

## YEAR 12 – Creative Writing

The Major Work should be imaginative, investigative, interpretive, analytical or any combination of these. The basis of the Major Work is systemic and rigorous investigation documented in a journal that demonstrates the processes of inquiry, interpretation, and analysis and reflects on the knowledge gained and explains the stages of the composition of the Major Work.

Investigation should include developing critical awareness through published texts. It should also involve talking with writers, reading, interviewing experts, visiting locations, exploring skills.

This workshop will focus on the journal process, talking in depth with a writer and the process of writing an extended short story or a collection of short stories. Students need to bring their writing in progress.

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### Genre

1. Realism
2. Issue based
3. Science Fiction
4. Fantasy
5. Crime
6. Humour
7. Romance
8. Teenage/children's adult/Young Adult
9. Political
10. Mythological/Biblical
11. Fairy Tales
12. Faction
13. Travel
14. Historical
15. Spiritual/religious
16. Other

### Your Short Stories/Novella

1. What is your genre?
2. What is the narrative drive – storyline? Answer this in no more than 3 lines.
3. Is there is a subplot? Describe it briefly.
4. What is the underlying meaning – theme? Answer this is no more than 1-2 lines.
5. Who is the main character? Describe him/her/it.
6. What do you want the reader to experience from your short stories/novella?

### Research

1. Read and document short stories/books in the genre you are interested in.  
Short stories are assessable in literary journals such as Southerly, Westerly, Mattoid,

- Linq, Quadrant, Hermes, most universities have a literary journals.
2. Read books in the genre. For example, Tolkien for fantasy, Georgette Heyer for historical romance, George Orwell for political satire, Moya Simons for kids' humour, Geraldine Brooks for politics and women in the Middle East, Grisham for male crime fiction, Cathy Cole for murder mystery, me (Susanne Gervay) for youth literature dealing with issues .... and other books which are typical of the genre
  3. Research factual information if relevant to your project. For example, when I researched "Butterflies" (HarperCollins), I read medical books on burns, visited the Burn Unit at the Children's Hospital Westmead, cut out relevant newspaper clippings, interviewed doctors, staff and burn victims.
  4. Research the process of writing by talking to authors, historians, academics, writers In a variety of areas ..... as is relevant for your project.

### YEAR 12 PROJECT – FINAL STAGES

#### Reassessment

1. What is your project?
2. What do you want your reader to feel and think? How do you want your reader to react?
3. List your strengths and weaknesses in the following:-
  - Ethos or philosophy
  - Themes and sub themes
  - Characters
  - Language
  - Structure
  - Plots and sub plots
  - Tone
  - Style
  - Beginning
  - Tension
  - Ending
4. Basic check list – all of these may not be applicable to your work:-
  - Have you lost any characters on the way?
  - Is your language consistent?
  - Are your characters well developed and believable?
  - Does your ending really work? Has the story supported that ending?
  - Is your dialogue realistic?
  - Are you overwriting in any sections?
  - Do you have to cut back any parts?

- Are your facts correct?
  - Do parts of your work may you laugh, cry, get angry ... feel?
  - Are there any boring and slow sections?
5. What do you regard as innovative in your piece?
6. Have you got the courage to listen to criticism or do you just want to argue your point until the critic gives up?
- NOT all criticism is valid
  - You must keep your vision
  - However listening to other opinions is important – take what you need from them
  - Often critical comments will enable you to improve your work

Susanne Gervay is an award winning short story writer with stories published in literary journals such as Southerly, Quadrant, Mattoid, Westerley. She is a lecturer (M Ed UNSW) and award winning children's and young adult author. Her best selling *Jack* children's fiction young adult novel "Butterflies" (HarperCollins) are endorsed by organizations including Cancer Council, Life Education, Room to Read, Alannah & Madeline Foundation. Her Y A novel 'That's Why I Wrote This Song' in a unique collaboration of music, text. Lyrics, film (HarperCollins) goes to the heart of young adult culture today.

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