

# Student word choice during a pandemic

Over 20 000 entries were received for the latest instalment of Storyathon, a story-writing event in Australia. Children aged 8-14 submitted a 100 word story responding to the prompt 'A different world - living in lockdown', and Oxford University Press analysed their word choices. Here, we see how last term's word choices compare to previous Storyathon events.

## INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

'we' was the most used word. It placed 19th last year.

'friends' was used 6 times more often than last year, 'family' 4 times more often and 'grandparents' 9 times more often.

## AGE DIFFERENCES

### YEARS 3-4

More likely to use the words  
'brother/sister',  
'shop', 'miss',  
'zombies',  
'Minecraft'

### YEARS 5-6

More likely to use the words  
'sport',  
'panic',  
'dying',  
'Fortnite'

### YEARS 7-8

More likely to use the words  
'essential',  
'boredom',  
'lonely', 'deadly'

## WORD CHOICE INFLUENCES

The words  
'isolation', 'restrictions',  
'cases' and 'sanitiser'  
appeared in stories  
for the first time

'lockdown'  
was the 2nd  
most used word  
'quarantine'  
was the 27th  
most used word