



GATEWAYS ON LOCATION

For gifted Year 5 and 6 children with a
love of reading and creative writing

'WHODUNNIT?'

At Writers Victoria, Level 3, The Wheeler Centre, 176 Little Lonsdale Street, Melbourne

G.A.T.E.WAYS is an independent organisation offering challenging and enriching activities and experiences to develop and extend highly able children. This *ON LOCATION* program for both girls and boys will run over two full days.

Want to become the lead detective on the case? Or maybe you'd like a few clues about what to do when things get forensic, or how to keep your mystery mystifying? The answers, I can assure you, are Elementary!

In this intriguing program, come along with the great detective, Sherlock Holmes, and investigate a crime scene of your own. You will learn how to unravel the pieces of a mystery puzzle – the characters, the plot, and the whodunit – while studying the Art of Deduction.

Bring along: nibbles for morning tea and lunch (no nuts please), a water bottle, an exercise book or writing paper, pens and pencils, a thesaurus, a deductive mind.

Before you come along: You might like to read Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's great Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson story, *Silver Blaze* to set the scene.

Day 1: Get on the case

Over the course of our first day you will:

- **Investigate the scene:** learn the basics of crime (who did what to whom, and who's investigating?), and discover all there is to know about perps, vics and detectives. Don't forget the *why* – all characters have hidden motives, and it's your job to find out what they are. Brainstorm with Holmes and make a case board montage to help your crime come to light.
- **Plot the perfect crime:** find out how to create a crime scene of your own, and put your detective to work. There are many different types of crime, and to be a good sleuth you will need all the facts. Study case notes from different crimes to get a feel for the dastardly minds behind them, and figure out how to trap your suspect.
- **Find out about the Art of Deduction:** a good detective is more than just a trench coat and a magnifying glass. Look at the files on crime busters of all stripes, and develop the character of your detective to make him or her unique...and unusual enough to catch any perpetrator.

Day 2: The net draws close

Over the course of our second day you will learn about:

- **Chain of reasoning:** it's a necessary evil, but a good investigator should know how to find out where the bodies are buried. Discover research resources for crime writing – for everything from forensics to homemade explosives – and how to work the research facts into your story.

- **Red Herrings:** even great detectives are sometimes led down the wrong path, and it's your job to make sure that readers stay puzzled until the very end. Find out how to trick your reader, lay down red herrings for your detective, and keep everybody guessing 'whodunit'.
- **The Locked Room Mystery:** what makes a satisfying wrap-up to a case? Is it just about catching the bad guys? Figure out how to tie your mystery together seamlessly with a tension-filled denouement and an exciting finale!

You will spend time working as a class, individually, and in groups to plot and plan your mystery – there will also be plenty of time just for pure writing. So if you're not bothered by a little blood, or the dirt from the mean streets, and you'd like to know how to keep readers confounded until the very end, grab your deerstalker and come along for the ride!

Homework:

Your homework will be to work on your story between classes.

About the Presenter:

Ellie Marney is a qualified teacher and writer of crime fiction for teenagers. Her first book, *Every Breath*, was shortlisted for the Ned Kelly Awards, the Davitt Awards and the Centre for Youth Literature's Gold Inky, and listed by ALIA as one of the most borrowed YA books in Australian libraries. Follow-up books *Every Word* and *Every Move* complete the trilogy, which has now been published in eight countries. When she's not writing, she talks in schools and libraries about books, writing and reading. Ellie lives in north-central Victoria with her partner, their four sons, and way too many pets. She likes a good book in her hand, Sherlock on the telly, and the occasional spot of remedial chain-sawing.

