Introduction

This microfiction classroom resource is designed to reflect key learning areas outlined in the ACARA Australian Curriculum. Students compare the different microfiction samples provided, and evaluate the impact and effect of their distinct styles and genres. Students then use their reflections and discussions about the samples to guide their own 120 word written response to an image provided below. Microfiction encourages students to edit as they write, selecting only their most meaningful and evocative words and sentence structures to produce a short, imaginative piece.

Classroom Discussion: Microfiction Examples

As a class, read the microfiction samples provided in the student handout, and discuss using these questions as a guide:

- Which genres and themes did you recognise in these microfiction stories?
  - Which, in your opinion, was the most effective, and why?
  - What language or techniques did the author use to evoke this particular genre or theme?

- How does the form of a microfiction story (poetry or prose) change its effect?
  -What are some of the technical differences between the prose and poetry microfiction   samples?

- What words or phrases stood out to you, and why do you think they made an impact?
  -Can you identify any literary techniques used in the words or phrases that caught your attention? (e.g simile, metaphor, tricolon)

- How do the microfiction samples use language that is concise, but still evocative?
  -Find and list some examples of striking or interesting words.
  -Why is it important to choose your words carefully, and try to get straight to the point, even when you're writing creatively? What other forms of writing could these skills be applied to?

- evaluating the effectiveness of texts in representing ideas, attitudes and voices (ACEEN039)
- analysing and evaluating how different texts represent similar ideas in different ways (ACEEN057)
- explaining how meaning changes when texts are transformed into a different genre or medium (ACEEN058)
- comparing and evaluating the impact of language conventions used in a variety of texts and genres. (ACEEN059)

Microfiction Samples

These samples were written by high school students for the 2019 Brisbane Writers Festival microfiction competition. They demonstrate the diverse range of creative stories that can be created using only 120 words.

How to Survive an Apocalypse: The Definitive Guide by Max Klitscher, Ormiston College

Step One: Don't die! This bit is very important – if you're unsure about your survival, make sure you've got this one nailed and the rest will come naturally.

Step Two: Shoot stuff! If you can find an old game console, this should help you practise good life skills. Everyone knows that in an apocalypse, banding together for the greater good of all is never as effective as emptying a few rounds into your next-door neighbour. Obviously.

Step Three: Don't bother writing memoirs – you'll likely get shot putting pen to page. Nobody else is worth your time, anyhow - don't make life easier for your enemies! Channel your inner callousness. After all-

Carpentaria by Kayleigh Laine, Moreton Bay College

there is in

and there is out;

the gulf is in

the world is out.

there is within the gulf

and without the gulf;

within the gulf is the shallows

without the gulf is the deep.

there is behind the gulf

and ahead of the gulf;

behind the gulf is the flat shore

ahead of the gulf

is an untold horizon.

there is below the gulf

and above the gulf;

below the gulf are marauding wrecks

above the gulf is   promise.

there is the gulf and there is the engulfed;

the gulf is

     the in and the out,

the within and the without,

               the behind and the ahead of,

                  the above and the below

and the engulfed

is me.

Building Trystal by Angus Morice, Holy Spirit College

Pink trees with blood red cherries and crystal lakes. Purple robed fairies and green suited elves. The fiery breath from the scarlet dragons above me combines with the pixie dust in the air filling my nostrils with a cinnamon scent. The sound of happy voices floats up to me, a celebration underway. There are dancing imps, elves raising pints of butterbeer in joy and the sounds of the singing merfolk can be heard over the salty waves crashing down calmly. I look around at my beautiful creation. Trystal, I will call this place.

"Hey!" a voice says. I open my eyes. "Has the 3:15 been yet?" he asks impatiently. I am no longer in Trystal but awaiting the bus home.

Practice Activity

In this activity, you will practice writing concisely. For example "The detective conducted an investigation of the crime scene" can be rewritten as "the detective investigated the crime scene".

Wordy Sentence	Concise Sentence
There are three workers doing repairs on the house.	
I was so amazed and delighted, it made me so happy; I have never felt like that before	
I walked into the dark, gloomy, and smelly cave and listened for the sound of the animal I was looking for.	
(Find sentences in your own work that can be made more concise.)	

Writing Activity

Now it's time for you to have a go at writing your own.

- Choose one of the pictures below and create a mind map. From your initial brainstorm, find one idea that can fuel a 120 word story.

- Decide on a genre or theme. Will your story be comedic, or address a social issue you're passionate about? Is it set in a fantasy world? Brainstorm the techniques you will need to use to achieve your desired effect in 120 words.

- Think about which literary form would be best to communicate your ideas. Poetry is a powerful way to express a series of vivid images, whereas writers creating something more plot-driven might opt for prose .

- Experiment with sentence structures, varying short and long sentences to create a dynamic and interesting flow.

- using strategies for planning, drafting, editing and proofreading (ACEEN016)
- experimenting with text structures, language features and multimodal devices (ACEEN033)
- using and experimenting with text structures and language features related to specific genres for particular effects (ACEEN052)
- using nuanced language (ACEEN070)

Image Prompts