

## YOUNG WRITERS ONLINE

### Junior Writers Sessions with Meg McKinlay

Released Term 3, 2020

#### What is included?

#### *6 x Creative Writing Sessions*

##### **Session 1 – Ideas and Inspiration**

This session focuses on getting the creative wheels turning, finding raw material in the everyday and taking specific steps to transform it into fodder for fiction. Meg will talk about how this process works for her, using practical examples, and provide students with a series of starters to fuel their own work. She will draw on and read from her novel *A Single Stone*.



##### **Session 2 – Stepping Stones to Story**

Planning and structure do not come naturally to Meg; she has had to 'learn by doing' over many years, and many novels. In this session, she'll share some of her hard-won strategies and tips - important for all students but particularly those who get stuck in the muddy middle of their stories. Features examples and a reading from *Catch a Falling Star*.

##### **Session 3 – Creating Characters that Captivate**

This session combines elements of character and point-of-view. Connecting readers to your characters is vital and a key way of doing this is to write from deep inside their perspective. This is "show, don't tell" with Meg's own particular spin, a nuts-and-bolts focus on technique with examples drawn from her novel *Surface Tension*, among others.

##### **Session 4 – Drawing on Description and Detail**

Building on the previous session's work on 'show, don't tell', Meg discusses the importance of bringing setting and character to life via the use of specific, vivid detail. Using examples from a range of her work, she leads students through a series of exercises encouraging students to draw on these techniques to discover and trust their own unique writing voice. Includes a reading from Meg's novel *Annabel, Again*.

##### **Session 5 – Pathway to Poetry**

In this session, we turn our attention to poetry. Meg will guide students to explore the poetic possibilities of the everyday, opening up cracks in the ordinary to take words into places you never imagined they could go. Techniques will be linked to the prose work covered in earlier sessions and students will be guided to create a simply structured free-verse poem of their own. Meg will also read from her own poetry.

##### **Session 6 – Playing with Poetry**

Continuing to explore the possibilities of poetry, Meg builds on the previous session, this time working with looser poetic forms. Students will use the techniques previously introduced to look at a local icon with fresh eyes and craft a series of linked poems that re-imagine it. Meg will read her poem "A Gardener's Guide to Poetry" and will also give answers to some frequently asked questions about her work, writing, and creativity in general.

Each session:

- Is a tailored pre-recorded writing workshop for students presented by WA young adult author, Meg McKinlay. They are designed to be used in sequence.
- Can be used at the teacher's discretion; one session at a time or together, as six private video links are provided. Privately enrolled students can watch as they wish.
- Includes a writing exercise and a short reading by the author from one of her books.
- Meg's books are available for purchase from the Centre and can be signed to your school or students on request.

### **About WA Author Meg McKinlay**

A Fremantle author, Meg is the successful writer of picture books, YA novels and poetry for adults. She has published seventeen books for children. Her work for *A Single Stone* won the Prime Minister's Literary Award, the Queensland Literary Award, the Davitt Award for Crime writing and the Aurealis Award for Speculative Fiction and been shortlisted for numerous other awards. Her latest titles are *Catch a Falling Star* and picture book *Let Me Sleep, Sheep!* Both published in 2019. In August 2020, Meg was thrilled to receive the WA Premier's Prize for Writing for Children for *Catch a Falling Star*. With a PhD in Japanese Literature, Meg spent several years at the University of Western Australian where she taught Australian Literature and Creative Writing to Japanese students. Meg is an experienced presenter of the Talented Young Writers' Programme at The Literature Centre. On these days she always inspires her students to not only read widely but to write with confidence.

### **Your Feedback**

As this is a new and exciting venture for The Literature Centre, your feedback on our Young Writers Online workshop is appreciated. We know there will be improvements and adjustments needed along the way. As always, the content and presentation style of each of our award-winning authors will differ. A short feedback survey will be emailed to all participating teachers after sessions are released.

### **Full Details on our Website**

See our website for all the details including reduced fee, registration forms, timetable of authors, what to expect and more [www.thelitcentre.org.au](http://www.thelitcentre.org.au). Young Writers Online is suitable for school classes or individual students (home-school or privately enrolled) keen to write.