



Takeover Melbourne

Personal Narrative Writing Unit

WHAT IS TAKEOVER MELBOURNE?

The ABC's Takeover Melbourne project puts young Melburnians at the centre of the conversations that shape your communities. It gives you a powerful platform to share your stories, experiences and passions with the nation.

You can take up this great opportunity, by entering a story in the Takeover Melbourne storytelling competition, which is open to high school students living in greater Melbourne. We're calling on students to enter true stories about an aspect of your life in text, photo, video or audio format. Competition winners will work with ABC Producers to have their stories featured on the ABC.

If at any time you need support with these materials, please contact the ABC Takeover team at:

takeover@abc.net.au

LESSON 1: CONNECTING WITH STORIES

Activity:

1 Read or view the two ABC produced stories (below), written by young people, and then compare and contrast. The aim is not to judge one story as 'better' than another; remember that different texts can appeal to different people.

Key questions:

- Which story appeals to you more and why?
- Did you make any personal connections to these stories?
- Explain and justify your preference, e.g. I connected to Molly's story because I play AFL.

2 Write a response to the following questions, using your own 'authentic' voice to do so.

- What do you think these storytellers are trying to say?
- Why is it important for them to tell this story?

Key points:

- Stories convey and reinforce values / morals / beliefs / societal norms.
- Good storytelling creates empathy by allowing us to experience another's world.
- Stories evoke emotional responses and help us to connect and understand.

Stories:



▶ Watch [Molly's story](#)



▶ Watch [Ebony's story](#)

Curriculum Content:

- Reflect on, extend, endorse or refute others' interpretations of and responses to literature (ACELT1640)
- Analyse and explain how text structures, language features and visual features of texts and the context in which texts are experienced may influence audience response (ACELT1641)

Note: Stories used throughout this teaching unit were written by the authors, with the video/audio content professionally produced by the ABC. For student submissions to the Takeover Melbourne competition, professional video/audio standards are not required.

LESSON 2: STORYTELLING: WHAT MAKES A GOOD STORY?

Warm-up:

- Brainstorm ideas about what makes a good story.
- You may want to put your ideas into a list or diagram.

Activity:

- 1 Recall a good story you have either heard or read and retell it to someone (it could be a family member or you could call a friend). Explain why you remembered and enjoyed the story.
- 2 Watch or read one of the stories below (either Trent or Zurack) and think about the structure, language features and audience. What do you think makes this a good story?
- 3 Create a mind map/graphic/poster to represent the characteristics of a good story.
- 4 Annotate a written copy of Trent or Zurack's story to highlight language features and text structure. You can find these stories and an example of how to do that on pages 12-14.

Stories:



[▶ Watch Trent's story](#)



[▶ Watch Zurack's story](#)

Curriculum Content:

- Understand how language use can have inclusive and exclusive social effects, and can empower or disempower people (*ACELA1564*)
- Analyse and explain how text structures, language features and visual features of texts and the context in which texts are experienced may influence audience response (*ACELT1641*)
- Analyse and evaluate text structures and language features of literary texts and make relevant thematic and intertextual connections with other texts (*ACELT1774*)

LESSON 3: FINDING YOUR STORY

In this lesson, you will complete activities which will help you think of your life as a unique story. Sometimes we can have trouble seeing that we have a story to tell. This lesson challenges that mindset and encourages you to see your life events as significant stories worthy of telling.

Activity:

- 1 Take two-minutes to list as many things as you can think of in response to the following prompt question: **What are you passionate about?**

This is a brainstorming activity where there are no wrong answers. You should focus on quantity over quality.

- 2 In a new list, take two-minutes to write as many responses that you can think of to the following prompt question: **What is a challenge that you have overcome?**

It is important to understand that the challenges you choose to tell do not have to be big, life-changing moments. They can be small, everyday occurrences. The story's power will come from your feelings, responses and thoughts – not the challenges themselves. This is what makes your story unique.

- 3 Look at both of your lists and circle **one** response from either list that you would like to write a story about – something that you are passionate about **or** a challenge that you have overcome. You should have one response circled that you would like to develop into a story.

Curriculum Content:

- An opportunity for students to build personal and social capability, as they develop a realistic sense of their personal abilities, qualities and strengths through knowing what they are feeling in the moment and having a realistic assessment of their own abilities and a well-grounded sense of self-knowledge and self-confidence. Students reflect on and evaluate their learning, identify personal characteristics that contribute to or limit their effectiveness and learn from successes or failures.

LESSON 4: TELLING YOUR STORY

You can now begin to crystallise your ideas by focussing in on crucial moments in your story.

