

The **BRAINWAVES** Club

Term 2 2021: Imagineers – Years 3 and 4

Venue: Canberra Girls Grammar School, Grey Street, DEAKIN

Term Fee \$285

All great writers have the ability to entertain us whilst making us think about some of life's challenges.

This semester we will take a look at what it is like to feel different from other people and to understand what this might mean. We will explore the world of a girl who never makes mistakes, try to imagine what it might feel like to be a witch, or to possess an ability which some children might find embarrassing, or to be labelled as one of "the worst kids in the world".

As well as studying and practising the skills which make good writers, such as creating exciting characters and using vivid and evocative language, we will also examine the issues of peer pressure, understanding ourselves and learning to accept life as it is, without complaining.

There will be many opportunities to work together in groups, share ideas and learn to comment critically on our own and others' work in a positive way.

Other activities will include writing and producing our own play (using our PA system to generate interesting sound effects) and learning how to structure a story effectively.

Meeting 5: A Flash of Fiction
Focus: Short story and editing

Just What I Always Wanted (short stories by brilliant authors)

Read about a demon school principal, spooks, skeletons and little green men. These stories are all short, so we will focus on the art of 'tight' writing: how to make every word count and how to edit our stories effectively.

Again, we will work in groups, with each member contributing to the storylines and providing constructive feedback after each story has been read out to the class by its author.

Meeting 6: Being True
Focus: Theme and voice

Harry's Secret by Anita Heiss

Harry's Secret is about a young boy living in Cowra NSW who has a passion and talent for sketching portraits, and who also happens to be indigenous. Harry is embarrassed by his art because his skateboarding friends think that art is for 'wusses' so he draws in secret.

His secret is exposed when he wins a local art competition under a pseudonym and although he is initially reluctant to come forward to claim first prize, he discovers fame and fortune when he finally finds the courage.

The story touches on themes of peer pressure, self-discovery and acceptance. The message is that being unique is something to aspire to, not shy away from.

Harry's personal secret is about his love of drawing but it could be about anything. It's a story that inspires confidence to be authentic and true to yourself, even if you're different to anyone you know and fearful about accepting this difference. Everyone has been embarrassed at some stage in their lives. Think of a time when you felt like a bit of a fool

and describe what feelings you had, what you thought about and what actions you took. Would you do the same things again, did you learn anything from the experience and can you laugh about it now?

We will describe our experiences as either a funny story or one that we can never think about without blushing!

Meeting 7: Sleuthing Skills

Focus: Mystery

The Case of the Graveyard Ghost and other Mysteries

At Possum Creek Cemetery, dismembered pieces of headstone have mysteriously been discovered, along with bizarre notes signed by the Ghost.

When Anna and Tim accidentally stumble across a head, they prove that three heads are better than two and decide to get to the bottom of this deed. But finding the Ghost means going back to the cemetery.

Here is an opportunity to use your sleuthing skills to help solve these mysteries.

This provides another opportunity for peer learning, where group members assist each other and learn to comment critically (and helpfully) in response to the work of others. Many young authors use illustrations to add to the quality of their writing. In the large group, we will discuss whether an illustration always improves a story or whether, in some cases, it's best if we just create a mental picture of what happened and let our imaginations run riot!

In pairs, we will create an original story, where one Imagineer takes on the role of illustrator, while the other is the main story-teller. We will discuss whether this method worked or not and report back to the main group.

Meeting 8: Starring Roles

Focus: Presentation and performance

The Worst Kids in the World

The Herdmans are the worst kids in the world. Mischief is their collective strong point, so when the six skinny, stringy-haired, scruffy terrors grab the limelight by taking the starring roles in the school Christmas play, there's bound to be trouble.

Setting fire to buildings or drawing pictures on your homework weren't the worst things the Herdmans could do – they might also put worms in your pocket...or worse!

This is an opportunity to write a play (about Christmas or similar topic) and to perform it in public, using microphone and PA equipment. We will base our ideas for the play on the events and characters described in the book. We may end up with two or three versions of the play, given that we will have more actors than roles. Of course, we can always invent new characters of our own and add them to the story!

What to bring

- Well-stocked pencil case with writing pencils, sharpener, rubber for edits, coloured pencils and textas, scissors and glue stick.

About the club leader: Ken Fraser

Ken is a former primary school teacher. He has five grandchildren, two of whom attend primary school. Ken writes short stories for children and has recently published a book of 99 short stories called *Tales Out of School - the Complete and Utter Collection*. Many of the stories feature the natural wisdom and kindness of children. Ken has spoken at conferences around the world on topics such as self-esteem, personality type and emotional literacy and lists organic gardening and playing the bagpipes as his main hobbies.