

ok?

Bells of Stella

and when the Bells of Stella rang

one step closer to hell

two

three

four

five

six

seven

eight

nine

ten

heleven

twelve

thirteen

foughteen

fifteen

sixteen

seventeen

eighteen

nineteen

pwenty

twentyone

twentytwo

twentythree

twentyfour

twentyfive

twentysicks

twentyheven

twentyeight

twentynine

thurty

thurtyone

thurtytwo

thurtyfree

hurtyfloor

thurtyfive

thurtrysicks

thurtyseven

thurtyeight

thurtynine

foughty

foughtyone

foughtytwo

foughtyfree
foughtyfloor
fourtyfine
foughtysicks
foughtyseven
foughtyeight
foughtynine
fifty
fiftywon
fiftytwo
fifty three

Instruction label



THING PROFILES

Chair 2ft Best attribute: can stand up for a long time

Bio:

Doesn't want you to talk. Isn't interested in making it work. Will consider being civil if you bring another chair. Thinks your annoying. Prefers it when you go to work. And stay there.

Average profile rating: 0.9 stars out of 5

Fridge 6ft Best Attribute: supplies your favourite cheese

Bio:

Wants to give you all it has. Likes to 'get through it together'. Loyalty is priority- must be only fridge in the house. Knows how to hit the sweet spot, always has your favourite chocolate. Face lights up every time you visit. Literally.

Average Profile rating 4.5 out of 5. Pretty good!

Spoon 15cm Best Attribute: yoghurt holder

Looking for an affectionate companion. Doesn't date forks. Had a bad experience was left in drawer for 2 weeks so looking for a regular spoon user. Loves clinginess. Magnum Double Caramel over Dairy Milk. Puts in the effort. A lot.

Average Profile rating 3.2 out of 5. Nothing overly exciting.

Microwave 15 inches Best Attribute: can cook food for you- *fast*

Bio:

Hates the last one. Would have burned her if she was a meal. But she wasn't. She was a microwave. Can provide you with fully cooked chicken arribata. Low maintenance. Dings sometimes. But only for your benefit.

Average Profile rating 0.1 out of 5. Slightly weird.

An OCD LOVE STORY

It was a beautiful love story
in the heart of Manchester's finest premier inn
me and this guy
we spent the night
the dim purple oasis
the welcome leaflet once over by many
it was creased down the side
not where it should have been
the bathroom soap had three presses left
I think I'm in love
he ran his fingers around the edge of the
plug socket
whilst I stared at the taps
the night was young
so we checked the doors together
slammed the mini fridge shut eight times in sync
I said "tell me you love me"
so he carried me to the bathroom window and caressed
the lock
pressed the light switch five more just for me
I knew he was good with his hands

