

Exploratory Writing 1/29/09

When you write in the exploratory
safe safe safe safe safe safe
make a line like the one above.

Then read the prompts below,
telling yourself, "This is mine,
I don't have to share it with
anyone." Now write what occurs to
you.

NYT 1/27/09
DAVID BROOKS

What Life Asks Of Us

A few years ago, a faculty committee at Harvard produced a report on the purpose of education. "The aim of a liberal education" the report declared, "is to unsettle presumptions, to defamiliarize the familiar, to reveal what is going on beneath and behind appearances, to disorient young people and to help them to find ways to reorient themselves."

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Requiem

It came to me the other day:
Were I to die, no one would say,
"Oh, what a shame! So young, so full
Of promise — depths unplumbable!"

Instead, a shrug and tearless eyes
Will greet my overdue demise;
The wide response will be, I know,
"I thought he died a while ago."

For life's a shabby subterfuge,
And death is real, and dark, and huge.
The shock of it will register
Nowhere but where it will occur.

— JOHN UPDIKE

This poem is taken from John Updike's forthcoming collection, "Endpoint and Other Poems."