

Little Things

Have you ever noticed how it's much easier to ignore something if it's really big? Take a dinosaur or an ancient tree fern. These things were bigger than we can ever imagine now; nothing their size has existed for millions of years. And yet, when they died, many of them went on to break down and form fossil fuels. One of the most dangerous of these is crude oil. If you've ever seen a crude oil pit, you'll know just how massive they can be. Far bigger than the dinosaurs that died to create them. Far too big to think about, really. When was the last time you considered where oil comes from?

Perhaps a little bit smaller, though not by much, are the frenetic processing plants. These shining, silver beasts rear up into the sky, belching out thick smoke and slipping hidden, dangerous secrets into the rivers and oceans. Much like an animal, these monsters need to be fed. Thousands of tonnes of oil are swallowed whole, and an endless stream of plastic pellets is expelled. So much plastic, in fact, that it's far too big to think about.

The plastic pellets are quite small, but my goodness, they make big things. In just the same way as you can, these little nuggets can go on to be just about anything they want to be. They could form the plastic cup that you drank from at break time or the bumper of an articulated lorry barrelling down the highway. Or maybe, they could go on to form the wasteful packaging that your new toy arrived in. These things are smaller, easier to think about. But still perhaps too big to worry us.

Like everything, these products soon become useless to us. Most of these items (nearly 60%) will all end up in landfills. Much of this will eventually find its way into the waters that provide homes for thousands of species of animal. Unfortunately, plastic will eventually break down into smaller and smaller pieces, but it won't disappear. These pieces of plastic - micro-plastics - are nearly too small to see, but they are definitely not insignificant. What happens when a fish eats these microplastics? Where do they end up?

Next time you have fish for your dinner, think about this. Suddenly, things are small enough to start worrying about. Suddenly, we can understand just how dangerous the big things can be.

Bon Appbtit.

Reading task:

1. Which is bigger, a crude oil pit or a dinosaur?
2. How much oil do factories take in?
3. Other than dinosaurs, what else might form fossil fuels?
4. Why does the author sign off with Bon Appbtit?
5. Using the context of the sentence, write a definition for frenetic. Check using a dictionary.
6. What are the dangerous secrets that are slipped into the rivers and oceans?
7. List all the things that the author notes during their day that are damaging the Earth.
8. Which word shows that micro-plastics are important?

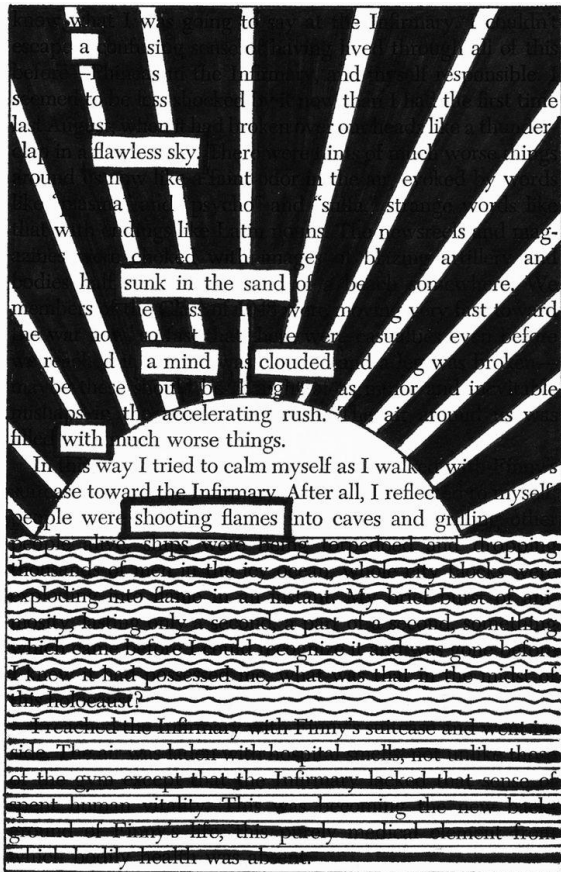
Writing task:

Writing can be so powerful and can really affect and even change a reader's mindset on a particular issue. When I read the writing above, I certainly started thinking about all of the big things happening to our planet that I 'forget' about. It also made me do some research into oil and the problem with landfills.

Your writing task today is to create a piece of powerful writing, in the form of a poem, about any area of this week's topic that you would like. Maybe you could write about deforestation that we looked at yesterday. Or maybe you could use your mini eco project as inspiration. Maybe you could think about what we have done to help our planet at Ashton Hayes and use those ideas to encourage other schools to take part.

What type of poem you write is completely up to you. Here is a list of different poetic forms that you can research and have a go at:

- Narrative poem (a poem that tells a story)
- Acrostic poem (the first letter of each line spells out a word)
- A poem that rhymes
- Black out poem (I love these, but you have to give your word choice LOTS of thought in order for it to be effective. I have attached a copy below)
- Free verse poem (another favourite of mine, because it is a poem with NO RULES!)



Blackout poems

These are so brilliant when they are finished!
 However, you have to spend lots of time and
 care planning out what words are going to
 make your poem.

