GLENN LIGON
WARM BROAD GLOW, 2005

Glenn Ligon’s first neon relief, Warm Broad Glow, consists simply of the words ‘negro sunshine’ fashioned in letters some sixteen feet across and three feet high. The sign is rendered in old typewriter characters, each one dipped face first in black paint so that the light escapes only from behind, casting a cool fluorescence on the wall on which it hangs, about eight feet from the ground... The work inverts the relationship between light and dark one expects from a lighted sign against a recessive ground; it casts a pall over [Gertrude] Stein’s nagging phrase, but there remains, as well, a paradoxically effulgent and hopeful penumbra. Of all Ligon’s work with text, this piece is perhaps his most distilled and elegant visual rephrasing of borrowed words.¹

ADDITIONAL LINKS

THIRD DIMENSION: WORKS FROM THE BRANT FOUNDATION
GLENN LIGON - ENCOUNTERS AND COLLISIONS

ACTIVITY
Choose a phrase from one of your favorite books and draw or type the words using different text styles and designs. Experiment with how the meaning of the words can change depending on how they appear visually. How do the words change when you introduce color, or lack of color? Look at the words in different contexts and think about how time and place play a role in how people may interpret your work versus when read in the original context.

Share your creations with us on Instagram @thebrantfoundation!

QUESTIONS
1. What was the deciding factor for you to pick this phrase?
2. What was your stylistic approach to this phrase? Why?
3. What was the deciding factor behind the phrase you chose?

MATERIALS
pen, pencil, glitter pens, markers, paint, crayons

EXAMPLES

LOVE LOUDLY
time singing