

**T.S. Eliot on the difficulty of working with words,  
and when to know your writing is right**  
(taken from his *Four Quartets*)

**From Part I – Burnt Norton**

Words strain,  
Crack and sometimes break, under the burden,  
Under the tension, slip, slide, perish,  
Decay with imprecision, will not stay in place,  
Will not stay still. Shrieking voices  
Scolding, mocking, or merely chattering,  
Always assail them.

**From Part IV – Little Gidding**

And every phrase  
And sentence that is right (where every word is at home,  
Taking its place to support the others,  
The word neither diffident nor ostentatious,  
An easy commerce of the old and the new,  
The common word exact without vulgarity,  
The formal word precise but not pedantic,  
The complete consort dancing together),  
Every phrase and every sentence is an end and a beginning....

**NOTE:** To read complete text of the “Four Quartets,” visit: <http://tinyurl.com/bwryfxj>