Weapons of Mass Instruction

ABCD
Each time we pick up the papers
We are reminded about war:
The war on Iraq
The war on drugs
The war on escalating gas prices
The war on schools
That's the one teachers caused—right?

ABCDEF
I pause because, “we’re the cause?”
Of course teachers are
Cuz we’re the ones who enlarge and unpack
students’ minds
From taped, unboxed boxes of arsenal mines
Sitting and waiting patiently for their turns
Only to be found in broken desks,
Old school time machines
littered with graffiti of years past
tell stories of other wars
that map out our country’s misinstructions
victories, no doubt rewritten into anything but mass destruction

ABCDE
Filling in bubbles on standardized,
No child left critically thinking tests,
Students sit anxiously tapping their pencils
Only to become the next set of ‘arsenaled’ dead soldiers
Cuz those tests are gonna land them good jobs
Make them decent and moral citizens,
Who don’t question the whereabouts of the
W-weapons of
M-mass
D-destruction
And make them think that everything is answered reductively and simply
by A.B.C.D. or none of the above
Yes, we are the cause
That students ABCD each other
Back into Concentration Camps
And
A-abide
B-behave
C-cower
And then
D-die

Our papers read:
“US goes to war to stop Iraq’s development of weapons of mass destruction”
So we war to thwart our own potential destruction
war brought “democracy” to them-
war brought “democracy” to them-
can we please have some of our own democracy here?
Do we need another war to have a new US democracy here?
Do we need another war to have a new US democracy here?

ABCDEF
I tell you this because while there were no weapons of mass destruction
Teachers eagerly turned to their students and became weapons of mass instruction
Instructing and assisting students to deduct reasons for the war
Not out of spite but to help students critically
Think that there was a problem with our government’s foresight-
Now in hindsight the war has become the greatest teaching tool we know
this gift of human error
has become the teacher’s tool to repair
Faith in mankind, assignment by assignment, Socratic seminar by Socratic seminar, paper
by paper, bubble test by bubble test...

ABCDEF
Iraq’s “Weapons of mass destruction”
Have made us weapons of mass instruction
Forcing us to turn to other sources than corporate-owned media
So we pull from this place and that
The Nation, Z, MTV, Democracy Now, Independent Media, BBC,
Because the counter narratives speak a truth that others try to ignore

AB
counter facts form multiple viewpoints
That we need to in order to be weapons of mass instruction
So students can be weapons of mass informed citizens
So they can ABCD
A- answer
B- be informed
C- courage to speak their truth
D-differentiate
Because what we’re being fed through corporate media cannot cement
Fact any more
Teachers shan’t be blamed for failing schools
It is the media-laden weapons of mass misinformation
Guided by our own government’s FCC
That promote misthinking, misdirection, misguidance,
and have misled our own leaders
to make them weapons of mass destruction
and reduced us all to ABCD
A-anything
B-but blindly
C-committed citizens
D-desiring democracy

Because WMD
W- where’s
M- my
D- democracy?