



G.A.T.E.WAYS invites

Year 5 and 6 gifted children with a love  
of literature, language and writing to

## ***‘Wacky Wanderers and Stunning Stories’***

**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 with a passion for creative writing, will run over four mornings. We will use history as a springboard and each week you will be presented with a range of writing challenges. Please join us!

Imagine that you have been transported back in time to Medieval England, the time of knights, castles, lords, ladies, peasants, serfs and the Black Plague. Yes, it is the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, and you will be joining an ill- assorted group of pilgrims who are on their way to a shrine in the bustling city of Canterbury. You’ll have the opportunity to experience some of the stories from master storyteller Geoffrey Chaucer’s literary masterpiece *The Canterbury Tales* – in the original old English. Your host on this trip, Harry Bailey, has suggested that each member of our group tell a tale to make the time pass more pleasantly, with the ‘prize’ being an elegant dinner at the end of the trip. You will of course have to use your skills to dramatize your tale and you might even include some of your fellow travellers as actors.

You will use writers’ notebooks to gather ideas, record character traits and possible plot lines. Hmm... what kind of story would your fellow pilgrims enjoy?

**Requirements:** Bring a well- stocked pencil case including textas, scissors and glue, an exercise book and paper, a drink and snack (no nuts please), a small, labelled photo of yourself and a stamped, self-addressed DL envelope for your report. If you are doing this program in Term 1 or 4, a hat is required for break time.

### **Session 1: A Smart Traveller Warning: Watch out for the Black Plague!**

Travelling to a different time requires cultural sensitivity. What will you need to know in order to fit in? Did you know It was the custom for two or more people to share one portion of food and that you would be spearing your food with the pointed end of a knife? So, don’t expect to get your own serving at the inn. In this session, you will be putting all your creative writing skills to the test as you write for modern time travellers on the Trip Advisor site. (**TripAdvisor** is the world's largest travel site, enabling travellers to plan and have the perfect trip.) You will need to advise readers as to how they could make their trips successful and safe. After all the Black Plague is around! Your aim will be to pick just the right information and communicate it in a fun, exciting way. Each of our sessions includes a story from Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* and in this session, it will be the Nun’s Priest’s tale. This tale concerns the misfortune that befalls a cock named Chanticleer when he chooses to ignore the advice of his lovely wife, the hen, Pertelote.

### **Session 2: Growing your character: Serf, Knight, Miller, Pardoner, Summoner?**

What did people in the Middle Ages think and worry about? What job might you have? What might your name be? You are now well on your way to becoming a writer of historical fiction and this week you will be creating an identity for yourself so that you can tell your tale. All good writers create characters with strengths and weaknesses, characters who have dreams and ambitions, and characters who will tell a certain type of story. You will record your research into the life and minds of the time in your Writer’s Notebook. You will be provided with illustrations from books and manuscripts from the Middle Ages and other resources to enable you to gather ideas for your own narrative. You will also begin exploring ideas for your original tale. Today’s tale is “the Friar’s Tale” and this about a man who ended up getting exactly what he deserved.

### **Session 3: Why are you keaking? I'm pitchkettled**

In this session, you will become a word detective, as you labour to 'crack' the old English of medieval times. In the Cook's Tale, we'll meet Cook who alas has a large boil on his leg and is generally less than hygienic. This session you will complete your own character portrait. You might decide to be a plague doctor called Ethelred. You will begin to write your tale which will be completed and edited at home before next session. You will of course be following the style of Chaucer, using witty dialogue and carefully chosen character details.

### **Session 4: Storytelling slam. Your turn**

*Am I a storyteller?*

*Well, yes, I guess y'could say so*

*It's true I can tell a tale or two*

*If y'really wanna know*

Today each traveller will prepare his/her story for performance. You will be sharing your stories with a peer editor and work together to make sure that it is relevant to the times, well-structured and based on Chaucer's style. Each story will be presented to your smaller group and then you will select one of them to perform to the whole class. Will you be the person who tells the most entertaining story and wins dinner at the local tavern, courtesy of the other story-telling pilgrims? Hopefully no-one will guess that you came from another century. You certainly do not want to be left behind trapped the past after being popped into the "stocks" Today you will be reading the Squires tale about five magic gifts.

#### **About the Presenter**

Layla Sacker has as an honours degree in English and has taught English and Art to students from Prep to Year 12. She has worked with highly able students supporting them in finding their creative writing voice. Her students have always risen to the challenge of stretching their thinking further and have come to appreciate that writing requires confidence and imagination Her involvement with international schools and working at a world school has further developed her love for inquiry and rich learning. She loves literature from the past and the present. She is interested in art, music, astronomy and the natural world. She loves to learn about different times and put herself in the mindset of other cultures and histories.



