



NEW WRITING
NORTH
YOUNG WRITERS

WRITING
FROM
HOME



The Cut-Up Method!

Warm Up:

To start off today's exercise, get a pen and paper/ipad/tablet and note down the first 5 words that come into your head.

Spend the next 5 - 10 minutes trying to link the words together to form as many sentences as you can. It's a bit tricky but sometimes the more random the sentence the better! Even if it makes no sense, it's a way of getting your brain ticking!

Here's an example: *Chocolate, Potato, Frog, Field, Fence*

"The chocolate frog jumped over the fence to find a potato in the field"

Get Inspired:

David Bowie's Cut-Up Method:

David Bowie was well known for his crazy lyrics in his songs. I remember hearing 'Life on Mars' and thinking what does he mean by "*Mickey Mouse has grown up a cow!*"

He would use a method in which he would cut up bits of old newspaper and old diaries to create lyrics for his song. Use the links below as a stimulus before we start our main activity!

[YouTube: \(BBC - How David Bowie used cut-ups\)](#)

[YouTube: \(Footage of David Bowie using the Cut-Up technique\)](#)

[David Bowie - Life on Mars \(Listen how Bowie has put the lyrics together\)](#)

Give it a Try:

For the next 30 minutes grab some old newspapers/magazines and a pair of scissors (if you don't have scissors, you can always circle the words and sentences with a pen or pencil!)

Alternatively with it being 2020... you may not have any newspapers. If this is the case, you can always go to a news website and copy and paste the sentences into a word document. So you should spend:

10 minutes reading through, looking for sentences you like

2 minutes cutting them out

8 minutes trying to match them up to make as much sense as possible!

For the last 10 minutes try to structure them for example: Verse, Bridge, Chorus, Middle 8!

Challenge Yourself:

If you'd like to continue working on what you've created with the cuttings, you might want to change some of the words so it makes more sense. You could try and add your own sentences to make it completely original!

Explore Further:

[Further reading on Bowie's technique](#)

[Random word generator](#)

[Random sentence generator](#)

This workshop was devised by Jordan Miller for New Writing North Young Writers.



“I’m Jordan Miller, 29 and was brought up in Sunderland. I’m a self taught musician/songwriter/producer/recording engineer. Over the past few years I’ve worked with various artists including Lilliput, Hyde & Beast and Eva Stone. I was lucky enough to do a full UK tour with James Morrison in 2015, performing at the likes of the Roundhouse in Camden and Shepherds Bush Empire.

A couple of years ago I decided to leave my job as a music lecturer and open a recording studio in Sunderland city centre. It’s been a huge success and I have managed to work with some great artists including Dave Stewart of The Eurythmics, The Lake Poets and The Futureheads.

I’m currently writing, producing and touring with my Sunderland based eleco-funk pop band, Vandebilt. We signed a publishing deal back in 2018 and recently went to the south of France to make a record. We’re just about to go on a full UK tour.”

New Writing North Young Writers is a programme for young people aged 12-19. We run creative writing groups, masterclasses and programmes in schools across the North East. We support young people to express their ideas, to work with professional writers and artists, to create and share new work, and to meet other young writers.

We would love to read your writing! Share it with us on social media using #writingfromhome or by emailing youngwriters@newwritingnorth.com. Search for New Writing North Young Writers on Instagram, Facebook or Twitter, where we will also be sharing regular writing prompts. Each week we will select a Young Writer of the Week whose work will be shared on our channels.

Find other writing workshops and much more on our website www.newwritingnorth.com

**NEW WRITING
NORTH**



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**