ABSTRACT:
It begins in the book: writing the material poem comprises practice-led research in the form of three creative projects, and a thesis. Its central question is how the theory and practice surrounding the materiality of language can be applied in the context of poetic practice. The first of the three creative projects is The Material Poem: an e-anthology of media-specific writing and text-based art, published in mid-2007. The second, The Homeless Gods, is an online poem-world developed using Flash. The third and final work is Conversions, an exhibition of Chinese poetry in translation. I explore the processes underpinning them through dedicated project assessments. All projects are in some way collaborative and all parties are duly acknowledged. The thesis formulates a model by which these works (and other literary endeavours engaged with the materiality of language) can be critically assessed. The first proposition is that we must move beyond materiality’s purely formal meaning. Accordingly, I have developed a three-pronged model of materiality that centres on the following questions: what enables, and how does, a reader to respond to a literary work (material basis); what socio-cultural forces influence the relationship between writers, readers and the language-object (materialism); and finally, the actual material expression (or materiality) of a language-object. This is the subject of the first chapter. The subject of the second chapter is how this model might be applied to a specific literary genre, poetry. Drawing on texts by Huisman, Riffaterre and Perloff, I argue that poetry’s material basis is driven by its visual interface, its localised semiotic systems and, in the case of certain poetic traditions, ultimately indeterminate meaning. This material basis differs vastly from that of most other literary genres, indicating potential for experimentation with poetry’s material form. The third and final chapter centres on this assessment. Having established that interactivity and interface are emblematic of poetry’s material basis, I revisit the conceptual and creative work of artists/architects Arakawa and Gins to develop a model of materiality that echoes their concepts of terrain, landing sites and perception stations. In turn, this provides me with the required critical framework to revisit and reassess my creative projects as complete “language-objects”.

Please use this identifier to cite or link to this item:
http://hdl.handle.net/10453/34192
This article focuses on poetry from the United Kingdom written in the English language. The article does not cover poetry from other countries where the English language is spoken, including Southern Ireland after December 1922. The earliest surviving English poetry, written in Anglo-Saxon, the direct predecessor of modern English, may have been composed as early as the 7th century. How to write a poem - a step-by-step guide to poetry techniques. Advice on choosing a topic, getting started, and finding the right words. Don't feel that you have to choose profound or "poetic" material. Anything can be the subject for a poem. Great poems have been written about such topics as a gas station (Elizabeth Bishop, "The Filling Station"), a clothesline full of laundry (Richard Wilbur, "Love Calls Us to the Things of the World"), and pieces of broken glass on the beach ("Amy Clampitt, "Beach Glass"). In his book Poetry in the Making, the poet Ted Hughes talks about how to write a poem about an animal. The key, he says, is to concentrate hard enough on the animal, to choose the words that best capture the animal you have in your mind. Poetry is the most artistic and liberating form of creative writing. You can write in the abstract or the concrete. Images can be vague or subtle, brilliant or dull. Write in form, using patterns, or write freely, letting your conscience (or subconscious) be your guide. Poems can happen very quickly and many beginning poets are inclined to go over the poem once or twice, sweeping it rather than giving it a deep cleaning. Spend time with the poem. Look for alternative words in a thesaurus.