



A G.A.T.E.WAYS JOURNEY PROGRAM

For gifted Year 3 and 4 children with a
love of language and writing...and mystery

‘Move Over Sherlock!!!’

G.A.T.E.WAYS is an independent organization offering challenging and enriching activities and experiences to develop and extend highly able children. Established in 1994, G.A.T.E.WAYS runs a range of stimulating school programs as well as the Saturday *Brainwaves Club*. This *JOURNEY* for both girls and boys will run over four mornings.

Are you always the one to find the lost sock or car keys? Or the missing peacocks? Do you love reading the Famous Five? The Pesky Kids? Do you have your *notebook for noticing* tucked away in your backpack at all times? Welcome to our Journey! Over the next four sessions, young mystery lovers will investigate what makes our spines tingle when reading a great mystery, before writing their very own. As we accompany Cassie on her search for the missing peacocks in *The Peacock Detective* by Carly Nugent, we'll learn how to create characters with more layers than a rainbow sponge cake and how the clever use of setting adds tension and drama. Just like Cassie we will uncover the types of clues, characters and plot twists that will make our mysteries spine-tingling.

Session One – Mysteries 101

The Case of the Missing Peacock.....? There aren't many peacocks in the classroom but there is something not quite right. Can you work out what some of the mysterious changes might be? Whilst trying to solve the problem, we will learn the basics of a good mystery story: the clues, the crime, the suspects, and, what a fish has got to do with it! We will look to Cassie Anderson, Peacock Detective to learn the effectiveness of first-person narrative in making a story come alive. Cassie must find the missing peacocks but there are underlying problems that bring her story to life. Why is her dad not speaking anymore? Is her sister Diana really living in the garden? And what about poor grandpa? Mystery stories are not just about the crime, it's the various layers that make them believable. Today, we'll start putting our ideas together for our very own mystery.

Session Two – The 3Cs – Characters, Clues and Crimes

Using the basics that we learned during the first session, we now build on our story using the Mystery Story Arc where our characters and 'mysteries' are introduced early with clues and 'signposts', early signs that show us that there is another layer in the story. We'll also go fishing (yes! actually fishing!) for red herrings, clues that aren't really clues in the first place. Cassie's 'voice' is very clear in *The Peacock Detectives*. She uses capital letters for significant places such as The Very Important Restaurant and The Other Side of Town for example. But what exactly is 'voice' in a story? It's not dialogue as such, so we'll work on finding our very own 'voice' through writing some of our story from the peacock's point of view!

Session Three – Sense- sational Settings

'It was a dark and stormy night.....' The author of Sherlock Holmes uses thunderous storms, dark nights and large gothic mansions to add atmosphere and drama in his stories. We'll explore how weather and the setting of the action can have a great effect on the reader's mind. In *The Peacock Detectives*, Cassie's story is cleverly divided into seasons that reflect what's happening in her life. In her small town, everything from the trees to the smell of the bush changes with the weather giving readers a real sense of place. We'll use all our senses to create the perfect setting for our crimes.

Session Four – A Rough Diamond

This final session will see our mystery writers sharing and workshopping our drafts and new ideas with each other. All good writers write and write again to turn their rough drafts into diamonds. We will put a sparkle in our stories through role playing and brainstorming ideas. We'll go to the next level of mystery writing looking at symbolism and

the 'fourth wall'. Cassie visits a bridge at certain times in *The Peacock Detective* and each time is symbolic for a different reason. We'll discover how we can add our own 'bridge' in our story. Have you ever broken the 'fourth wall'? It's a technique used in some of the latest movies and in *The Peacock Detective* when Cassie talks directly to the reader. Is this a technique that we could use? We will finish our Journey knowing that we have the tools at hand for finishing our story within a week for the final assessment.

What to Bring:

- A notebook, pencil case (colouring pencils/textas, pencils and pens), envelope folder to store handouts
- A smart, labelled photograph of yourself, a stamped, self-addressed DL envelope for your report
- A snack (no nuts please) and water as crime fighting is thirsty work!

Preparation and homework

Set text: Please read *The Peacock Detectives* by Carly Nugent. This is a wonderful mystery story with many layers that will enchant and inspire.

You can also read any mystery stories in addition to the set text if you wish (optional) Suggested books include:

Nancy Drew Mysteries by Carolyn Keene,
Famous Five and *Secret Seven* by Enid Blyton,
Friday Barnes and *The Pesky Kids* by RA Spratt
Enola Holmes Mysteries by Nancy Springer
Sherlock Bones by Renee Trembl
Kensy and Max by Jacqueline Harvey

Heather will have available her 'Treasure Chest' filled with mystery stories for Journey members to read and borrow over the four sessions.

Journey members will be asked to do some writing, research and thinking between sessions. But not all at once!

About the Presenter:

Heather Zubek is the finder of lost socks and car keys. She loves a good mystery. As a freelance writer, Heather has written for numerous newspapers and magazines and reviewed many mystery stories written by very talented authors. As a teacher, she has taught in Brisbane, Perth and Melbourne with her favourite class being teaching young writers the art of creating the perfect crime. Heather even ran a school Mystery Club complete with a celebratory 'murder' cake! Anyone who loves a good mystery will find Move Over Sherlock! fun and inspirational. It would be a crime to miss out!

