

**WAVE SAYS Reader's Guide**  
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**READ IN**

1. What kind of tone is set by the book's title, cover image, epigraphs, and proem? What sort of expectation(s) do they create for you as a reader?
2. A scan of *Wave Says* reveals a variety of free verse and experimental forms—identify some of the different kinds of poems in the collection. How does this variety and formal experimentation function for you as a reader?

Why the multiplicity of forms?

3. Consider the following statement in Charles Olson's "Projective Verse": "A poem is energy transferred from where the poet got it (he will have some several causations), by way of the poem itself to, all the way over to, the reader."

Identify some of the "several causations" in *Wave Says*.

4. Generate a glossary of words that either recur/loop/(re)surface throughout the book and/or that sting you—what are the effects of this repetition and patterning? What might they suggest about knowledge, experience, and memory? About time?
5. In writing *Wave Says*, I wanted to think about permeability, patterning, containment, and the invisible structures that shape and direct our experiences of being. Consider how power is rendered in these poems. Who has it, and who doesn't?
6. Adrienne Rich's "Someone is Writing a Poem" includes many ideas about composition and poetry that resonate with the poetics of *Wave Says*. Consider Rich's statements below and discuss how and where you see these ideas enacted and expored in *Wave Says*.

Rich describes poetry as "an exchange of electrical currents through language".

"The theater of any poem is a collection of decisions about space and time."

"Words are being set down in a force field."

## WRITE OUT

1. We all have words that surface and resurface in our lives and our writing. Go back through your writing — any kind of writing you have done — and try to identify some of your own personal lexicon. If you have writings from years past to go through, all the better. Look beyond finished poems to journals, drafts, etc. The less consciousness you bring to this exercise the more likely you are to surprise yourself.
2. Is there a phenomenon/element/inanimate object whose voice you would like to hear? Write a poem in that voice.
3. *Wave Says* is, to me, a book written in the aftermath. What does that mean to you? Compose your own aftermath poem.
4. When I set out to write the title poem, I saw the poem's shape, movement, and approximate length in my mind's eye before I had any words other than the first one or two lines. Try composing a poem this way, by starting with a shape or some other visual/sensual/energetic quality.

What comes up for you? Does the experiment show you anything useful about your own composition practice and/or ideas you might carry about how a poem is made? Does it challenge any ideas you might have about what a poem is? How does it feel to conceive of a poem in this way?