

*Welcome!*

**Lumni**•4

***What's on today?***

A photograph of a desk with a notebook, pencils, and glasses. The notebook is open, showing lined pages. Several pencils are scattered on the desk. A pair of black-rimmed glasses is resting on the desk. The text "Creative writing workshop" is overlaid on the image in a purple, italicized font.

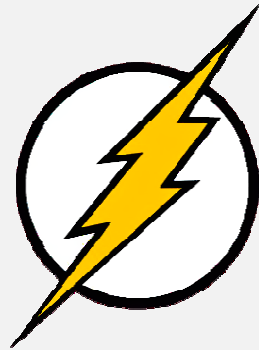
***Creative writing  
workshop***

**With words  
from our  
students!**

*Discover...*



*Flash*



*Fiction*




with David Gaffney


# Discover flash fiction with David Gaffney



David Gaffney

 Manchester, UK.

 Writes stories that are exactly 150 words long... and loves the restraint!

 Also writes novels & graphic novels.



*Let's discover a story by David Gaffney*





"Until You are Happy",  
From *Sawn-Off Tales*, David Gaffney, 2010.

HE SAT IN the Photo-Me and read the instructions. *Tilt your head to the side or sit at an angle. Point your shoulder towards the camera.* He tried all this, but couldn't relax. He looked as though he was holding a contorted poise for an invasive medical examination. His face wore the expression of a startled comedian trying to look zany. Then he saw the sign. *Keep taking your picture until you are happy.* He stayed in the booth all day, striking a pose, taking the picture, looking at the preview screen, starting again. But each time the morose face staring back said the same thing. *There is no escape. There is no way out. You can get a travel card, but you'll never get away from me.*



## Our students' reactions...

"It's about the obligation to be happy.  
I can really relate to it."

*Livia*

"It makes me think of a possible  
future, like in an episode of *Black  
Mirror*; or like on social networks  
where everyone shows the best side  
of their life."

*Mélodie*

Expression &  
construction de soi



...and David Gaffney's!

# Where did you get the inspiration?



💡 *From real life*

💡 *By observing and questioning it*

## "Until You are Happy"

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# How can we write flash fiction?

✍️ Think about the **premise** of your story and then develop it into a **plot**.

To do this: **start with the end!**

✍️ Focus on what the reader really needs to **know** about the character. Do not include too much description.



✍️ Create gaps that the reader will be able to fill.

✍️ Do not make the story too practical. Keep some poetic or figurative language.

*Discover...*



*Micro  
Fiction*



James Mark Miller

# Micro fiction by James Mark Miller



**A Small Fiction** · 01/02/2020



He awoke in the night, alert and afraid. It was too quiet.

His eyes went to the attic hatch.

"Hello?" he whispered.

It cracked open, slowly.

"Still here," the monster whispered back, "You're not alone."

He relaxed, and went back to sleep.

70

6 898

28,8k



# What makes this story "effective"?

It starts *in medias res*

The focus is on the actions & emotions

The verbs in the simple past move the story forward

Short sentences and frequent line breaks increase the suspense

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The familiarity of the situation makes it relatable

The repeated use of the definite article "the" increases the reader's allegiance

There are gaps for the reader to fill

The external narrator is omniscient

The writer plays with the reader's expectations

**WRITING  
WORKSHOP**

*He awoke in the night...*

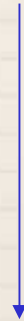
Use this opening line to write your own text



**STEP 1**

Think about your ending:

*He awoke in the night...*



*He laughed out loud...*





## STEP 2

Think about how you are going to get there:  
**PLAN YOUR STORY**

**Choose a tone:**

- dramatic  comical
- ironic ...

**Choose the next  
actions**

**Choose the characters  
& the narrative voice**

**Introduce a problem**

**Remember your ending**





### STEP 3

## Start writing: CHOOSE YOUR WORDS

Picture the scene in your mind

He *opened* his eyes.

He *had* just heard a strange noise / *some kind of squeak*  
coming from under his pillow. *a muffled cry*

It made him *tremble* / *shake* / *shiver*.

Mind your conjugation:

- preterite
- past perfect

Use precise words



## STEP 4

Give a voice to your character through direct speech

“ ” he *said* shyly / hesitantly.

Mind the punctuation

Choose the right speech verbs



## STEP 4

Give a voice to your character through direct speech

*“Who’s there?” he **said** shyly / hesitantly.*

Mind the  
punctuation

***asked/ inquired***

Choose the right  
speech verbs



## STEP 4

Give a voice to your character through free indirect speech

Let the narrator speak for the character

*It sounded as if someone **was** **looking** for something.*

*But who or what could it be?*

*BE + ING* to provide an explanation about an action



STEP 5

Play with the reader's expectations

*"It's me, the tooth fairy!"*

*squeaked a tiny, muffled voice.*

*"I'm stuck under your pillow!"*

Introduce a  
reveal



## STEP 6

End the story: surprise the reader

*"It's me, the tooth fairy!"*  
*squeaked a tiny, muffled voice.*

*"I'm stuck under your pillow!"*

*He laughed out loud.*

*He was 99 years old.*

Let the reader reconsider the whole story & make their own interpretation.

Start a new line to increase the surprise





*One final tip for our students to improve their writing?*



WRITING  
WORKSHOP

**Share your stories on Twitter &  
Instagram**

#flashfiction #englishlumni





***Thanks for your  
attention!***

***Stay connected with English, wear masks  
& stay safe!***