from the journey on the way here when

he hit the window button twenty times

just to make sure

just to make sure

EACH EACH

SETTLE4LESS



YO OK
OK OK OK
OK YO
YO OK OK

Frankie and Bennies Vortex

From the buzzing sound of Manchester we were launched into a weird alien portal, far far away from anything involving normal brain function, the people of earth, the concept of communication, non-robotic smiles, and Greggs. That grounding smell of steak bakes and three cheese pizza was only a sad hope, and the ultra-fine flakes of buttery pastry smashed into a show of pyrotechnics whilst I looked into the eyes of the man who said "welcome to Frankie and Bennies, how ya doing?" but nothing else moved other than his paper-thin lips. At this point I knew we were doomed. We were taken over to a table where I was convinced we would sit for the rest of time. Was I paying for my sins? For not finishing my last margherita slice here 5 years ago? Thirty seconds in and the over-animated waitress came and asked for our food order (of course I don't know what food I want yet, I'm still trying to come to terms with the fact that I've been sucked into some sort of space hoover that has creepy red leather seats inside it and... queue the typical isolated road side diner in the middle of nowhere with the big neon sign that says HORROR FILM MURDERERS STOP HERE THANK YOU that I'll have to listen to for the rest of eternity) but the waitress was glaring at me with wide eyes and it was making me feel kinda weird so I thought fuck it "cheese and bacon fries and southern fried chicken goujons- I know come as two side dishes but please could I have them as one" my best friend ordered, and then the waitress whipped the menus from underneath our hands and scuttled away. So there we were, left at the table, our eyes locking, we talked and after ten seconds came to the mature conclusion that everyone in there (except us) were programmed robots and that we were living in a simulation and an episode of black mirror or it was someone's U grade science experiment and people came to the cinema to watch us die because sixty robots killed us. Kiera had started to freak out and we both wondered if all these people were normal before they opened those double doors to hell. They must have been doors to hell because they were that odd green looking wood with red stained coloured glass (*who has that?*) so that must be the blood of all the humans that enter. And never exit. A moment passed and Kiera had an epiphany- *I had asked for two sides as one main-* let's play a social experiment inside a science experiment- if the food comes as I asked for it, it proves that everyone in here are cyborgs and fucking weird because their robot ass brain couldn't programme that I wanted the cheese and bacon fries and chicken goujons on one plate- not two! We dared to look around us, all the people were strange and had those yoghurt TV advert smiles, like so enthusiastic, so fake, but sort of, I will kill you if you don't buy these yoghurts. Others sat eerily still, a couple next to us sat and stared at each other and said nothing for at least forty-six minutes. Kiera needed the toilet so we both didn't know if we would see each other again, I told her that I loved her and that I would ring her work 9am sharp and explain everything if she didn't make it back. I was left alone, noticing the large wooden fans on the ceiling and thinking if we were about to take off, wishing that all this was just a bad dream and praying that I would wake up tomorrow and get a Greggs before starting my one to nine thirty pm shift. Kiera walked back through the space hoover towards the table and she had an empty look in her eye so much that for a second I thought she had turned into a fucking cyborg too. Either that or she had seen Jeepers creepers in the ladies' toilets. I had to see what all this was about. All this craziness (and I needed the toilet). Once again we said our goodbyes, and she said she would call my work 9am sharp if I didn't make it back. As I was walking, the environment around me felt as if it were in slow motion, and when I walked past the kitchen, I began to think I would be served human goujons instead of chicken ones.

When I walked into the toilets I was greeted by a cocktail of urine on the floor and a woman that was holding her hands apart the size of a large fish and trying to explain that the third cubicle was out of order. The horror film music continued and I was transfixed by the tiles that boasted a black and white pattern. I, carefully, with sadness, entered cubicle two, and began to consider if Texas Chainsaw might be in the one next to me taking a shit. You know them ones where theres no movement or shadow but the toilet door is locked. Weird. Anyway, I made it out still breathing and not plunged into the pits of hell by the flush of the water- so that was a positive. It wasn't over yet, though. The water from the tap was uncomfortably hot. Were they trying to singe our hands off? Probably. I quickly swung the door open just encase TC changed his mind and fancied killing me. Back to the table. When the cheese and bacon fries and chicken goujons came on two separate plates I knew we were fucked. With caution, we both began eating...

Artist statement

'Alarm'- Inspired by my grandmother who has Alzheimer's, the alarm that she was given to wear around her whilst she was still living at her own home.

'Bells of Stella'- This poem was based around my father's alcoholism, referencing the drink 'Stella', my memories as a child associating this drink with my father and his addiction. The numbers being slurred together representing intoxication, and the deliberate misspelt words appearing more like phonetics. For example- "twentysicks" "foughtyfloor", "fought" to suggest fighting against, 'sicks' to portray an overdose of alcohol.

'SETTLE4LESS'- In this visual poem I wanted to capture how many times a person agrees to settle for less, just 'ok', doing something for others when we should be putting ourselves first for once, how many times have you said 'ok' when you really wanted to say 'no' or 'maybe not this time' or 'I have to put myself first'. The placement of the words represents the notion of this being pushed aside and forgotten about, perhaps a favour for a friend, but alternatively shows trying to be free of old habits with only a few breaking free. If closely read, you can find a word other than 'ok'.

'Let or go'- A concrete poem, this shows the words of 'let' and 'go' having a tug-of-war. This concept shows how the universal phrase 'let go' can be creatively adapted into a literal form.

'Instruction's label'- Inspired by mental health struggles, ideas of mass and volume- humans being just another number, basic care instructions to survive.

'Each'- This piece was motivated by two arms reaching for each other. Simple imagery communicated by word rather than picture.

Reflection: How experimental form/style can communicate 'life' topics

To reflect, my portfolio of 'Life Writing' poetry showcases form play, concrete imagery and ideas of voice, communicating universal 'life' conversations, and engaging in emotional responses through an experimental mode. I will discuss how intertextuality, the peer workshopping process alongside my own editing have contributed to this portfolio: **ok?**

A blend of critical and creative intertextuality was valuable in erasing the space between realism and non-realism. 'THING PROFILES' toys with the question we have all once considered- *are things real? Imagine if objects could talk?* Whether this has been a childhood thought, or adulthood has reminded you of the abject nature of the chairs, fridges and cutlery in our houses. Through its modern form of a dating app profile and an intensely sarcastic tone, this light-hearted piece addresses ideas of voice, similar to 'The Dresser', (Rimbaud, 2001, p.63), which describes an old dresser and shares how it is bursting with memories, almost giving the wooden object an identity and a voice as a result of the people around it.

