



**The English Teachers
Association of Queensland Inc.**

Providing professional support
and advocacy for English teachers

Embrace the ide(a)s *of* March

March Seminar

Saturday 15th March
Brigidine College, Indooroopilly

etaq.org.au



EMBRACE THE IDE(A)S OF MARCH

As it always does, Term 1 presents new opportunities for imaginative teaching and learning in English classrooms. In 2025, this event happens to be programmed on **the ides of March**. Those familiar with Shakespeare's play will know that this was not good news for Julius Caesar. But it's professional renewal that we have in mind, not political assassination.

So, instead of exhorting you to "**beware the ides of March**", we cordially invite you to **embrace the ide(a)s of March**. We confidently anticipate that the keynote speaker and a smorgasbord selection of supporting workshop / presentation sessions will provide some useful ideas that you can then try out in your own classrooms. These could be another collection of "treasures" to be gleaned from ETAQ events in 2025 which are linked by the theme "**Treasures, tropes, and triumphs**".

Online attendance

The March seminar is principally a face-to-face event; however, ETAQ is committed to providing high quality professional learning for members in rural and regional areas who are unable to attend in person on the day. We will be live streaming the keynote address and one workshop in each session. One other workshop in each session will be recorded and will be made available once editing of the recording is completed.

Schedule

Time	Activity
8:00	Registration
8:40- 9:20	AGM
9:30 – 10:30	Keynote – Jessica Gildersleeve
10:30 – 11:00	Morning tea, perusal of resources and networking
11:10 – 12:05	Workshop session A
12:15 – 1:10	Workshop session B

KEYNOTE

Triggers, Trauma, and Teaching Difficult Texts: Pedagogy and Practice in the Australian Classroom

Professor Jessica Gildersleeve,
University of Southern Qld



As a tertiary educator of close to twenty years, one of the greatest difficulties I experience is getting students to complete their reading. This is compounded when the set texts are 'uncomfortable', 'challenging', or 'triggering', and is particularly the case in teaching Australian literature, which can challenge students' prevailing internal beliefs and external discourses about the world in which they live. This presentation draws on research by our project team investigating trauma-informed teaching and learning practices across disciplines, with a particular focus on literature, as well as helping professions such as education and counselling. It considers why students find some texts difficult, how trauma-informed approaches can be used to develop resilience in learners, and

the simplicity of strategic reflective practice as a learning intervention with ongoing positive impacts for students.

Jessica Gildersleeve is Professor of English Literature and Associate Head of School (Research) at the University of Southern Queensland. She is the President of the Australian University Heads of English, editor of the *Journal of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature*, series editor of *Palgrave Studies in Contemporary Women's Writing*, and a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. She is also the author and editor of several books, including *Screening the Gothic: Contemporary Antipodean Film and Television* (2022), *The Routledge Companion to Australian Literature* (2021) and *Christos Tsiolkas: The Utopian Vision* (2017). In 2024 she and her team were recognised for their work on Trauma-Informed Practice in Higher Education with an Australian Awards for University Teaching Citation.

Registration and Workshop selection

An array of twelve workshops is on offer. Which ones actually run and in which session will be determined by your selections. **However, we do not expect all workshops listed for each session to actually run. Some of these may run once only.**

Registration opens Monday 3 February

Registration CLOSES Friday 7 March

Cost: \$60 for member for in-person attendance. Other prices are on the website.

Conditions of registration

1. Change of persons registered - sometimes schools may need to substitute one teacher for another on their registrations. If so, please notify the change to the Administration Officer so that we can prepare the appropriate Certificate of Participation and Individual program.
2. Many schools prefer to receive an invoice for registrations and pay on that rather than pay at the time of registration. We are happy to offer this convenience, but it must be recognised that **registration commits you to payment**. See also the Cancellation Policy below.
3. Many schools are now insisting on an **Order Number** on the invoice. If your school is one of these, please record it in your online registration.
4. **Cancellation Policy** – If you register for face-to-face attendance and have to cancel your physical attendance, the following will apply:
 - a. Cancel your registration by 23 February and receive a refund of your full registration fee OR transfer over to the online attendance group and receive a refund of the face-to-face component of your registration fee.
 - b. From 24 February to 10 March, you will receive a refund of the face-to-face component of your registration fee.
 - c. From 11 March no refund is possible.
 - d. Cancellation to be by email to adminofficer@etaq.org.au .

Social Media

You can follow along with the ETAQ hashtag on X using the hashtag **#etaq25**.

ETAQ's handle on Threads, X and Instagram is **@ETAQld**.

