



**The English Teachers
Association of Queensland Inc.**

Providing professional support
and advocacy for English teachers

EARLY CAREER CONFERENCE

Saturday, 24 October 2020

Wynnum State High School
25 Peel Street, MANLY



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Saturday 24th October, 2020

The Context

Like snorkelling though a reef, the 2020 Early Career Conference will submerge you in a new, colourful, and enchanting world. Here you will engage in conversations and learn practical English teaching skills from your peers at varying stages of their careers. This is a valuable opportunity for preservice English teachers, teachers in their first five years, and experienced teachers who are new to English.

The day will provide high quality professional development specifically tailored to the needs of English teachers in their first five years of practice and those who may be experienced teachers but are new to teaching English.

One of the secondary aims of the day is to provide beginning teachers with the opportunity to boost their professional profile through seminar presentations. As such, this year's program features workshops covering a range of professional and curriculum-related issues, presented by beginning teachers, and experienced English teachers.

This professional development opportunity offers new-to-English, beginning and pre-service teachers the chance to extend their professional network, whilst attending workshops that offer practical strategies and ideas relating to the teaching of English.

Keynote 1: Building Your Well-Being Team.



As an early career teacher, at times you may feel you are snorkelling the reef alone. Learning how to build your well-being team and relying on your team will assist you through the early years of your career and give you the strength and confidence to snorkel with others, now and in the future. A workshop packed with practical advice and strategies for developing your team, looking after your well-being and balancing your life. This workshop is evidence-based and grounded in recent research.

June Balfour is a Director of Learning, an English teacher and is in the final stages of completing her doctoral studies exploring the relationship between school leadership connection and practice, and the impact on teacher well-being and identity. She is passionate about well-being and supporting her staff.

Register at www.etaq.org.au

Cost: \$45



Keynote 2: Making it Stick: Literacy for Learning!

(Session 5)

Abstract

Writing is not something extra to our daily work. Literacy is not the add-on to English. But how do we demystify teaching vocabulary and writing to our students in a way that is purposeful, practical and sticks?

This session will take the perspective that writing processes should be something we learn how to embed as part of our daily teaching routines, and students have repeated opportunities to practice and apply. Examples for this workshop are taken from English, Humanities and Science classrooms to demonstrate how literacy practices can be transparent across the full range of subject areas.

This workshop uses the strategies from Anita Archer's *Explicit Direct Instruction*, as well as ideas from *The Writing Revolution* to address:

- Direct vocabulary instruction to develop a deep understanding of key terms;
- Sentence level structures to build comprehension and relationships between concepts;
- Strategies for summarising and note taking.

Teaching effective and explicit writing strategies is something that we can learn to do using our curriculum content and classroom contexts.

Presenters

Ellen McGuigan and **Dayle Fulford** are both early career teachers at Atherton State High School in Far North Queensland. Ellen has previously presented at the ETAQ State Conference and at last year's Early Career Conference on feedback and engaging consolidations. Honest, practical and easily influenced by Ellen to join her in presenting, Dayle values the importance of networks like this one to support beginning teachers and is keen to share her experiences with others starting out in the world of teaching.

United by their love of explicit instruction and demystifying writing for students, together they offer a unique perspective on the importance of literacy across the curriculum



Program

| Time | Activity | Presenter |
|-----------------|---|--|
| 8:30 – 9:00 | Registration Sign-in for Covid Safe contact tracing | |
| 9:00 am | Introduction and welcome | Lindsay Williams |
| 9:10 – 10:10am | Keynote 1: Building Your Well-Being Team | June Balfour |
| 10:15 – 11:00am | Session 2: 2A: Teaching Poetry: Strategies that work OR 2B: Critical and Creative Thinking in English and Literature | Anne Wood Eldene Johnson |
| 11:05-11:50 | Session 3: 3A: Calmer Conversations and Non-Toxic Emails: Navigating the seas of difficult interactions OR 3B: Beyond PowerPoint | Rebecca Hewitt Hillary Geers |
| 11:50 – 12:35pm | Lunch + Networking | |
| 12:35 – 1:20pm | Session 4: 4A: Shakespeare's Shorts Performance OR 4B: Imagine to Persuade: persuade to imagine. | Queensland Shakespeare Ensemble Mel Dixon |
| 1:25-2:10 | Keynote 2: Making it Stick: Literacy for Learning! | Ellen McGuigan and Dayle Fulford |
| 2:15-2:25 | Close | Melissa Blacklock |

This program constitutes 4.45 hours CPD

Covid Safety

A Covid Safe Plan will be in place for this event; the key features are:

- sign the Contact Tracing Register;
- maintain a physical distance of 1.5 metres from others;
- chairs and tables will be spaced to ensure this is maintained throughout the day;
- a pre-packaged lunch will be served to you.

The full Plan is available for your perusal from a link on the event page.



Session 2

A. Teaching Poetry: Strategies that work

Abstract

Do you feel apprehensive about teaching poetry? Are you afraid you don't have the skills and knowledge to teach poetry effectively? You are not alone! Teacher knowledge and attitudes to the genre of poetry have been linked to the success and failure of poetry teaching. Researchers have found teachers' apprehension to teach the genre stems from their own insufficient knowledge and a belief that students do not understand poetry. Teachers who believe they can teach poetry will enable all students to engage in the genre and their students are more likely to be successful in reading and writing poetry. This practical session will increase your confidence in teaching poetry. You will learn how to create poetry units of work, activities and assessments for all year levels that can lead your students to a poetic heart rather than away from it.

