



# MISSION CATASTROPHE

CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST FOR  
MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS  
(OPEN TO ALL GRADES)



## **Today you are going to:**

- **Take part in a group discussion**
  - **Plan a disaster story**
- **Learn how to write a mini saga**
- **Write a mini saga for Young Writers' Survival Sagas: Mission Catastrophe contest**



**You're now going to watch a short video that introduces you to the writing activity...**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pdxy380g-C0>**

**The unthinkable has happened,  
a catastrophe so epic...**



## What is a mini saga?

- Be original! Students can be inspired by other stories, but add a twist, make it their own!
- Keep to the 100-word limit – less is always more! (Mini sagas can be up to 100 words long. The title isn't included in the word count!)
- Remember that a mini saga must have a beginning, a middle and an end!



SURVIVAL SAGA

# MISSION CATASTROPHE



SURVIVAL SAGA

- Your teacher will split you into groups
- Write down as many ideas as you can think of for what the catastrophe could be
  - You can be inspired by the past, present or future
  - Your 5 minutes starts now! Get inspired!



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**Here are some catastrophe ideas, in case you need any extra inspiration!**

Here are some suggestions that they might come up with:

Tornado

Temperature Extremes

Hurricane

Nuclear Explosion

Famine

Storm

Tsunami

Drought

Blackout

Solar Flare



SURVIVAL SAGA

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SURVIVAL SAGA

- Look around the classroom for 8 different postcards, each one has a story starter on it.
  - Read each story starter – which one will you use to inspire your mini saga?
  - You can be inspired by the story starters or include it in your mini saga.



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## Story Starters

**The siren blared. "It's time..."**

**The giant black cloud rose into the sky...**

**The water level had reached my neck...**

**My skin was blistered, I needed to find water...**

**The ground split open...**

**I was warned not to look into its eyes...**

**We were the only ones left...**

**It was the day the sun fell...**



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**Can you guess which story starter inspired this example?**

## **The Noise**

*We kept the radio on in the hopes of hearing from other survivors. It'd been quiet for months... until one day, horrific screeching and crackling emitted from its speakers.*

*“Omar!” Hamsa called from near the radio. “Get over here!”*

*The terrible noise became worse as I got closer. It felt like the sounds were scraping inside my skull but I listened hard, and through the violent static two distorted words could be made out: “We’re coming.”*

*I looked at Hamsa, my heart pounding, and saw my fear reflected in her eyes. We weren't alone... but we'd soon wish we were.*



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**It was...**

**We were the only ones left...**

Well done if you guessed correctly!



## EXAMPLE

# Danger

I was warned not to look into its eyes, but they were hypnotic, enticing and excitingly dangerous. The shadowy colours in its glassy eyes swirled as though they were possessing me. I managed to stumble backwards, tripping over the rubble of the charred, desecrated earth. So this was the outcome of the dangerous pollution levels, this was what humanity's contempt for Planet Earth had caused - an outbreak of mutant animals and a world consumed by destruction! As the dog leapt at me, I slowly came to realise that humans were no longer at the top of the food chain...



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## EXAMPLE

### The Cull

The water level had reached my neck... it was murky brown, frothing, and I could no longer feel my leg, pinned between dislodged metal. I should have known; shockwaves and the sea retreating like that? Of course they were warning signs of a tsunami, but I hadn't been thinking. The authorities hadn't warned us. They never warned anyone of disasters anymore. Almost like they wanted the large population culls. As usual, there was something bigger at play with the government. I didn't want to think about the possible body count, but I knew I might join that morbid statistic soon.



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## **It's now time to get writing!**

Don't forget the 3 golden rules of mini saga writing:

- Be original! You can be inspired by other stories, but add a twist, make it your own!
- Keep to the 100-word limit – less is always more! (Mini sagas can be up to 100 words long. The title isn't included in the word count!)
- Remember that a mini saga must have a beginning, a middle and an end!



# MISSION CATASTROPHE



**It's time to write your Mission  
Catastrophe mini saga!**

Ask your teacher any questions you may have now!



# MISSION CATASTROPHE



## **Work in pairs and read your mini sagas to one another.**

- Your partner is to provide feedback; something they liked and something that can be improved. You then do the same for your partner.
- You can help your partner edit the work down if it exceeds the 100-word limit.



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Thank you taking part, we hope you enjoyed  
writing your survival saga today!

[www.youngwritersusa.com](http://www.youngwritersusa.com)