If you are on Facebook, you can join up to the ETAQ group (www.facebook.com/groups/ETAQLD) and/or like the official ETAQ page (www.facebook.com/ETAQLD)

Workshop selections.

While the offering is 13 workshops in session 1 and 12 in session two, we do not expect that all 25 will be filled. Some will run once only as determined by your selections.

You are asked to choose a first and second choice for session 1 and session 2 and at least one different selection for session 2, so you will be selecting at least 3 different workshops across the program.

No	Title and Presenter	Sess 1	Sess 2
1	“Love Over Eras”: Bridging Shakespeare and Taylor Swift to Engage Modern Audiences – Kristy Dall	√	√
2	Grasp the subject; the words will follow – Jarred Adams	√	√
3	The anagram-synonym game: a puzzle-based, self-contained, engaging and productive lesson activity – Garry Collins	√	√
4	Not 'Greek to me': Ide(a)s for the Literature IA1 – Carley Elliott	√	
5	Managing Choice – Oliver Macpherson	√	√
6	Triumphs, Tribulations, and Transformation: PBL in Middle Years English – Christina Orr	√	√
7	Teasing Out the Writer Within – Nancy Roberge	√	√
8	To Think or Not to Think: Unlocking Curiosity with Thinking Routines – Rachel Partridge	√	√
9	AI in the Classroom: Practical Strategies for All Educators – Thomas Moore and Kelly Allgood	√	√
10	Shakespeare on Their Terms: Using Modern Marketing to Foster Literary Buy-in. – Tracey Daranjo	√	√
11	English Extension Master Class: Jacques Lacan’s Mirror Stage – Christopher Boerdam	√	√
12	Exploring the potential of <i>The Arsonist</i> for English and Essential English – Julie Arnold	√	√
13	Terrific tips for tremendous teaching – June Balfour	√	√

WORKSHOP 1

“Love Over Eras”: Bridging Shakespeare and Taylor Swift to Engage Modern Audiences

Abstract

This presentation explores the innovative Year 9 English unit: “Love Over Eras: Is Taylor Swift the New Shakespeare?”, which integrates classic literature with contemporary music to make timeless themes accessible to modern learners. Over ten weeks, students analyse Shakespearean sonnets alongside Taylor Swift’s lyrics, examining how both artists articulate love through poetic devices and cultural contexts.

The unit fosters analytical skills, cultural awareness, and creativity by comparing Elizabethan and modern societal values, attitudes, and beliefs. Culminating in a feature article, the unit has students synthesise their findings to evaluate the universality of love across eras. The success of this approach, reflected in increased student engagement and deeper appreciation of language’s power, highlights its relevance in reaching contemporary audiences.

This session will share the unit’s objectives, structure, and assessment, along with insights into its execution and outcomes. It connects to broader academic discourse, as the juxtaposition of Swift and Shakespeare gains traction internationally, showcasing how popular culture can reinvigorate literary studies.

Presenter

Kristy Dall is a dedicated and experienced high school teacher specialising in English and Humanities. With over a decade of experience, she has successfully developed and delivered ACARA and QCAA-compliant curricula for Years 7-12 in English, Literature, and Geography. Kristy’s professional expertise includes QCAA senior assessment

endorsement, designing engaging resources, and creating student-focused exemplars to enhance learning outcomes.

WORKSHOP 2

Grasp the subject; the words will follow

Abstract

When our students hear the word "speech", they seem to magically forget every glimmer of understanding of how to speak to another human being. Speech units for our contemporary students seem to be more about parroting the right words from a page, rather than connecting with the audience in front of them. Essentially, they are just reading an essay to an audience (or speaking it into a camera if we’re considering the senior phases). This conundrum calls into question what skills our students are gaining from these kinds of units. We often forget that speaking in this forum requires conscious thought, and that many of both verbal and non-verbal skills need to be explicitly taught to students. In the words of Cato, students need to "grasp the subject" to provide space for them to consider how to present more effectively, trusting that "the words will follow". This workshop aims to provide some activities and skills that you could use to get students practising their public and persuasive speaking skills, both for live and recorded speech units

Presenter

Jarred Adams is the teacher of moderately sized humans at Kedron State High School, teaching English from years 9-12.

Workshop 3

The anagram-synonym game: a puzzle-based, self-contained, engaging and productive lesson activity

Abstract

You're allocated a supervision period at short notice and no work has been left by the class teacher. Or, if work has been set, it is unlikely to keep students productively engaged in real learning. What do you do? This workshop will provide a sure-fire solution. This is a teacher-made resource, not a commercial publication.

