

Poetry Corner

UTEP's Lawrence Lesser turned to poetry to help navigate these pandemic times, a reflection on infection and inflection! First published in the June 2020 issue of *Radical Statistics*, this poem could actually be used with high school students learning about the inflection point of a (logistic or other) graph, and then going on to make corona-connections with the meaning of the word *inflection* in the registers of linguistics and communication.

The Point of Inflection by Lawrence Mark Lesser

The point of inflection
is where towering terror of
cumulative cases
finally
slows its rise.

The point of inflection
of that logistic curve
depends on logistics
of testing, tracing,
and distance.

The point of inflection
is to let our words show number, person, mood, tense:
distinguishing *case* and *cases*,
infect and *infected*,
dense and *denser*.

The point of inflection
is how the rise and fall of our voice
shows tone,
beyond what's typed
in chat windows.

The root of inflection
is the Latin word meaning to *bend*,
like a curve, a government,
arc of the moral universe,
or us.