



Nurturing excellence in
Nurturing excellence
children's and young adult literature

Young Writers Online

Years 9 - 12, Metro students with Anthony Eaton

What is included?

6 x Creative Writing Sessions, intended to be viewed in sequence.

Structure: Each of Anthony's sessions will include:

- A brief introduction to the 'key idea' for that session
- A short personal context for the idea and why it's important to me as a writer
- A (mostly) 3-5 minute reading from a work demonstrating how I've used the key idea for that session (again with appropriate context)
- One or two brief writing activities allowing the students to apply the key idea and experiment with it.
- Bad dad jokes.



Session One: There Are No Rules

IN WHICH... we are introduced to one another, we discuss the entire concept of 'rules-based writing' and the problematic (though appealing) idea of 'writing anarchy', we explore the alternative notion of 'writing guidelines', we journey briefly *Into White Silence*, and we embark on an experiment with potentially appalling consequences...

Breakdown:

Key Idea: Rules. Breaking them. When and How.

Key Discussion: Instances where breaking the rules has led to amazing writing

Reading: *Into White Silence*

Activity: Breaking rules activity – write something, then destroy it.

Session Two: ...That Is The Question.

IN WHICH... we ponder the interesting question of structure and its impact upon writing, we entertain the idea of simplified philosophy of narrative, We visit a *Darkland* and discover *Nightpeople*, the secret power of the first sentence is revealed, and we pose some questions of our own.

Breakdown:

Key Idea: Questions and Answers

Key Discussion: Various structure and their effect on writing

Reading: *Nightpeople* – Book 1 of the *Darklands Trilogy*

Activity: First sentences – posing a question

Session Three: Visiting Reality

IN WHICH... we interrogate an oft-spouted writing aphorism, we contemplate the interesting in the everyday, we explore Tony's neighbourhood (or at least, part of it), we visit a prison camp, and we consider fully the repercussions of breakfast.

Breakdown:

Key Idea 1: Show don't tell. Or not.

Key Idea 2: 'Truth' and where to find it

Reading: *Fireshadow* (including personal context)

Activity 1: Microfictions

Activity 2: Writing reality/rewriting reality

Session Four: A Test of Character

IN WHICH... we contemplate what makes a person – fictional or otherwise – worthy of our attention, we examine the possible ramifications of accidentally putting someone you know in a story, we ask of ourselves 'whose story is it, anyway?' and we tease apart the problematic issues of stereotyped character tropes and explore one possible way to avoid them.

Breakdown:

Key Idea: Characters are not part of your story. They *are* your story.

Reading: Small sections from *The Darkness* and *Nathan Nuttboard Upstaged*

Activity 1 (short): Switching sides

Activity 2: Developing a Character – a few key questions

Session Five: Roman Holiday

IN WHICH... we start to pull together the threads of our journey so far, we attempt to achieve enlightenment, we consider the fundamental nature of the short story, and we take an extended visit to Rome where we witness a fight.

Breakdown:

Key Idea: The short story as a single idea narrative

Reading: Short Story *Enlightenment* plus context (Note, unlike the other readings in these sessions, this one is extended and will take roughly 12 minutes. It will also include a good deal of context to actively demonstrate the way in which ideas and experiences can be brought together effectively in fiction) This session is intended as a drawing together of all the key ideas so far, put into a more developed and realised form, which will lead us into the final two sessions.

Activity: The Island of the Seven Winds – extended writing activity introduction.

Plus: [Island of the Seven Winds](#) map to be handed out.

Session Six: So, What's Next?

IN WHICH... we contemplate the awful idea that editing and rewriting are actually necessary, we learn three useful things to look for when editing work (both our own and other's), we discuss the problem with parents (well, one of them, anyway...), we share some pain, and we depart for the moon.

Breakdown:

Key Idea: Editing and revision are a creative and important process (and can also be fun!)

Self-Editing Demonstration

Reading: One Small Step (work in progress)

Activity 1: Editing for repetition

Activity 2: Editing for redundancy

Each session:

- Is a tailored pre-recorded writing workshop for students presented by ACT author, Anthony Eaton. 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 his books.
- In keeping with the writing program, Anthony's books are available for purchase from the Centre.

About ACT Author Anthony Eaton

Eaton was born in Papua New Guinea in 1972 and moved to Perth, Western Australia during his childhood. After attending university he worked as a literature and drama teacher at Trinity College, Perth for eight years. He currently lives in Canberra and is a lecturer at the University of Canberra. In 2000 Eaton's first novel was released in Australia, entitled *The Darkness*. It won the 2001 Western Australian Premier's Award for Young Adult Literature and was a short-list nominee for the 2000 Aurealis Award for best fantasy novel.

In 2004 Eaton released *Fireshadow*, which won the Western Australian Premier's Award for Young Adult Literature and was named as an honour book in the CBCA Book of the Year Awards. In 2005 he started his Darklands Trilogy with the first book, *Nightpeople*, being a short-list nominee for the 2005 Aurealis Award for best fantasy novel and best young-adult novel. In 2007 the second book in the trilogy, *Skyfall* won the 2007 Aurealis Award for best young-adult novel and in 2008 *Into White Silence* was named an honour book in the 2009 CBCA Book of the Year awards and was a short-list nominee for the Queensland Premier's Literary Awards. Eaton is currently teaching Creative Writing at the University of Canberra whilst he works on his next set of novels.

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 online program details including reduced fee, registration forms, timetable of authors, what to expect, and more www.thelitcentre.org.au.

The Young Writers Online is suitable for school classes or individual students (home-school or privately enrolled) keen to write.