

The **BRAINWAVES** Club



Term 1 2021: Tolkiens – Years 5 and 6

Venue: Brighton Grammar School

Term Fee: \$285.00

I write only because / There is a voice within me / That will not be still.

–**Sylvia Plath**

Voices from the past, present - and the future? Is that even possible? You'll find out this semester as you explore a wide range of authors, how their style and voices differ across genres and how they have evolved over time. Become acquainted with some unusual new (old?) story structures, plan your work carefully using exciting tools to organise your thinking, conjure up new characters with very specific fears and loves, and share your thinking and literary creations with others. Who knows? Maybe there will turn out to be another Jonathon Swift, Ernest Hemingway, Veronica Roth or Cynthia Rylant among us!

Meeting 1: Less Is More? Counting Off Words

Focus: Poetry

When we think of poetry, people often think of epic sagas made up of hundreds of lines and dozens of stanzas. After this session though, the Tolkiens will know not to dismiss more concise poems as being, well, less! Consider how carefully you have to trim and select your words to craft a Twitter poem (140 characters or fewer). Similarly, there are real challenges in composing a book spine poem, where you can only use book titles to express your ideas. Finally, black out poetry requires you to use just the words already printed on a page of text and "black out" the rest! All these literary challenges force you to evaluate the importance of every word and be ABSOLUTELY certain that it is needed. What will you leave in? What will you take out? How will your audience respond? Choose wisely!

Meeting 2: From Book Theme To Theme Park

Focus: Literary Analysis

You can read a book and love it so much you never want to be without a copy, and admire the author for their way with words... but it's no accident that certain pieces of writing are so adored! There is SO much that authors have to consider about crafting settings, developing relatable characters, creating rising action, staging conflict, and reaching an electrifying climax so you are guaranteed to want to keep revisiting it over and over and over! This meeting, to ensure we have the tools under our belt to explore as much as possible below the surface of our favourite books (and some well-known short stories), we'll create the 'literariest' place on earth, our very own theme park based on the worlds of our best-loved reads. The layout and different elements of your park (including its rides, games, merchandise and food) must reflect the elements you and others feel make this novel so enduring. Together with a team of literary analysts, you'll design and map your amusement park, which may seem easy at first... but then you'll use the idea behind this unique organiser to plan your own individual piece of creative writing.

Requirements: Please select your favourite book (or two, if you really can't choose) and bring a copy with you to this meeting. You must have finished reading it at least once!

Meeting 3: Do You Suffer From Metromania? I Do Hope So!

Focus: Characterisation

Fictional characters and irrational fears go together like bread and butter. What if Batman hadn't been terrified of bats? Or if Peter Pan hadn't suffered from gerascophobia, and his nemesis Captain Hook hadn't been caught up in the throes of his herpetophobia? Today we will explore Emily Gravett's award-winning, and deceptively simple, picture book *Little Mouse's Big Book Of Fears*, whose main character suffers from arachnophobia and sciophobia. We can learn a lot from Little Mouse about how multi-dimensional characters and duality are created by authors and illustrators. After that, it's your turn to craft a narrative exploring how a character 'lives' their fear but doesn't descend into one-dimensionality. Will your character suffer from ophidiophobia?

Meeting 4: What On Earth Is A Hornbook?

Focus: The Evolution of Writing

What if I told you to bring your hornbook to our meeting today? You would know exactly what I was talking about if you were a child from five hundred years ago, and were lucky enough to know how to read! However, you would have been less than thrilled to get one for your birthday as they were most certainly not page turners. In fact, they had only one page! Fairy tales and adventure stories were considered immoral and adults thought all you needed to be taught was right from wrong. Thank goodness you have more choice in your reading material now! Today you will explore and consider what young people 'should' read and what they should learn from their reading. Then you'll create your own modern version of a hornbook. How will YOUR writing be received by the children of the future?

What to bring

Each week please bring a well-stocked pencil case, including scissors, pens and pencils, textas, sticky tape or a glue stick, your writers' notebook, a nut-free snack, water bottle and hat (Term 1).

About the club leader: Layla Sacker

Layla has worn the hats of an early childhood, primary and secondary school teacher. She has a firm belief in the capacity of children to think outside the box and her creative writing students from primary school to university have done just that. She delights in using technology and multimedia as texts as well as drawing on traditional literature. Layla has a passion for art and science and has exhibited her own artworks.