

The GATEWAYS BRAINWAVES Club

Term 3 2021: Tolkiens – Years 5 and 6

Venue: Ryde Public School

Term Fee: \$285.00

AROUND THE WORLD AND BACK AGAIN

Unlock your imagination to learn about new people, places and things and how these can increase your curiosity, creativity and innovation. Have you ever wanted to learn different languages, arts and cultures from around the world? The best way to learn is to immerse yourself – dive right in - and that is exactly what we'll be doing! We'll be painting through poetry; going deep with analysis of Aboriginal-First Nation People stories, writing our own raps and exploring genres you may never have encountered before. Join us on a literary adventure as we explore how culture affects language and, more importantly, how your choice of words at every turn can shape who you are seen as, as a writer and an artist.

24 July

Meeting 1: Choose Your Own Adventure!

Focus: Tension, plot, adventure genre

Suddenly, you're confronted with a fearsome dragon, thirty feet tall and snarling menacing at you, smoke pluming from its nostrils... if you pick to *fight* the dragon, turn to page four! If you choose to *flee* the dragon, turn to page twelve! With all the choices to make in a choose your own adventure story, who knows what kind of mayhem we'll uncover in this session? This meeting we will explore the techniques used by famous Aussie writer, Andy Griffiths, as we create alternative endings in the style of 'choose your own adventure' stories. The Tolkiens will visualise and map out our stories with many alternative pathways and then take the drivers' seat to make the choices that will seal your protagonist's fate. Will they emerge triumphant... or meet a grisly end?

7 August

Meeting 2: Planet of Childhoods

Focus: Literature in different cultures

Just few hundred years ago, childhood didn't exist. Sure, children were around – but they were treated like small adults, complete with very strict expectations of their behaviour and very little of the fun stuff we take for granted! Nowadays, though - are children all the same? What's it like to be a child in Egypt, the Congo or The United States, in comparison to Australia? Are there commonalities? Through examples in literature (Naghib Mahfouz's recollection of his childhood in Egypt, Alain Mabankou's stories in Congo or Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer* in Missouri) we will compare depictions of children all around the world and (because who would do it better than the Tolkiens?) write the ultimate guide to Planet Childhood! **Please read the preface and Chapter 1 of Mark Twain's 'Tom Sawyer'.**

21 August

Meeting 3: 漢俳 (Chinese Haiku)

Focus: Poetry

What makes a poem a poem? How do we know? Is the secret found in its rhyme or relentless metre? Is it in the special literary devices you won't see anywhere else? We will try to answer these questions by looking at a selection of short poems, including the deceptively simple haiku. Tolkiens will have a go at writing their own, appreciating the clarity in such short forms, and removing all of the unnecessary layers found in many poems to focus on the miniature aspects of the world around us, such as, the 'world in a grain of sand'. Tolkiens will then learn how to compose Eastern Haiku poems with ritual breathing in mind and illustrate their writing using the Classical Four Treasures of ink, water, paper and stone. **Please read a series of short poems, e.g. 'Stars' by Mary Oliver, 'Frog' by Matsuo Basho, "'Banana Poem' by Wendy Cope; Leunig's poems.**

4 September

Meeting 4: Get Cultured!

Focus: Language and Culture

Starting with the Aboriginal storybook about "*How the Birds Got Their Colours*", the Tolkiens will discover how cultural identity is expressed through language and stories, and how it goes through a kind of evolution through sharing them. They'll examine ideas of cultural identity and belonging, and explore how these are embedded in the language we use. What is it about language that can make it so unique to specific cultures? Once we've got to grips with this, we'll use our knowledge to compose and develop a performance piece that expresses our collective Tolkiens culture.

What to Bring:

Each week please bring an A4 notebook and a well-stocked pencil case. Please also bring a hat, drink and snack for the break (no nuts please).

About the Club Leader:

Bronwen Wade-Leeuwen has been teaching at Macquarie University on the Teacher Education programs for the past 8 years. She is a trained primary school teacher and has over a decade of classroom experience. Bronwen holds an MA (Environmental Design) from Canberra University and PhD from School of Education, Macquarie University. and specialises in bringing creativity into the classroom mix of subject areas, including teaching children how to enjoy learning English language in an innovative and fun way.