This session will present two related word games that students find engaging and which have the potential to expand vocabulary and generate worthwhile learning in the areas of word meanings, dictionary use, spelling and some aspects of grammar. Experience has shown that one of these games can provide worthwhile activity for a junior secondary class for a 70 minute lesson. No photocopying and special resources are required. All you need is the board in a standard classroom

Come to this session and you will gain a useful addition to your store of pedagogical treasures that will mean you need never fear an unexpected supervision period again. The PowerPoint file and a suite of Word files containing a collection of the games will be available to interested participants.

Presenter

A former President of ETAQ, **Garry Collins** was an English Department Head in Queensland state high schools for over 30 years. In addition, he has experience of North American high school classrooms via year-long exchanges in Oregon and Ontario. Now busily retired, he has previously worked part-time as a teacher educator and taught university courses in functional grammar.

Workshop 4

Not 'Greek to me': Ide(a)s for the Literature IA1

Abstract

The Literature IA1 is a complex task that offers challenges for teachers and students familiar with the typical high school literary analysis. This session will be focused on practical strategies for planning and teaching this task and participants will leave with examples and resources that can be immediately implemented in the classroom. While discussion will naturally fall to texts suitable for 10-12 Literature (*Terra Nullius*, *Sweet Country*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and *Catching Teller Crow* may be mentioned), focus will remain on responding to the instrument, and some strategies that are broadly applicable regardless of your text choice.

Presenter

Carley Elliott has been teaching the QCAA senior subject Literature since its adoption in Queensland. She has been involved in all aspects of the syllabuses' implementation, both in schools and with QCAA in a variety of assessor roles. She is a passionate advocate for the incorporation of fantastic First Nations' texts, and for Literature (and literature) being accessible for all students who love reading and writing great texts.

Workshop 5

Managing Choice

Abstract

While we are very capable in adapting assessment to differentiate for level of ability, there is sometimes a reluctance to open up a wide range of choices for students when it comes to engagement. Our tasks may offer 'another topic in consultation with your teacher' but what about another text, or another genre entirely?

This workshop explores the possibilities of choice within existing assessment items, particularly in Years 7 - 9 English. It explores areas where choice may be added, how to maintain equity across student responses, and how to minimise teacher workload when offering choice.

Presenter

Ollie Macpherson has been teaching English and the Arts since 2015 and struggling to make up his mind for a lot longer. Based at Indooroopilly SHS, he also facilitates extra-curricular activities including Dungeons and Dragons, Card Games and eSports clubs, as well as the student newsletter Aspire program.

Workshop 6

Triumphs, Tribulations, and Transformation: PBL in Middle Years English

Abstract

A lack of confidence, risk taking, over scaffolding and a teacher wanting to break free were the key factors in the re-imagining of a Year 8 English classroom. Looking for a way to invigorate the study of narratives, project-based learning (PBL) and entrepreneurship education were used to engage students in understanding the importance of learning English, while emphasising the need for relatable, real-world applications to engage students. What ensued was a series of triumphs and tribulations that tested resilience, challenged perspectives, and gave students permission to be daring in how the power of language can connect, inspire, and transform. From ideating characters, crafting “what if” scenarios, to student choice of genre, triumphs flourished. Yet, tribulations emerged through reading a set text, weekly book clubs, and the ever-present demands of spelling and grammar activities. What initially seemed like a failure – a chaotic project with missteps and unexpected challenges – revealed itself to be a hidden success.

Presenter

Christina Ong currently holds the role of Learning Leader at St Benedict's College, bringing extensive experience in teaching middle and senior years English. With a mission to inspire curiosity and critical thinking, she integrates a diverse range of issues, ideas, and texts, such as politics, music, TV, social media and film into the English classroom. Christina is passionate about using Project-Based Learning (PBL) in the English classroom, to deepen understanding and use real-world context to achieve success in the classroom.

Workshop 7

Teasing Out the Writer Within

Abstract

Journal writing is a key activity for students to improve writing skills, and, let's face it, it's a great way to get them to calm down at the start of a lesson! But how often do students stare off into space because they don't have anything to write about or because they cannot relate to a particular prompt? Additionally, there are only so many times students want to write about what they did on their holiday! In most written tasks, students are increasingly relying on what AI can provide for them and that, if used well, has its place. However, in a written world that has increasingly become copy-paste, the ability to write well, unassisted, may be the skill that sets a person apart in their future working world. So, how can we encourage students to move from passive comprehension to written production? This session will focus on how written *dialogue* skills can improve overall writing.

