

# The BRAINWAVES Club



Term 3 2021 | Tolkiens | Years 5 and 6

Venue: Alphington Grammar

Term Fee \$285.00

## *A Fearless Flash of Form: Experimenting with Writing Formats*

Becoming multi-talented in many writing forms is a wonderful asset for budding writers to develop – besides being an exciting creative challenge to tackle! Many of the world’s great writers turned their hands to different kinds of writing over the course of their successful careers before settling into the format that made them famous. Plays on stage and screen, poems miniscule and momentous, fiction in pictures, paragraphs or pouring across pages: what new writing format will you unexpectedly find a real passion for as your creative abilities start taking ‘form’?!

### **Meeting 1: A Picture Tells a Thousand Words**

**Focus:** Revisiting Picture Books

Is that old saying really true? *Can* pictures say more than words? What could pictures tell that perhaps words cannot – or what can words do that pictures maybe can't?! But when you come down to it, letters and words are just pictures too: strange little scribbles and hieroglyphs that symbolize and represent people and places and objects and... Let’s dig out some favourite childhood fiction to see what can be told and revealed without words (or without many words) and then create a poignant picture book for ourselves!

**Requirements:** Bring along your own personal favourite picture book from when you were little – why did you love it so much?!

### **Meeting 2: What You See is What You Get?**

**Focus:** Visual Narrative in *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*

It took years for the highbrow literary community to accept comic books and graphic novels as real narrative art forms: even when it won awards, no-one was quite sure what kind of book Brian Selznick had written, because the story-telling gave equal importance to language AND illustrations. We’ll be designing a page for our own potential graphic novel today, and experimenting with layout and language and lines and layers: where will the balance lie?

**Requirements:** Read *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick – how is a book about making movies marrying words and images on the page (instead of on the screen?!)

### **Meeting 3: The World’s Briefest Art Form**

**Focus:** A Plethora of Very Short Poems

The shortest poem in the world is two words – seriously! Picture books and graphic novels are interested in replacing written language with visual language, but some poets seem to be trying to dispense with words altogether because they use so few of them! We’re often told to expand and develop creative writing by adding MORE words and details and descriptions - but many poets are trying to strip back and thin out their writing to the very bare essentials. The challenge this session will be trying their technique for ourselves with the most succinct poetry forms ever... what happens in creative writing when instead of adding words, you remove them?!

**Requirements:** Look through a poetry anthology and bring along the shortest example of a poem you can find – what would be lost or gained if it were made longer?!

**Meeting 4: Musical Words and Epic Poetry**

**Focus:** Soaring Away with *The Man From Snowy River* and *The Hunting of the Snark*

Writing is remarkably challenging already: how about making it rhyme? And have a beat? And still be as long as an actual story?! Some writers create *whole novels* in rhyming metrical poetry: this session is going to unlock all kinds of hidden creative talents as we leap into a format you may never have really tried before! Some famous poems will inspire us as we explore the basics of rhythm and rhyme, and realize just how many poetic devices we already use in our prose writing or hear every day in our lives... Guess what? You're already a poet – and you didn't even know it!!

**Requirements:** Read Banjo Patterson's adventure poem *The Man from Snowy River* OR Lewis Carroll's *The Hunting of the Snark* ALOUD! What can you now hear in the poem that you didn't really notice on the page?!

**What to Bring:**

- Come ready with a well-read copy of the text for each week.
- A well-stocked pencil case!

**About the presenter – Kim Edwards**

Kim teaches English literature and creative writing to university and high school students, and drama and theatre skills to both adults and kids all over Melbourne. She has run book clubs and cabarets, performed Shakespeare and written sonnets, dabbled in Dickens and is best buddies with the Brontes, and while she loves a ripping good yarn, she is still convinced *everything* we get to read and write in our lives is always a thrilling new adventure!