



Term 3 2021 | Tolkiens | Years 5 and 6

Venue: Canberra Girls Grammar School – Junior School, Grey St Deakin

Just Do It! Jump Right in and Write!

Sometimes putting words on paper is the easy part of writing, but what about all the ways those words need to be chosen and crafted to bring your story and characters to life? Writing can become a very active pursuit as you gather your ideas around you, weave them together in unexpected ways, infuse them with the power of emotions and dreams, and create a whole new world, teeming with life and adventure.

Guided by the magic already woven by writers of all different genre, we will jump right in and explore our own universe of stories!

Meeting 1: Anybody Out There? Identifying your Audience

Focus: Audience & Purpose

Required reading, if possible: please read one of the following before Meeting 1 – Impossible Quest: Escape from Wolfhaven Castle, The Puzzle Ring, or Dragonclaw, by Kate Forsyth

Unless you are writing something in your private diary, it's pretty certain that you are writing something that you expect (or hope) someone else will read. How we write all depends on who our audience or reader is and why we are writing – and what genre we are writing in!

We'll take a quick look at how one author can write for three different audiences by changing her choice of language and voice in the books, Impossible Quest: Escape from Wolfhaven Castle, The Puzzle Ring, and Dragonclaw, by Kate Forsyth, before we have a bit of fun by splitting up to work on the same story – but for different audiences!

Read one or all of the stories and be ready to share your ideas.

Meeting 2: What a Character! How to Persuade your Characters to come Alive

Focus: Character Development

So you have a great idea for a story, and you know exactly what is going to happen, but who is going to make it happen? Every story needs strong characters to keep it alive and hold your readers' interest. So now you have to create a vivid, believable character (or two) that your reader will love (or love to hate).

Think about one of Kate Forsyth's main characters from the books we investigated in the last session and work out what it was that the character wanted more than anything.

Meeting 3: Worlds Away! Bringing the Reader into your World

Focus: Setting

Required reading: Wintersmith by Terry Pratchett – we will be discussing chapter 13. See notes below in meeting description.

Creating a setting for your story is a bit like making a collage where you use lots of bits and pieces to construct a picture. But this picture isn't just about decoration... this picture has to take your reader out of their everyday world and into your imagination. This picture is part of the story.

We will take a look at Wintersmith by Terry Pratchett to see how a strong setting becomes part of the story (you might find it helpful to take a look at Wee Free Men and A Hat Full of Sky first, if you decide to read the whole book, but we will be looking at Chapter 13, The Crown of Ice)

As a practical writing exercise, we will practise taking a snapshot in our mind's eye to discover all the detail in a tiny window.

Meeting 4: Making Sense of the World! Using Descriptive Writing

Focus: Description

We'll take a look at *Reckless* by Cornelia Funke along with another of her stories, *Inkheart*, to see how descriptive writing carries the reader into the story.

As the writer you have to be the eyes and ears of your readers, just enough to build an impression of the world, the people, and the events of your story. Bring them along for the ride using sensory detail and a sense of movement to bring your story to life by imagining your scene unfolding like a movie, and by learning about the 'rule of three'.

You will need to bring:

- A well-stocked pencil case (this includes grey lead pencils, coloured pencils, coloured textas, sharpener, eraser, ruler, scissors & glue stick)
- A notebook

About the club leader: Cate Whittle

Cate has been writing for children and young adults for over 15 years, with many articles, book reviews, and short stories published in a range of magazines and anthologies, both in print and online, and her work has been placed in competitions both nationally and internationally.

Her first book for young readers, *Trouble at Home*, about a girl and her troublesome dragon, was published by Omnibus Scholastic in 2016. More stories about *Trouble* followed over the next couple of years: *Trouble and the Missing Cat*, then *Trouble and the New Kid* (which made the long list for the CBCA Book of the Year Awards in 2018), and, the final book in the series, *Trouble and the Exploding House*.

Cate's latest book, *Wyrd*, a middle grade fantasy for slightly older readers, was released in August 2018. Next up is *Emergency Rescue Angel*, another middle grade/young YA title, both also with Omnibus Scholastic, was released in February this year.

Also a teacher, Cate has a passion for nurturing a love of stories in her students – as readers and creators – and loves the opportunity to share her experience with others.

Cate lives on a hillside overlooking a beautiful rural valley in New South Wales with her family, a cat, and a whole host of wildlife that visits her backyard. Other than writing stories, she loves to read, go for walks in the rain, take photographs, play with watercolours, and potter in the garden when she has time.