I removed this simple thought- *what is true and what is make-belief?* Now my writing had been given the go-ahead to explore all areas of fact and fiction merged. To give example poem four 'Leaflet' can find influence from ideas of memory (Proust, 1922,) and the ambiguous idea of voice through autobiographical writing. The notion of moments from the past' suggests intense experience of memories "It was creased down the side" through small detail in (leaflet) and a sensorial tone, the reader can almost feel the texture of the creased leaflet from the words on the page.

The peer editorial process, online, and in a work-shop environment was valuable to the development of any writing. By giving and receiving creative input from classmates who each have different perspectives opens new opportunities. For some classmates, this was the first experience of receiving criticism and praise for their creative work. To give example, I suggested as a piece of verbal feedback to simply take out unnecessary words and then re-read- my peer then understood how this easy editing action can have a positive impact on their writing. To continue, I gave feedback to the same piece of work discussing form changes, added stage directions alongside its diary style gave the reader more to be invested in. The chance to collaborate with peers meant that when experiencing a challenge, such as writers block, we had a supportive platform to be inspired by other readings and posted comments. To give example- a comment on an unedited poem discussed that my deliberate choices of miss-spelling made sense to the reader- this was helpful feedback and reassured that the decisions in my writing were communicating with clarity.

To conclude, the modules influences, peer editorial platform and the desire to experiment with form combined have contributed to the outcome of my portfolio, presenting my 'life'

conversations, thoughts, and objects. The 'Life Writing' genre has given me the opportunity and understanding to explore the liminal space between fact and fiction.

APPENDIX

Reflection 300-500 Words GO BACK + watch lectures!

SECTIONS:

1. Brief Intro → how your poems + portfolio translates into topics of 'life writing'

2. INFLUENCES FROM THE MODULE → INTERTEXTUALITY: Proust, (memory, food, sensorial, pov?) Good Immigrant (perspective, voice, identity) James Joyce THE TOPIC OF PASSING (micromoments, micropassing) the things we do every single day. Personal influences too ✓
 Something to reflect on: You have to find what fascinates you, confuses you almost → the styles and the situations, objects, rooms, things, food.

3. THE PEER EDITORIAL PROCESS (OWN, INDIVIDUAL PROCESS FOR EDITING: giving feedback in class to peers who have never been in a 'workshop' environment. Verbal feedback (the long piece → tone, cutting out words, playing with style - moving from a diary piece / diary entry to suggesting stage directions + intervals to experiment with form, the blend of different tones/styles. Suggestions take action and have a positive impact / different perspectives. Ideas from someone who is detached from the authors thoughts → opportunity to add their creative opinion / input / experience into the piece of work. The online blog, a chance to creatively collaborate and be inspired by reading peers writing. Individual editing process → important, however appreciate + respect raw pieces of writing. When experiencing

WRITER'S BLOCK (important to talk about this as it shows challenges)