Activity:

In this activity, you will practice using words which invite the reader into your world.

- 1 Write down three moments that tell your story.
E.g. if the story is based on a passion for AFL, the three moments may be the first game the person played, winning the grand final and meeting a great friend they made on the team.
- 2 Of the three moments listed, choose **one** moment to concentrate on. Focus on how you felt, what you saw and heard in that moment, and how to write about it. Imagine you are standing in that moment and take your audience there – what is it like? You may like to start with these senses: I could see/It sounded like/I felt/ I could taste/ It smelt like etc.

Useful sentence starter examples:

- ‘I will never forget the moment I...’
 - ‘It all began when...’
 - ‘I will always remember how I felt when...’
- 3 From here, you can move on to include the other moments or key points in your story and prepare your notes to be ready for drafting.

Curriculum Content:

- Review, edit and refine students’ own and others’ texts for control of content, organisation, sentence structure, vocabulary, and/or visual features to achieve particular purposes and effects (ACELY1757)
- Create literary texts with a sustained ‘voice’, selecting and adapting appropriate text structures, literary devices, language, auditory and visual structures and features for a specific purpose and intended audience v (ACELT1815)

LESSON 5: YOUR STORY MATTERS

Warm-up:

Think about: What makes your story important? Why do you have to be the one to tell your story?

Activity:

For this activity, watch or read some stories from the links below, revising your understanding of and thinking about their narrative structures. Your annotated copies of Trent or Zurack's stories could be useful

- 1 Write some basic ideas for your story's beginning, middle and end using the linear organiser template (p. 10) and notes from previous sessions.
- 2 Once you have a basic structure, you can further develop your story structure and begin to expand on your linear organiser points.
- 3 If you are filming or recording your story, you should still construct a written version from which to work initially.
- 4 Using your notes and completed graphic organisers, write a draft story.

Stories:



[▶ Watch Kudamba's story](#)



[▶ Watch Lauren's story](#)

[▶ Read and listen to more stories](#)

[▶ Watch more video stories](#)

Curriculum Content:

- Create literary texts that reflect an emerging sense of personal style and evaluate the effectiveness of these texts (ACELT1814)

LESSON 6: EDITING

Students pair with an editing buddy to review and edit their stories in this lesson. You can complete this task via phone, videoconferencing, email etc.

Activity:

- 1 Revisit the language that you used in lesson 4 to take the reader into your moments. Listen to / view Finbar or Lucy's story and think about how they create a sense of place: what do they see, hear, feel? What words convey this?
- 2 Read your story aloud, while a partner listens for repetition, lack of fluency / cohesion and so on.
- 3 Show or email your story to a partner and using the Peer Editing Checklist (p. 11), have your partner review a written copy of your story and ask them to take notes and highlight any questions or suggestions as they go, e.g. I want to know more about this, I am confused by this part of the story.

Story:



[Watch Finbar's story](#)



[Watch Lucy's story](#)

Curriculum Content:

- Review, edit and refine students' own and others' texts for control of content, organisation, sentence structure, vocabulary, and/or visual features to achieve particular purposes and effects (ACELY1757)
- Refine vocabulary choices to discriminate between shades of meaning, with deliberate attention to the effect on audiences (ACELA1571)

LESSON 7: FINAL DRAFTS AND SUBMISSION

Take ample time to review and edit your work as necessary.

If submitting a video story, you will need adequate time to film and upload this.

You may submit entries as:

- 400 words (approx.)
- 2-4 minutes video
- 2-4 minutes audio
- 10 photos

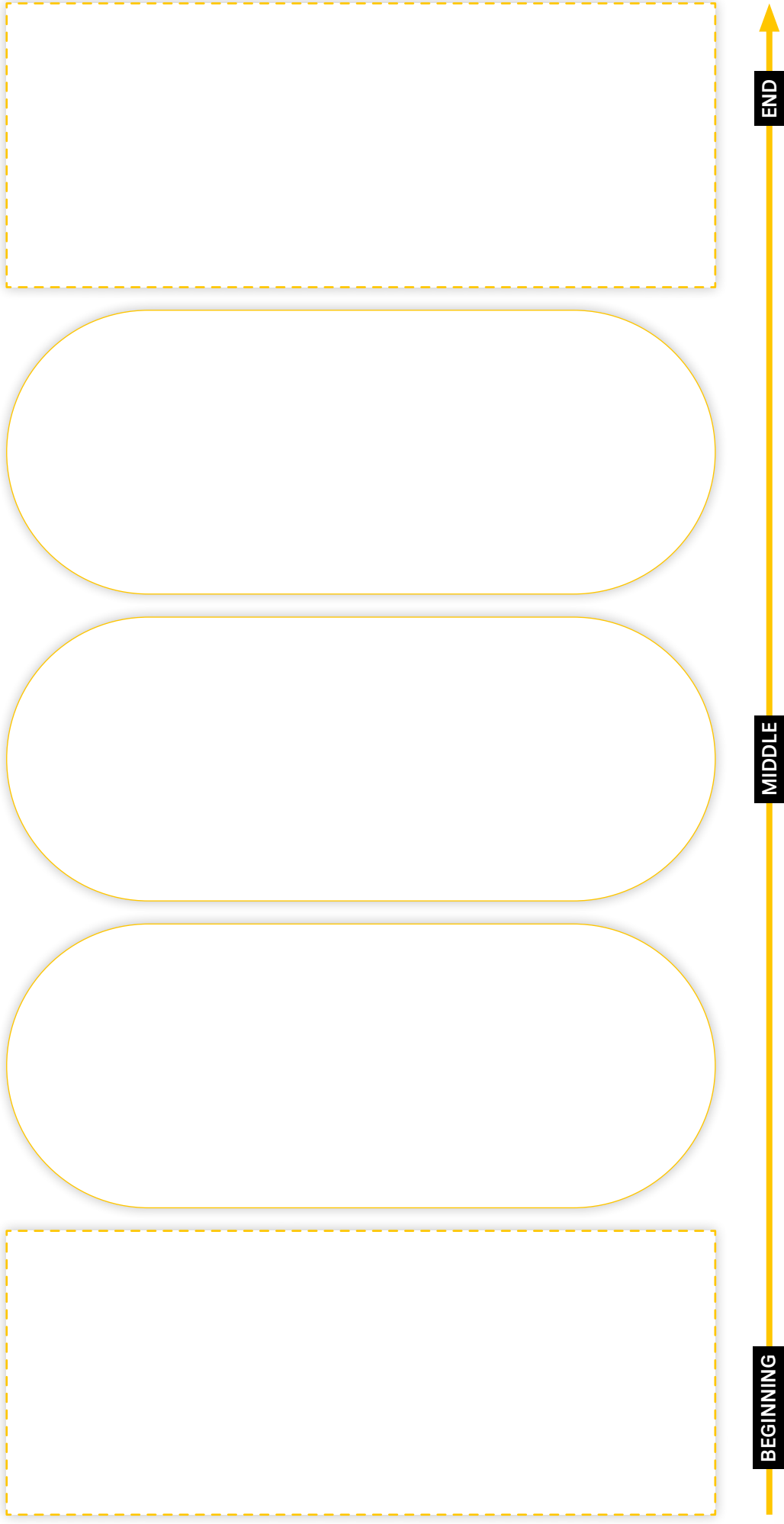
Once stories are completed, they can be submitted to the Takeover website abc.net.au/takeover

Entries for the Takeover Melbourne Competition close **June 26 2020**.

If you have any issues with this process, please make contact with the ABC team at takeover@abc.net.au

All submitted stories are read and reviewed by ABC staff.

LINEAR ORGANISER TEMPLATE



Problem, Main Events, Climax, Development



PEER EDITING CHECKLIST

- Read your story out loud. Does it make sense? Have words been left out?
- Use sensory words that help the reader see, hear, smell, taste and touch. Add more that appeal to the reader's senses.
- Place a triangle around the beginning word in each sentence. If they sound alike, change the beginning and length to add variety.
- Highlight in yellow any dialogue in your narrative. Add additional purposeful dialogues if you can. *(Optional)*
- Add descriptive adjectives that will help the reader remember your main character (you).
- Place a line through the "to be" verbs (am, is, are, was, were, being, been) and replace them with action verbs. For example, change was running to raced.
- Stories need both short and long sentences. Read your narrative aloud and ask yourself if more short sentences are needed, or if two short sentences may be combined to make a longer one.
- Find any word repeated more than once and replace it with a synonym.
- Reread the ending. Will the reader remember the ending? Does it reconnect with the beginning of your story?
- Proofread for spelling, punctuation and grammar by reading your story aloud. You may need to draft, revise, and edit several times.

For use in Activity 2

*Orientation -
Strong sense of place*

As a teenager, I lived in a tough neighbourhood in the northern suburbs of Perth.

I saw fights, drugs, and gangs fill the streets.

I got caught up in it, and was addicted to the danger.

I thought living like this made me tough.

But my life turned on Good Friday 2012. *Turning point*

I was 19 and down the park with my mates.

I decided it would be a good idea to do chin-ups on a soccer crossbar.

