On Sharpening Pencils......

Chester Sheppard Dawson

In preparing to sharpen a pencil
remember first: Only dull pencils need your solicitous concern. The less dull manage
in most cases to surmount such crises as arise. Now,
grasping the sharpener neither severely
nor easily, you begin to notice the pencil gradually conforms to your wishes. Or breaks.
A good sharpener seeks, not necessarily with immutable success, a no-longer-dull pencil, unbroken. Some

achieve this simply.
Not a few, unaware of what it takes, crush or so harrass the pencil that its fundamental function - its own expectations so to speak - are suppressed.
In this case for those involved it becomes best to revise method and approach, abandon present ways or for the rest of their days adjust to a world of dull pencils. True. In

the general flood of things one more broken pencil hardly matters. Still, one who appreciates the finer clearer writing, the far more legible prose, knows that it is in the nature of things, at the center of toil and travail and pain and dreams that enlightened men treat compassionately the dull as well as pencils terrible sharp which ultimately etch upon us all an often appalling mark.