

V A Victorian Association for **T E** the Teaching of English

Guidelines for VATE State Conference workshop abstracts

- Avoid writing in first person.
- Make clear the target audience if appropriate (e.g.: Year 7 teachers, VCE English Language teachers, early career teachers)
- Make explicit what delegates will do and how active they will be (e.g.: small group discussion, writing tasks, modelling activities)
- Explain what delegates will take away (e.g.: ideas, strategies, lesson plans, tasks)

Sample workshop abstracts from VATE events

Reading rebels: The power of banned books

This workshop shares my experiences using banned books to increase reading engagement and spark rich, critical discussion – especially with reluctant readers. It will go beyond reflection to include practical classroom activities, resources, and strategies for using banned books effectively. We'll examine who has the power to ban books in the 21st century, the importance of diverse voices in literature, and how these texts can challenge and reshape student thinking. In today's global and cultural climate, English teachers must be bold – leading students through thoughtful, courageous conversations about censorship, inclusion, and the lasting impact of the stories we choose to teach. *(100 words)*

Mutual feedback model for writing

This workshop empowers educators to transform feedback into a mutual process which strengthens students' ownership of their writing. Primarily targeted towards new teachers, this session will work through real classroom strategies to reduce the feedback burn out experiences by teachers and encourage them to shift the scale in favour of a healthy collaborative relationship through peer feedback workshops, teacher checklists, student stamp checklists, and student reflections on models and the value of conferencing over copious annotations. This approach dismantles the passive mindset that teachers are the sole source of feedback where writing becomes a dialogue, not a monologue. *(98 words)*

Quickwrites: Using mentor texts to inspire creativity

Learn how to integrate Quickwrites into your middle years English classroom, an approach to creative writing that helps students use mentor texts as a means of building their own writing toolbox. In this workshop, teachers will participate in demonstrations on how to use short mentor texts as a precursor to creative writing Quickwrites. Teachers will be guided on the ways in which Quickwrites lift student creativity, encourage authenticity of voice, and stimulate experimentation in creative writing. *(76 words)*

Improvisational ACs: Moving away from the formulaic in VCE English Language

This hands-on workshop will help teachers guide their students through an English Language analytical commentary without having them fall back on formulaic paragraphs or rehearsed structures. With a strong toolkit and sharper instincts, students can face whatever text comes their way, because when the script goes out the window, real analysis begins – no template, no panic, just insightful and relevant analysis. *(61 words)*

Stories in Miniature

VATE's annual creative writing competition is themed 'A Story in Miniature'. Students are encouraged to write stories that are between 300 and 500 words, focusing on a single interaction, moment, glimpse or moment they wish to retell in narrative prose. This workshop will revisit some of the past winners of the competition, unpacking the strengths of each and their suitability for use as a mentor text with students. The workshop will also explore some complementary teaching ideas for using miniature texts in your classroom to inspire your students to write their own stories and experiment with their creative writing voice. *(100 words)*