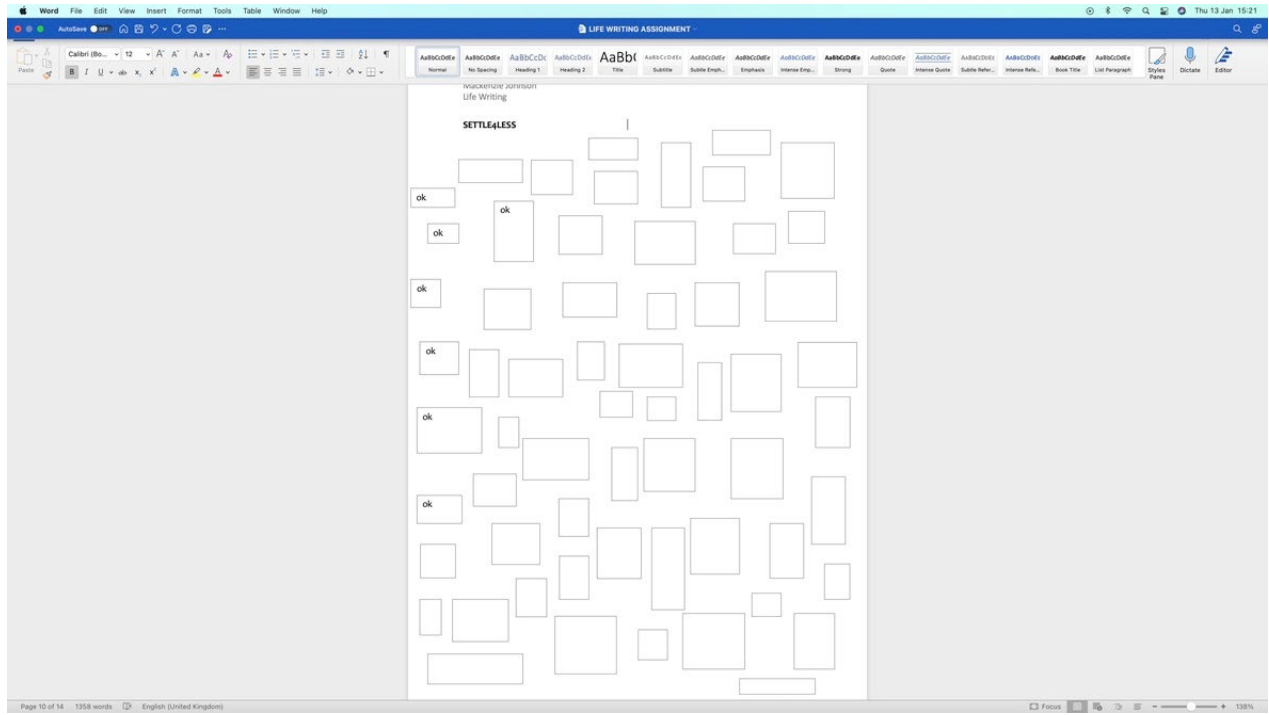
4. THE CORE FOCUSES OF THIS PORTFOLIO: FORM PLAY, VISUAL ASPECT + COMMUNICATION FROM AUTHOR → READER, MERGED WITH 'LIFE' → honesty, voice, identity, conversations, passions, repulses, infatuations. How did this communicate / how did all these aspects show in your work? Take specific examples of poems e.g. 'alarm' → experimental form to imply continuity of the alarm, bite of an alarm → urgency → translated into the situation. Ambiguity in it's presentation and how the letters / words present themselves on the page. 'Heal' can be seen. Individual, personal meaning can be found within the poem. Reading words and relating uniquely.

5. Examples of WHY chosen forms fulfil the assignment requests:

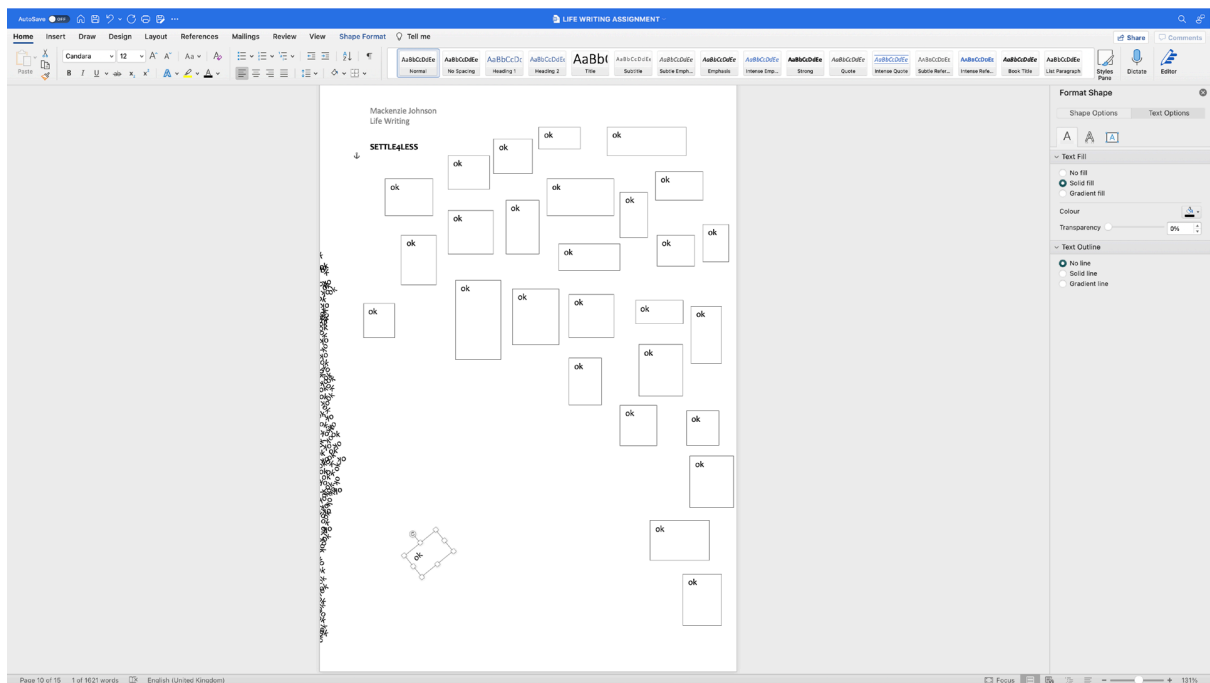
Literal → Full text → Stream of consciousness style → word vs phrase.
 Page
 experimental form + SHAPE → image through word
 memory, setting + voice → image + idea
 Sounds + conversations

