

## 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.