

# The **BRAINWAVES** Club

**Term 3 2021 | Imagineers | Years 3 and 4**

**Venue: Canberra Girls Grammar School – Junior School, Grey St Deakin**

**Term Fee: \$285.00**

During this Semester we will explore the kinds of language that shape people's moods, from hilarious to creepy, serious to silly. Club members will develop skills in persuasive writing, spontaneous story-telling, factual reporting, character development and writing 'with colour'. We will look at the 'secret language' of Londoners, which is called Cockney rhyming slang and come up with some original words and expressions of our own, to add 'colour' to our stories.

For some people, fictional characters, such as Sherlock Holmes, Yoda from *Star Wars*, Harry Potter and Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz* can sometimes seem more meaningful and 'real' to us than our friends and relatives. We will dip our toes into the intriguing world of character development and create an original character of our own. Who knows? The character you create may one day achieve world-wide fame among readers of fiction.

We will also ask ourselves the important questions: who is my audience and why am I writing this story?

There are no 'must read' books to read beforehand but Apprentices are encouraged to read *Matilda* by Roald Dahl (Session 5) and to bring along an example of a favourite story (Session 1.) All other excerpts for study will be provided.

## **Meeting 1: Simply the Best**

### **Focus: Creating character**

Even from a young age, all of us would have had a favourite book character, whether it be Harry Potter, Yoda from *Star Wars*, Aslan from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, or *Matilda*, from the book of that name.

In our first meeting, each of us will identify a book or a character which made a big impression on us and we'll try to identify why this was the case. We'll also read extracts from the above stories to determine why these characters have typically created such strong responses in readers. Then we'll consider more generally what makes a convincing character.

Is it a character's complexity (can a character be good and bad at the same time, a rogue with a kind heart)? Is it because we can relate to the character's personality (is it because the character is kind, brave, clever, caring)? Is it because the character's actions fit with what we think is right or wrong? Is it because the character is quirky or different from most other people?

After all of these considerations it will be time to let our imaginations run free as we 'create' a character of our own. What would your ideal character be like? Describe him /her/it in a way that makes us want to read more!

We will compile a list of our desired 'ideal' qualities, along with some examples of how the above characters behaved in different situations. We will discuss how we were able to form our opinions about them by their actions and how these actions were performed.

**Meeting requirement:** Please bring in your own choice of story, which might include an interesting character or characters and describe why they had such a powerful effect on you.

## **Meeting 2: Hear All About It!**

### **Focus: Writing a factual report**

Imagine that you are a reporter for national (or international) newspaper. You have just witnessed an exciting event and write a 100-word report for page 1. This is going to read by thousands of people, so how do you make it exciting? We will start of by looking at a number of articles taken from newspapers and decide which factors made the story interesting / exciting/ boring. When going to print, we only get one chance to make a good first impression, so how do we select words which will make the reader sit up and take notice! How do we craft a headline at the top which 'packs a punch' and makes good sense. (Not like the newspaper heading which stated *Include your children when making cakes*)?

But it's not over yet! You will need to be put on your best voice and imagine that you are now reading the article for national television and being watched by more than a million people. You will sit at the news desk in pairs here (just like on TV), so let's see how well you can work together with a colleague!

## **Meeting 3: Money, money, money**

### **Focus: Writing with Feeling**

Is there really such a thing as a 'right' decision - or a 'wrong' one for that matter? And how do we know? And, would having lots of money make us happy? How would you feel if you found a wallet with \$1000 in it? Excited? Pleased? Nervous? Would you feel that you needed to hand it in to the police? To your parents? Or perhaps you could keep it and buy that expensive new iPhone that you mum has wanted for ages? Or maybe you could donate it to help a child in hospital?

In today's story about a nine-year-old boy called Jasper, we will discover what went through his mind when he found \$1000 and how he made a decision that was the 'right' one for him. We'll discuss what we might do in a similar situation, then write our own stories of what we might have done, using our own thoughts and feelings to describe how we reached a decision.

I wonder who will write the right words to make us laugh, and perhaps cry?

## **Meeting 4: The Colour of Saying**

### **Focus: Writing with Colour**

Why is it that some authors can make a story come alive and have you turning each page furiously? In this meeting we will look at some of the best ways to do this, using figures of speech such as similes, alliteration – and an almost forgotten 'secret' language called *Cockney rhyming slang*. This is a weird and wonderful way to express ourselves - and will keep all your friends guessing! Would you Adam and Eve it? We will explore the verse of authors such as Dr Seuss to understand how figures of speech can help make the story or poem come alive. We will then use our newly-discovered powers of creative language to complete our own stories, based on a given sentence, such as..... "There was something large and ugly in the dog kennel and it wasn't a dog."

### **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 who still works with children in Canberra. 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*. 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 playing the bagpipes as his other main hobby.