

A STORY IN MINIATURE



2022 VATE Writing Competition and Teaching and Learning Package

Writing competition

VATE is excited to launch our 2022 writing competition **A Story in Miniature**. Students in Years 7-12 and their teachers are invited to submit a story between 300 and 500 words in length inspired by the writing competition theme.

*Short stories do not say this happened and this happened and this happened.
They are a microcosm and a magnification rather than a linear progression.*
—Isabelle Carmody

We encourage students and teachers to find inspiration from the miniature stories that make up our daily life – the small interactions and delightful tidbits that make up our day – and transform them, with brevity, into a piece of polished prose.

What could a **story in miniature** be?

Yellow Submarine

Sarah told her friends she'd rather die than go away with her stupid family. She said she'd prefer to make out with some creepy dude with bad breath than endure, for two whole weeks, her brother's surliness, her dad's relentless optimism, her mum's jeans. The morning they pulled out, the sun igniting the dew on their lawn, she stared out of her window and contemplated the vast pointlessness of everything. Thirteen kilometres later, she caught herself humming along to Yellow Submarine on the radio, then noticed her father watching her through the rear-view mirror. He winked. She may have smiled.

—© Paul Connolly (Text Publishing)

Entry details

There are **four** categories available in the competition. Schools may submit up to **five** entries for each of the categories:

Years 7-8 students | Years 9-10 students | Years 11-12 students | Teachers

- Each entry must be accompanied by [this completed entry form](#) and emailed to writingcompetition@vate.org.au by 4pm on Friday 24 June 2022. Entries without a completed entry form will not be considered.
- The winners of each category will each receive a **\$150 book voucher** to spend at VATE's partner bookseller **The Little Bookroom / Neighbourhood Books**, and their stories will be published in **Idiom**. The runners up will receive a book package from our competition supporters.

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- A moment in time.*
- A short interaction between friends.*
- A vignette depicting the future.*
- A portrait of daily life at home.*
- A slice of an imagined world.*
- A snapshot into another life.*
- A glimpse of the past.*

It's possible, in a poem or short story, to write about commonplace things and objects using commonplace but precise language, and to endow those things – a chair, a window curtain, a fork, a stone, a woman's earring – with immense, even startling power.

—Raymond Carver

Teaching and learning package

VATE is again offering a full online teaching and learning package to support the teaching of the creative writing process and competition. This year, our package features Australian flash-fiction and short story writers **Angela Meyer**, **Paul Connolly** and **Adam Thompson**. The activities in the package have been designed around the four sections of the writing process:

- **Part One:** The Ideas – 'The Dreaming Part'
- **Part Two:** The Writing – 'The Making Part'
- **Part Three:** The Hurdles – 'The Hard Part'
- **Part Four:** The Review – 'The Organising Part'

Each section features video interviews of the writers sharing their insights into constructing short stories and tips for writing within a concise word limit, including the following:

- Where do you find inspiration for story writing?
- How do you plan for, and stick to, a small word limit?
- What kind of clues do you have to leave a reader in a short story?
- How can a young writer develop an authentic voice?
- What makes a character interesting and how do you juggle a cast of characters?
- What is the difference between showing and telling in my work?
- What is important to look for when polishing a final draft for submission?

They'll also unpack the competition theme; giving students some inspiration for getting started with their writing.

Cost and registration

Total cost is **\$199** for all members of your English team to access the full online **A Story in Miniature** teaching and learning package. Please [register online here](#) on the VATE website.

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VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

Paul Connolly

A journalist, author and editor for more than 25 years, Paul Connolly has written for publications including *The Monthly*, *The Guardian* (UK), *Guardian Australia*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, and *The Age*. His flash fiction column, *Kitchen Sink Drama*, has been published weekly in the *Good Weekend* magazine since March 2017. In 2020, a collection of 100 of these stories – featuring the art of Jim Pavlidis – was published by Text Publishing. Paul has written hard news stories, feature articles, profiles, sport pieces, humour columns and travel stories, as well as four other texts. Paul also teaches media writing at Melbourne University and presents writing workshops for schools and businesses.



Angela Meyer

Angela Meyer is an award-winning Australian writer and editor. Her debut novel, *A Superior Spectre*, was shortlisted for an Aurealis Award, the MUD Literary Prize, an Australian Book Industry Award, the Readings Prize for New Australian Writing and a Saltire Literary Society Award (Scotland). She is also the author of a novella, *Joan Smokes*, which won the inaugural Mslexia Novella Award (UK), and a book of flash fiction, *Captives*. Her second novel, *Moon Sugar*, will be released in October 2022. Her work has been widely published in magazines, journals and newspapers, including *Island*, *The Big Issue*, *Best Australian Stories* and *Kill Your Darlings*. She has worked in many areas of the book industry and is now a freelancer. In 2022, one of her projects is to help shift the book industry towards a greener future.



Adam Thompson

Adam Thompson is a pakana writer from Launceston, Tasmania. His work has been published by the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, *Kill Your Darlings*, *Good Weekend* and *Griffith Review* – as well as appearing in several anthologies. Adam is the author of *Born Into This*, which won the Story Prize Spotlight award (US) and was shortlisted for the Queensland Literary Awards, *The Age* Book of the Year and the Readings Prize for New Australian Fiction. He was named as Tasmanian Aboriginal Artist of the Year in 2019. Adam has written for performance art and television. He is passionate about advancing the interests of the pakana community.