Presenter

Nancy Roberge has taught English for over 28 years in the USA, Japan, Argentina, New Zealand and Australia at both public and ecumenical schools. She currently teaches English, General English and Essential English at St. Benedicts College where she also teaches Japanese. She is keenly interested in

improving students writing skills, particularly with regards to grammar, sentence structure and analytical writing techniques.

Workshop 8

To Think or Not to Think: Unlocking Curiosity with Thinking Routines

Abstract

Hidden within English classrooms lies one of our greatest pedagogical treasures: students' genuine connections with texts. Yet a persistent trope in our practice remains: students struggle with textual analysis. Despite its potential to spark rich discussion and deeper understanding, many find analysis abstract and intimidating, leading to passive learning or overdependence on teacher guidance.

Through our work at St Peters Lutheran College Springfield, we've uncovered an invaluable teaching approach: Visible Thinking Routines. This structured framework transforms abstract concepts into accessible thinking tools, enabling students to meaningfully engage with texts. These routines serve a dual purpose, scaffolding student understanding while providing teachers with powerful formative assessment insights.

Witnessing our students' evolution from passive recipients to dynamic explorers of meaning represents our greatest triumph. With growing confidence, they now naturally "appreciate, enjoy, analyse, and evaluate the richness and power of the English language" (ACARA, 2023). Most significantly, we've observed these thinking patterns transfer organically across subject areas, validating their broader educational impact.

Join this interactive workshop to experience thinking routines that enhance analytical capabilities. Through practical demonstrations and collaborative exercises, you'll leave with

ready-to-implement strategies and resources for your next English lesson.

Presenter

Rachel Partridge, an experienced Middle and Senior Years English teacher at St Peters Lutheran College Springfield, is passionate about inspiring a love for English across diverse student levels. Dedicated to enhancing textual analysis, she seeks innovative methods and enthusiastically shares her successes. In 2024, Rachel co-presented a workshop at the March Seminar with Sarah Gunn, delivering it twice to excellent feedback and earning encouragement to present again. That same year, Rachel attended a two-day Cultures of Thinking conference led by Ron Ritchhart, which enriched her practice and inspired her to embed thinking routines more into her teaching, benefiting her students.

Workshop 9

AI in the Classroom: Practical Strategies for All Educators

Abstract

In this interactive workshop, participants will explore practical strategies for integrating artificial intelligence into the secondary English classroom to enhance teaching and reduce workload. Drawing from firsthand experiences at Corinda State High School, the session will demonstrate how AI tools can assist in lesson planning, resource creation, and providing personalised student feedback, all while maintaining pedagogical integrity and boosting student engagement.

We will delve into the development of standardised resources, such as poetry booklets, that unify teaching practices and simplify the onboarding process for new staff. The workshop will highlight real-world applications from Corinda SHS's AI Committee initiatives, showcasing how AI supports both teachers and students in achieving better educational outcomes.

Participants will engage in collaborative activities to address common challenges and ethical considerations associated with AI in education. By the end of the session, attendees will have gained actionable insights and practical resources to begin implementing AI solutions in their own classrooms, fostering a more inclusive and forward-thinking learning environment.

Presenters

Thomas Moore and **Kelly Allgood** are experienced English and Humanities educators at Corinda State High School. Thomas, Head of the AI Committee and formerly Year 8 English Coordinator, leads initiatives to enhance teaching and reduce workload through AI. Kelly, a former IB MYP Coordinator, brings extensive Middle Years curriculum expertise from the independent and, more recently, the state sector. Together, they work to unify teaching practices and improve educational outcomes for their students. Their passion for leveraging technology in education drives their commitment to fostering inclusive, innovative learning environments.

Workshop 10

Shakespeare on Their Terms: Using Modern Marketing to Foster Literary Buy-in

Abstract

While Shakespeare holds a treasured place in our cultural heritage, students often view his plays as fossilised relics of a fixed curriculum. But what if we flipped the script?

This session will offer ways Middle School teachers can meet obstacles with Shakespeare head-on. It will demonstrate how to identify student “pain points” and elicit solutions by reframing the challenge of Shakespeare as an opportunity to empower students and tackle engagement obstacles - such as accessibility, relevance, intercultural understanding, and connection - by leveraging

marketing approaches that capture their attention in everyday life. Through this process, students will develop and deliver compelling “literary pitches” tailored to resonate with their peers.

