

## 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 expecta-  
tions 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.