It wasn't bolted in properly.

Complication

The goal post crushed my head, and instantly put me into a coma.

My skull fractured in several places and I lost sight in one eye.

Evaluative language

And when I woke up, the accident had brought on a shopping list of mental illnesses - epilepsy, ADHD, PTSD, anxiety disorder and major depressive disorder.

I started to self harm and needed medication and regular admissions to mental hospitals to keep me sane.

I couldn't work, so chose to move to Broome to live with my mum.

It took months but the relaxed lifestyle of the Kimberley started to help me recover.

I got well enough to get work.

I loved my new job and my new community, but depression still made the smallest issue feel like the end of the world.

And I would sink back into depressive habits.

I needed help, not just medication. *Tension builds*

I needed to talk to someone.

I decided to visit a Headspace youth health centre, even though I was pretty sure they wouldn't be able to understand.

After all, even I couldn't find the words to explain what was going on in my head.

But as I talked I found myself saying things I had never even considered before.

It was like my brain was saying things that I had no control over.

I started attending a church, and was able to slowly ease off my medications.

The best part was knowing that I was actually healing.

Resolution

It's now coming up to three years since the accident and I've become a youth mental health advocate here in Broome.

I guess I have also learned a lot about what it really means to be tough.

It isn't about how many dangerous situations you put yourself in.

It's about fighting through the trials life throws at you.

Message / Learning

It's not about acting like you're invincible; it's about being brave enough to ask for help when you need it.



**Trent
Caldwell**

Broome,
WA

For use in Activity 2

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**Trent
Caldwell**
Broome,
WA

For use in Activity 2

As a teenager, I lived in a tough neighbourhood Growing up in a wild street of a wild town, I did some silly things — fights, graffiti, getting into trouble.

I was going off the rails.

Mum and my step dad decided to move us to Townsville to get fresh start. I was 14 and I knew I had to step up my game.

Having an Indigenous teacher at school helped me get back on track.

He told me, “the only person that can change you is you”.

I listened.

I started to work hard at school and connect with my Indigenous culture.

I was shy about it at first but my confidence grew when I started to do traditional dancing.

I also learned songs and more about the Walgawu traditions of the land.

And I found another passion.

My uncle and cousin have a shop in the centre of Townsville. I used to like going in there and watch them cut hair and chat to the customers.

I’ve never told him, but watching him work really inspired me to be a barber.

The first time I cut someone’s hair, it was my little cousin. I did a horrible job!

It was uneven and I didn’t know what I was doing.

But I’ve improved heaps by practicing on my friends. Skin fades, mid fades, high fades, under cuts, crew cuts and buzz cuts — I can do them all!

We’ve moved back to Cloncurry and I’ve started a business cutting people’s hair out of my house.

The walls of my bedroom probably aren’t typical for a teenager. They are covered in pictures of different cuts that I like to do.

People come to my place and tell me what they want, I look at the posters, or look up images on the net and I just go do it!

I charge people \$20 for a cut, but sometimes they pay me \$50 if they’re really happy with the look.

People even come up from the mines just to get their hair done be me.

After a tough start in life, I’m proud to say that I’ll finish high school soon, and hopefully head to Sydney to train to become a fully qualified barber.

Then I want to come back home to Cloncurry and open my own shop.

One day soon, Zu Zu Cuts will be the place to get your hair cut in north-west Queensland!

**Zurack
Dempsey**
Cloncurry,
QLD



STORY LINKS

Finbar's Story:

<http://www.abc.net.au/heywire/heywire-winner-finbar-kinna/8969932>

Kudamba's Story:

<https://www.abc.net.au/heywire/heywire-winner-kudamba-abaas.-morwell.-vic/9183192>

Trent's story:

<http://www.abc.net.au/heywire/heywire-winner-trent-caldwell/8970244>

Lauren's story:

<https://iview.abc.net.au/show/heywire/series/2019/video/RA1907H002S00>

Lucy's story:

<https://www.abc.net.au/heywire/heywire-winner-2018-lucy-scott-temora-nsw/9137372>

Zurack's story:

<https://www.abc.net.au/heywire/heywire-winner-2018-zurack-dempsey-cloncurry-qld/9138522>

Ebony's story:

<https://www.abc.net.au/heywire/heywire-winner-ebony-williams-pemberton-wa/10545722>

Molly's story:

<https://www.abc.net.au/heywire/heywire-winner-molly-hunt/9162830>

Read and listen to more stories:

<https://www.abc.net.au/heywire/winners/>

Watch more video stories:

<https://iview.abc.net.au/show/heywire>