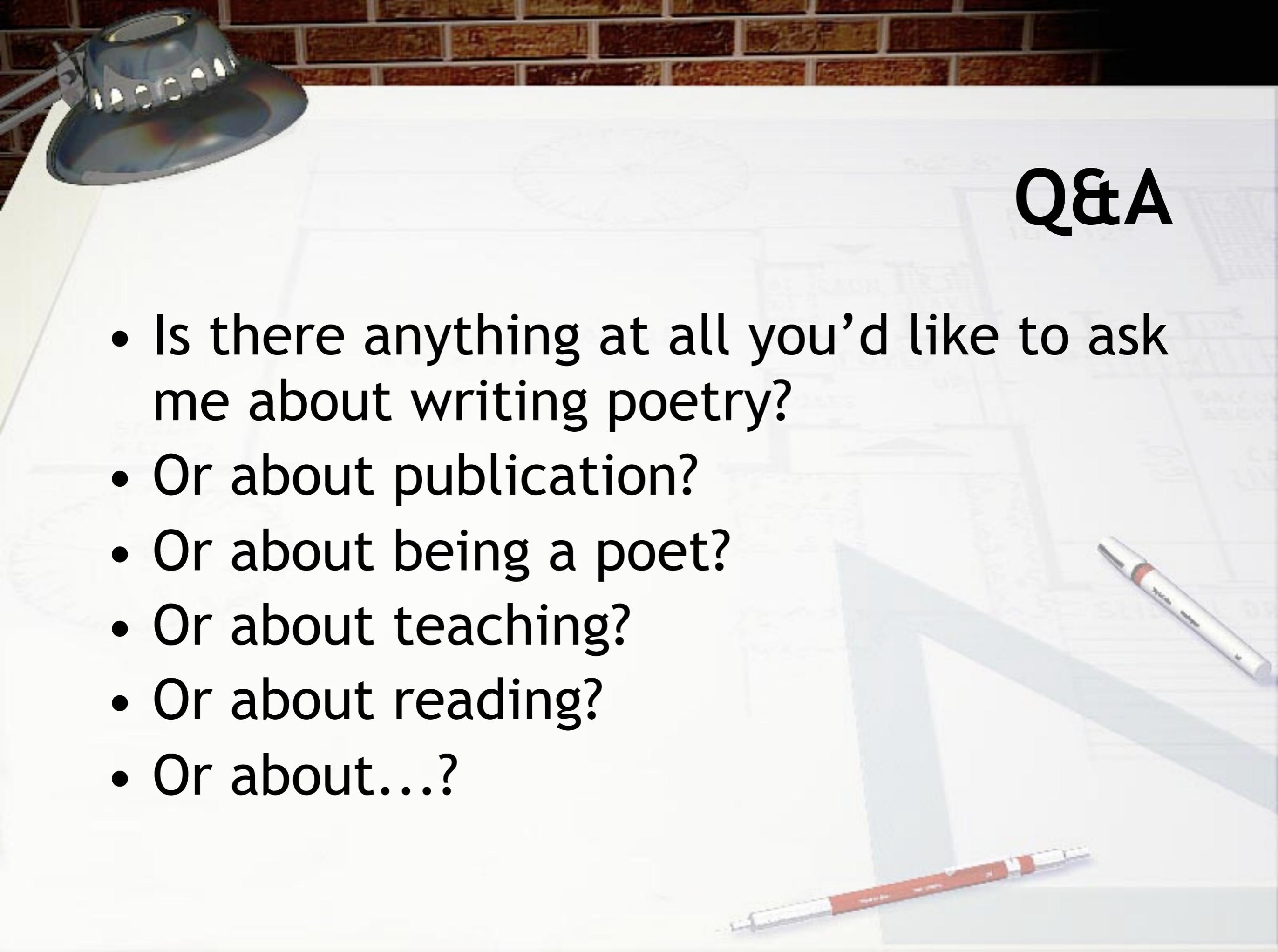
Prompt 3

- Go back to the poem you began on your Daily Writing Page
- Spend a few minutes revising and refining it
- Don't be afraid to add details to the poem if anything comes to mind now that the idea has had time to breathe!

The background of the slide is a photograph of a desk. In the top left corner, there is a silver desk lamp with a perforated shade. The desk surface is white and has a large, light blue ruler and a red and white pen. In the background, there is a brick wall. The title 'Finding a Process' is written in a large, bold, black font in the upper right quadrant of the image.

Finding a Process

- Pre-Writing
- Composition
- Revision
- Collaboration
- Publication



Q&A

- Is there anything at all you'd like to ask me about writing poetry?
- Or about publication?
- Or about being a poet?
- Or about teaching?
- Or about reading?
- Or about...?