



It's All In The Mind
Years 4, 5 and 6 - Term 4, 2021

Fee \$108

Minds: From Mice to Machines *with Oscar Delaney*

Having a mind (as opposed to just a brain) is pretty cool: it lets you experience rich aromas, think deep thoughts, and remember happy times. It's hard to imagine not having a mind, as the whole world is filtered through our having one. But what exactly is a mind, and how do we know who and what has one? We will contemplate the inner experiences of animals, the mental modules of machines, and even the puzzling possibility of philosophical zombies. We'll also examine a troubling ethical dilemma - if minds are so special, why is it we treat some differently (often much worse) than others? Enter this workshop prepared to ponder, pontificate and philosophise!

Oscar Delaney loves learning about all sorts of things, so is studying philosophy, maths, and biology in a Science/Arts dual degree, and likes reading books and academic papers about anything that interests him. As an example, he is currently helping challenge a proposed coal mine on climate change human rights grounds in court! Oscar grew up in India where his parents were community and development workers, and he is now passionate about using evidence and careful reasoning to improve people's lives.

Smashing Stereotypes with the Might of Your Mind *with Jacqx Melilli*

Do you find you unconsciously create stereotypical characters? Before you know it, your beautiful kind-hearted heroine is an emotional Cinderella type waiting for a charming, strong, muscular prince to rescue her. Her stepmother is a mean witch, complete with warts and gnarly fingers. So you decide to rewrite your heroine as a strong, fearless woman with supernatural powers who can fight an army without breaking a sweat. She rescues and marries an exotic prince who stays home to raise their children while she conquers the world. Yet, you still have unbelievable characters! This stereotyping and creating of 'Mary Sue' characters all begins in your mind, and it's a hard habit to unlearn as we pick these ideas up through just living out our lives day to day. We stereotype whether we realise it or not. Creating authentic characters requires the ability to look beyond a person's gender, profession, age, or cultural background, among other traits. Today we take the kernel of truth about stereotypes and peel away the layers that make up a character, re-wiring our brains to 'deny our first impulse' in writing.

Jacqx Melilli is a playwright, editor and drama teacher. She has a Master of Arts degree in Writing and Literature and is the author of the *Lights, Camera, Action* series of educational books on filmmaking and theatre production and multiple award-winning one-act plays performed at Eisteddfods and Theatre Festivals. Jacqx has worked in film, television and theatre and has conducted workshops at the Gold Coast Writer's Festival Authors in Schools program and Creative Writing for Young Geniuses.

Our Brilliant Brains and Their Nifty Neuroplasticity *with Declan Cavanagh*

Did you know that in the first five years of your life, your brain was capable of forming a million new synapses every second? We are truly born to learn – but it starts to get harder as we get older! How do we know? Why is this so? Together, we will explore how our brain is structured, how it changes as we get older and how it makes sense of the world around us through our vision. How you perceive things is heavily linked with our neuroplasticity, so we'll be experimenting with depth perception, colour perception and whether it's possible to rewire our brains through certain activities. Your grey matter is certain to get a workout from this workshop!

Declan Cavanagh has an interest in many areas of knowledge, tutors all age groups in mathematics and has found a love for teaching and learning. He approaches traditionally hard-to-grasp topics with interesting and relatable content for the kids and is very interactive and animated. Declan has a passion for stimulating the Eureka! moment in a student and being a part of the journey towards developing academic independence.