6. BRIEF CONCLUSION → Summary, challenges, successes. What does LIFE WRITING mean to me?

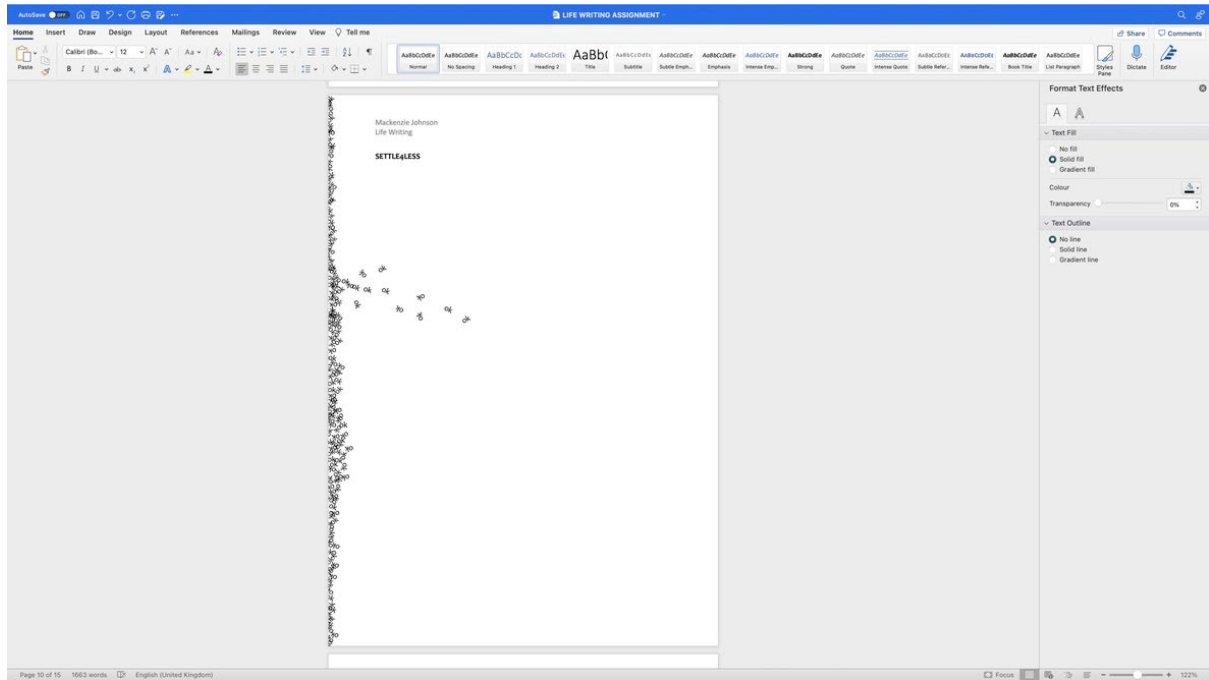
The brainstorming process for the reflection of my portfolio, this included notes on intertextuality, the peer editorial platform, what my portfolio really focused on, and examples of why my writing fulfils the assignment brief.



A screenshot I have provided of the process of poem 'SETTLE4LESS'- each 'ok' was inserted into an individual textbox, the lines were erased and the words carefully placed to create the finished piece.



To explain the detailed process of one poem that adopts this form, after each 'ok' had been placed, I filled the page with new ones, and repeated the same action until I achieved the desired shape.



After repeating the above steps on multiple occasions, here is the finished piece.

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