Presenter

Anne Wood has 25 years' experience as an English teacher. She has taught in both New South Wales and Queensland, in the State, Independent and Catholic systems. At her current school Aquinas College, Ashmore she is the English Curriculum Leader. Her passion is Australian literature, in particular poetry. She is currently studying a Doctor of Education at Queensland University of Technology.

B. Critical and Creative Thinking in English and Literature

Abstract

As English and Literature teachers, we want our students to question, interrogate, and apply a critical lens to all texts they encounter. We also want to foster an environment where students think creatively and have the confidence to produce their own works of aesthetic and literary value but this can often seem daunting and overwhelming for our students and us.

Through the use of Thinking Routines from the Cultures of Thinking Pedagogical framework, critical and creative thinking skills can be applied across a variety of contexts to allow teachers the opportunity to easily embed this thinking into our everyday pedagogy. Creative and critical thinking are not mutually exclusive, but it is through the continual integration and of these approaches to learning in the English and Literature classroom, that the transference of these skills can be applied across a range of learning contexts.

I will work through examples of Thinking Routines, their applications for teachers, and provide some student exemplars to demonstrate ways you can enhance critical and creative thinking within your classroom. Participants will leave the session with easy to use, practical activities and routines that can be implemented immediately.

Presenter

Eldene Johnston is a recent graduate from the Queensland University of Technology and currently works as an English and Literature teacher at Brisbane Girls Grammar School. In 2019, she received the Brisbane Girls Grammar Staff Award for Professional Practice by a Recent Graduate in Teaching. Eldene is actively involved in continual professional development with Cultures of Thinking through an Action Research Group, and attended the International Education that Matters Conference with Harvard's Project Zero in Melbourne, 2020.

Session 3

A. Calmer Conversations and Non-Toxic Emails: Navigating the seas of difficult interactions

Abstract

Whether it be via email or in a face-to-face meeting, difficult conversations with students and their parents and caregivers can be extremely nerve-wracking for all early-career teachers. Conflict can often arise due to misaligned goals, an asymmetry of understanding, competing priorities, or even the very-human blunders we all make in the course of daily conversation.

While nothing beats well-designed protocols and supportive school administrators, there are some communication and listening skills that you can equip yourself with to help you problem-solve with students and their families, and to create strong partnerships for success.

Beyond active listening, questioning, empathy and understanding your school's procedures for communicating, this session will also get to the nuts and bolts of our job as English teachers. After all, we want our students to understand their role and relationship with audiences, to make language choices and use aesthetic features for a specific effect, and understand how cultural assumptions and values shape how we engage in the world - and we should master this also.

This seminar won't turn you into a seasoned negotiator, but it may help you write shorter emails, leave a meeting with less anxiety, and perhaps even gain a few powerful allies in a child's success in English.

Presenter

Bec Hewitt has had some terrible, horrible, not good, very bad conversations in her ten

years of teaching, but in the last few she's had some really great ones. Having worked in the Catholic and Grammar sectors, she now teaches Senior English at Brisbane State High School. She has a keen interest in community connections, student leadership and school wellbeing, and looks forward to submitting her final research project for her Master of Education through the University of Melbourne in June.

B. Beyond PowerPoint

Abstract

This workshop will delve into ways to engage with curriculum content in a variety of ways – beyond death by power point. We will explore how to ensure that we have consistency across classes, but still have the freedom to be creative when we teach. The focus will be on Year 9, but the ideas can be used across any year level. Expect a practical toolkit to apply to your own units of work and implement at your school.

Presenter

Hillary Geers is an experienced educator in both school and adult education settings. She has taught senior English, Literature and Psychology, and is the Head of Middle Years English. Hillary taught in Victoria for many years and has prepared students for external exams. She is passionate about making English engaging, accessible and challenging for the many diverse students at her co-ed secondary school.



Session 4

A. Shakespeare's Shorts performance

Abstract

QSE offers a series of 'Shorts' performance incursions suitable for grades 8 - 12, and we'd love to show you how engaging an introduction to some of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies can be! Each of our Shorts performances utilise the play's original (but expertly edited) script to immerse your students in the characters, plot, and language of Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet, or Hamlet, in the most memorable way!

This performance of Express Macbeth will give an example of the student workshops as well as a Q&A on the other associated workshops that may also be of use to English students in their study of Shakespeare.

Presenter

The Queensland Shakespeare Ensemble (QSE) was founded in 2001. Since its inception QSE has gained a reputation for energetic, accessible and unique productions of Shakespeare's plays. We use Shakespeare as a platform for positive change.

B. Imagine to Persuade: persuade to imagine

Abstract

While there are imminent changes to NAPLAN, narrative and persuasive writing skills are still important in the English classroom. This presentation will focus on the relationship between the imagination and persuasion and ways we can enhance the associated writing in the classroom so that students may 'imagine to persuade: persuade to imagine'. Using the criteria of NAPLAN as a springboard and a range of texts and

samples, we will look at ways that we can teach persuasive and narrative writing that go beyond a formula.

Presenter

Mel Dixon is the Education and Publications Officer for the ETANSW. Until moving to NSW she was an active member of the ETAQ executive, editor of *Word's Worth* and ETAQ Vice President. She has taught across state and independent schools with ten years as Head of English in Queensland. Her most recent publications include *Creative Horizons* 1 and 2.

