

Scotch College Junior School

Melbourne, Australia

IBSC CapeTown

**Presentation: Thursday 9th
July 2015**



Using a Writer's Notebook to Create a Culture of Writing

Brian Sampson
Director of Studies

“A writer’s notebook gives you a place to live like a writer, not just in school during writing time, but where ever you are, at any time of day” - Ralph Fletcher

“The Writer’s notebook becomes a tool that the students are able to use to capture the things they notice, observe, wonder and think about” - Alan Wright

Writing is empowering.

Writing gives our boys a voice.

Writing allows students to develop and share their thinking.

Writing is a passion

- Scotch JS Staff

Our Aim: Why?



To develop creative, confident and competent writers.

To develop a culture of enjoying writing, to be comparable with the strong culture of reading

To foster the boys' ownership of their personal writing

To hook the boys into writing

To allow time for boys to have conversations and to rehearse their thoughts before writing

To provide an authentic purpose for writing

To enhance Metacognitive writing: self reflective,
thinking about their thinking and knowing

A Key Learning Area identified for improvement in
our boys education

What is a Notebook?

- An easy, informal, no pressure way to start thinking about an idea and recording
- A list of ideas
- A place to jot: Thoughts and feelings
- Observations of, and wonderings about the world around us

Sketches, drawings

Memories, moments

Quotes, inspiring passages

Space to practise and experiment
with words and techniques

A collection of magazine or
newspaper articles, words / pictures
can be pasted into Notebook



How did we Set it Up?

We allowed the boys to select and develop their notebook, as a reflection of their personality.

Prevent it being seen as a Diary or Journal or a Workbook

A source of ideas from which writing grows

Supported students encouraging them to search their notebook and to identifying ideas that could be used in their writing



Who is involved?

Staff Commitment: Time for boys to write, becoming a model by writing and Professional Development

Real Author's: quality literature to read, share, unpack as mentor texts

Expert in Residence: to work with boys in classroom as models and mentors and model expert practices for staff

When?

A Long Term Project: Commenced in 2013

Initial Staff Development: Mid Year 2013 to
Mid Year
2015

Make use of small timetable blocks

Write Daily

Revisit regularly to maintain Notebook focus

How to Celebrate?

Write Around Scotch: A Day of Intense Writing

Year Level Focus

Gathering of ideas in Notebooks over preceding period

Preparing for Writing by building prior knowledge

Planning and Writing Process

Supported and inspired by Authors and their experiences

Year Level Focus

Year 6 : **Mystery**

Year 5 : Science Fiction

Year 4 : **Dreamtime**

Year3 : **Sports Adventures**

Year2 :Cautionary Tales

Year1 : **Twisted Fairy Tales**

Year Prep : **Fantasy Toy**

Working Beside a Writer

Yr 6 and 5

Drama Studio 1 at 8.40-9.40am
(enter through first door)

Michael Panckridge

Michael Panckridge lives in Geelong where he was born and raised. He enjoys the close proximity to the beach and, of course barracks for the Cats! His passion for sport inspired him to write books to encourage children, particularly reluctant readers, to be engaged in reading. He works part-time as a teacher in Geelong and gets many of his ideas from the children he teaches. He has written over 30 books including the highly acclaimed Legends and Anniversary Legends series. In addition to his sporting novels, he has also written several mysteries including The Cursed, the Vanishings and The Immortal. Michael enjoys playing and watching all types of sport and is also very musical.



Wearing a Writer's Shoes

Y 4 and 3

Shergold at 8.40-9.40am

Michael Wagner

Michael Wagner

Michael Wagner is the author of the Maxx Rumble Football and Maxx Rumble Cricket series — 16 children's books bursting with madcap sporting action — and the acclaimed Dog Wars, a novel about wrestling fleas and fighting dogs. Michael loves writing books that are amusing, exciting and accessible to everyone. Before becoming a full-time writer, Michael worked for ten years with ABC as a radio broadcaster. He lives in Melbourne with his wife Jane Godwin (also a children's author) and his two children, Will and Lizzie.



I am a Writer for the Day!

Year 2, 1 and Prep
JS Hall at 8.40-9.40am

Sally Rippin



Sally Rippin was born in Darwin, however due to her father's work, spent much of her childhood in South East Asia. As a young adult she lived in China for three years where she studied traditional Chinese painting. Sally also lived in France for three years and is now happy to call Melbourne home. As an author and illustrator, she demonstrates great versatility by writing for children of all ages. Sally has had over 40 books published including Peeking Ducks, The Race for the Chinese Zodiac and Mannie and the Very Long Brave Day. In 2012, Sally launched Hey Jack, a series that focuses on the moods of a young boy in everyday life situations. In addition to writing, Sally also teaches Writing for Children at RMIT University and is a mentor for the Australian Society of Authors.

The whole Junior School participated in the first 'Write Around Scotch Day' in which every student produced a piece of writing. The Year 6s were required to use their imaginations to write a mystery story that included interesting characters, and sequences that built suspense and provided an unexpected twist. At first I thought I had a strong idea set in my mind, but as I listened to the ideas of my peers, I decided to change a few key points. In addition, Michael Pankridge, our guest speaker, shared some of his writing strategies and tips. Using what we'd learnt from Michael, I managed to produce an exhilarating short story.

Alan Xiong

Scotch is not just a school; it is a community, an experience, and a journey. I have learnt so much this year from my Writer's Notebook, to my Draft Book, even my planning. My Writer's Notebook is everything to me; it expresses my feelings, my life, and my stories. Sometimes it is hard to get that spark, that idea, but once you get it you feel very good. Every day I have ideas of what to write. One day I will look back at it and I will smile and remember when I lived through that experience. I used to dislike Maths, but I have really improved and now I LOVE it. Everyone makes mistakes and that's good, by making mistakes we learn and improve. Maths is a really important subject for anyone, for me. Drama is my favourite subject because I really like making things up. I enjoy adding a bit of humour in our plays, but if I need to do something else then I will do it. Playing an instrument is one of my favourite things at school; it has helped me with my sight-reading. It would be a dream if I got in the Concert Band in Senior School and be a Cardinal singer.

Harry Jane

I have always enjoyed sharing stories about my life and my family with the students I teach. Taking this one step further and writing with them really sets the tone of your writing lessons to one of excitement, authenticity and value. When you write from the heart and the students see this process in action, then it allows them to trust and follow suit. It makes the writing more personal and gives us choices on what to write and how to write it. Having my own Writer's Notebook, discussing ideas I might have, showing them how I rehearse and plan my writing, actually completing writing with them during class and having them give me feedback is very powerful and hooks the students into writing. Connecting their reading to their writing and encouraging each student to 'read like a writer' helps students collect quotes, words or ideas from their favourite authors. – Connie DiNatale Level Coordinator



References and Resources



