Victorian Association for the Teaching of English

2026 Idiom Vol 62 No 2 – Call for contributions

Writing now:
Writers, rights and re-writes

Theme

What do we owe to ourselves and to our students when it comes to a writing education today? What new learnings, dispositions and skills are needed in order to foster and prioritise student voice, the writer's workshop, and authentic writing in the English classroom? How do we engage in the writing process and what writing do we want to see from our students?

In this edition of Idiom we set out to consider how writing can be taught for engagement, voice, student ownership, authentic experience and empowerment. The NCTE's 2026 'students' right to write' is founded on the premise that students have the right to see themselves as writers and to experience the practices of authentic writing. However, teachers have long experienced challenges such as standardised tests, low-variance curriculum, and breaking through formulas in meeting these aims.

These challenges have only increased in recent years, and the now widespread prevalence of GenAI warrants heightened consideration in terms of what a writing education can and should mean for young people. VATE Council's position on AI is guided by the understanding that 'Learning is not a problem to be solved; it's a process to be undertaken.'

Are we happy with the way writing is currently taught in our school contexts? Are we comfortable with the way writing pedagogy and assessment is being spoken of in the broader discourse? Are the opportunities and challenges for writing the same as they ever were – or is it time for a re-write?

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1/134-136 Cambridge Street, Collingwood, VIC, 3066
(03) 9411 8500 | publications@vate.org.au | www.vate.org.au
ABN: ABN 22 667 468 657 | Inc. No. A0013525E

We invite your contributions to this edition of Idiom

In responding to the theme, you may like to write about any of the following. Tell us more about:

- Your school's approach to teaching writing.
- The writing journey from Year 7 to Year 12.
- Overcoming student and teacher resistance to writing, particularly creative writing.
- Initiatives that you and/or your English teaching colleagues have introduced into the English curriculum to help develop students' writing skills.
- Current research from researchers and teacher-practitioners on the teaching of writing.
- A lesson, activity, learning sequence or unit of work focusing on writing. How do these develop across the different levels of secondary English?
- 'Anything but an essay' – the value of short-form/low-stakes writing to build student confidence, stamina and skills.
- What should the role of the teacher be in the writing process? How can we encourage students to take more responsibility for the drafting and editing process?
- Responding to students' writing – teacher and peer feedback.
- How can we assess creative writing without damaging student voice or diminishing students' experiences and vulnerability?
- Assessing students' writing in meaningful and constructive ways (formative and summative).
- Exploring different forms of writing in English – challenges and opportunities.
- How do you use mentor texts to develop students' language and writing skills? How do the students respond?
- Teaching writing through a focus on language skills, knowledge and awareness.
- In what ways can we extend more capable students while also supporting those who struggle to engage with writing?
- Your recommendations for resources. What are your go-to materials, websites, organisations for ideas and inspiration, reliable and accurate information, and guidance to support your teaching of writing?
- Reviews of relevant and useful texts supporting the development of students' writing (600-800 words).

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We want to hear from you

We welcome a range of submissions for this edition of Idiom.

We would like to hear from English leaders, classroom teachers of English, teacher educators, educational researchers, pre-service and early career English teachers, teachers working in ES roles linked to English classes, and students in your English classes.

We invite different forms of contributing – written articles, academic essays, units of work, lesson sequences, book reviews – that respond to the theme 'Writing now: Writers, rights and re-writes.'

To discuss your ideas for a possible submission, please email idiom@vate.org.au.

Dates for submission

Full submissions (1000-2500 words) are due **Tuesday 20 October** to: idiom@vate.org.au.

General advice about writing and formatting your article for Idiom is available here.

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