The aim of this session is to explore how teachers can use basic marketing strategies to transform student resistance into authentic engagement by positioning them as advocates for the Bard. Teachers should leave understanding how student-led solutions in the classroom fosters agency, deepens emotional investment, and enhances personal and social capability. By blending teaching artistry with marketing science, teachers can transform the way they engage Gen Z with the Bard's works. Maybe it's not just about teaching Shakespeare - maybe it's about selling it.

Presenter

Hello, I am **Tracey Daranjo**, the Director of Master Key Academy. Over my 22-year teaching career I have taught in Australian and British classrooms, built a tutoring business, facilitated workshops, hosted webinars, contributed to my YouTube channel and have written educational resources. I have always had a passion for reimagining how students interact with English, especially canonical texts, and I have ardently sought to connect these works to their own worlds and lived experiences. It is a daily joy to bring fresh perspectives to literature and infuse my teaching and resources with creativity, beauty and - occasionally - a touch of magic.

Workshop 11

English Extension Master Class: Jacques Lacan's Mirror Stage

Abstract

English Extension Master Classes are an opportunity for English teachers to deepen their understanding of literary theory by engaging in the critical reading and discussion of specific concepts or arguments. This

session is the latest in a series of ETAQ workshops focusing on a single concept or topic from the field of literary theory and including a consideration of a short reading. Each session will involve some background information regarding the set topic followed by a tutorial-style group discussion.

This session will focus on Lacan's theorisation of subjectivity and the registers of the symbolic, the imaginary, and the real through an exploration of Lacan's concept of the mirror stage. We will unpack this concept and engage in a close reading of some excerpts from Lacan's 'The Mirror Stage as Formative of the I Function' from his *Écrits*. In our group discussion, we will consider the implications of Lacan's approach to subjectivity and how it can be used by students in developing responses to the IA2, IA3 and EA in English Extension.

Presenter

Christopher Boerdam has been a Head of English in Queensland schools for sixteen years and has been teaching English & Literature Extension for just over twenty years. He was involved in the writing panel for the Literature syllabus and is currently a Lead Endorser (English), Lead Confirmer (Literature), and in 2024 was Lead Marker for External Assessment (English & Literature Extension and Literature) and Chief Marker for Literature External Assessment. He is interested in literary studies, literary theory, and philosophy, and recently completed his PhD studies on Slavoj Žižek's dialectical materialism. Christopher currently works as Learning Area Leader for English at St Aidan's Anglican Girls School, where he teaches English, Literature, and English & Literature Extension.

Workshop 12

Exploring the potential of *The Arsonist* for English and Essential English

Abstract

"Why all these fires, why all these gliding ghosts?"

Julius Caesar Act 1, scene iii.

In *Julius Caesar*, Cassius interprets the strange and unnatural occurrences he has witnessed, like fires and ghostly apparitions, as ominous signs. In this workshop, we will explore how Chloe Hooper's *The Arsonist: Mind on Fire* offers possibilities for interpreting meaning about a significant historical Australian event: the Black Saturday bushfires in 2009. We will connect important syllabus elements including event, identity, concept and place. I want to convince you to teach or at least read this fabulous book - which is wonderfully structured, beautifully written and easy to read. It has much potential for learning about perspectives and representations in very concrete ways. You'll come away with plenty of departure points; that is, examples of how *The Arsonist* could be a springboard for responding in Essential English (especially IA4) or one of the internal assessments in English.

Presenter

Julie Arnold is an educator of preservice English teachers at QUT. Her research interests are in accessible assessment practices, currently how formative assessment works differently in English and mathematics. Other research and teaching interests are in English curriculum, especially building teacher linguistic subject knowledge for writing instruction. Before and beyond university, Julie was a Teacher and Head of English. She co-authors Cambridge's *Essential English for Queensland Schools* with Rhiannon French, Enoch Byrne, and Lynda Wall. In her role as Vice President of the English Teachers Association of Queensland, Julie takes an active interest in instructional leadership and curriculum development.

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Workshop 13

Terrific tips for tremendous teaching

Abstract:

Whether you are new to teaching or new to teaching English, this workshop will fill your teaching tool-box with practical activities and

ideas to enhance your English classroom, help you pivot like a pro and enhance your English teacher well-being.

Presenter

Dr June Balfour has been teaching and leading for more than 30 years. Her passions are supporting early career teachers and teachers new to teaching English, helping them acquire the skills to build longevity in the English classroom and in their teaching career.

We will be filming.

Some presentations during the day will be filmed for uploading to the members only area of the website and images of some attendees may be captured in the process. Images of individuals and groups may also be captured at registration and at morning tea for posting on our website or on social media.

If you want your image NOT to be captured, let us know when you register