



NEW WRITING
NORTH
YOUNG WRITERS



Introduction to Proud Words

This workshop is designed to introduce you to LGBTQIA+ themes and begin to look at how we can create new pieces of writing that are meaningful and important to us.

Warm Up:

Choose a song from the PROUD WORDS PLAYLIST (see Appendix 1) and put it on through speakers or headphones. For the duration of the track, write whatever comes into your head. This is called 'freewriting'. Try not to lift your pen from the paper for the entire duration of the song. If you are really stuck, repeat the phrase '*I am writing...*' until something else pops into your head.

Think about: where you are, what you can see, how you are feeling, what you've been thinking about recently, what makes you happy/sad/angry/excited.

THEN: Go back through your writing and see if anything particularly stands out or surprises you. Highlight this and maybe it will come in useful later!

Get Inspired:

LGBTQIA stands for: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual.

You may often see a '+' at the end of the acronym, this means that there are many more identities that may not be listed in the acronym but are very real and valid, for example – Pansexual or Nonbinary.

Spend a little bit of time researching the definitions of any identities you are unsure about and make a note of any that may not have been mentioned yet. How many have you got in total? Maybe you'd like to highlight which ones, if any, you feel might apply to you – but if not or none, that is also okay!

Using the letters in the acronym, create an acrostic poem, so each letter of the acronym will be the first letter of a new line of poetry, for example:

- L – Listen to us chant and cheer
- G – Going to let you know we are loud, proud and here
- B – Because in the past things have been
- T – Tough, but now some of us can show our love

Your poem doesn't have to rhyme, but it should be clear and each line shouldn't be too long.

Give it a Try:

Choose a word from your acrostic poem and use this as your stimulus to write a short story. For example, I might choose the word 'CHEER' and choose to write a short story from the perspective of someone going to their first Pride March. When you're writing, think about:

- The senses – what can the character see/smell/taste/hear/touch.
- How do you want the audience/reader to feel at different stages in the story?
- How does the content link back to the themes of the workshop?
- Is there a moment in your story where the character might hear the song that you wrote to in the warm up & if so how do they react to it?
- Can you use any of the lines/words from your freewriting to give us an insight into the world of the story?

Challenge Yourself:

Develop your work further by choosing one line from your story and using it as the text for a poster, illustration or short comic book strip. Does taking the line out of context change or deepen meaning?

Further Reading:

Check out '[The Outsider's Handbook](#)' collated by artist Scottee. This printable zine is full of interviews, activities and art work by some brilliant contemporary queer artists and made especially for young people identifying as or exploring queerness.

Appendix 1:

PROUD WORDS PLAYLIST

Created by students at Sandhill View Academy, Sunderland.

- **Lizzo – Juice**
- **Cavetown – This Is Home**
- **girl in red – i wanna be your girlfriend**
- **The Neighbourhood – Sweater Weather**
- **YUNGBLUD – I Love You, Will You Marry Me**
- **Todrick Hall – Nails, Hair, Hips, Heels**
- **Troye Sivan – Youth**
- **The 1975 – Me & You Together Song**
- **beabadoobee – She Plays Bass**
- **Arctic Monkeys – R U Mine?**
- **Janelle Monae – Pynk**
- **Hayley Kiyoko – Girls Like Girls**
- **Charlie XCX – Boys**
- **Billie Eilish – bad guy**
- **Robyn – Dancing On My Own**
- **Halsey – Without Me**
- **King Princess – 1950**
- **Ezra Furman – I Wanna Be Your Girlfriend**
- **dodie – She**
- **Harry Styles – Watermelon Sugar**
- **Kehlani – Honey**

Add your own! Are there any identities that are underrepresented in this list? Make it better! Tweet us or tell us on Instagram what you think belongs on the playlist.

This workshop was devised by Zoe Murtagh for New Writing North Young Writers.



Zoe Murtagh is a writer, performance artist and poet. Her work is vibrant and interactive, creating playful disruptions to everyday life. Inspired by music that makes you tingle, science lessons and Kate Bush's dancing she creates work around themes of identity, heritage, the environment and friendship in a way that is fun, insightful and might even put a bit of fire in your belly. She is the current recipient of Northern Stage's 'Title Pending Award for New Theatre' and recently took part in 'Words First' poetry competition with BBC Radio 1Xtra and New Writing North. She has recently completed writing her debut short film 'After The Break' which was written through BFI Network and Film Hub North's Script Lab and has since been commissioned by New Creatives - a talent development scheme supported by Arts Council England and BBC Arts and delivered by Tyneside Cinema. She is a freelance artist with BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art and has made work for Live Theatre, Camden People's Theatre, GIFT Festival and Curious Festival.

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

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