Stories from the Shed:

Connecting Communities, Histories and Legacies

A Curriculum Guide for Upper Primary / Junior Secondary Programs

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Introduction

This resource has been created to complement and support the use of the *Stories from the Shed* collection of personal stories written by members of the Mount Gravatt Men's Shed. Selected Content Descriptions from the Australian Curriculum in English have been used to target learning experiences, as well as keeping these flexible and able to be adapted and differentiated to suit the unique needs to individual classes, teachers and students.

A significant goal of the *Stories from the Shed* is to document and share the notable and diverse lived experiences and lessons in life accumulated recalled by members of the Mount Gravatt Men's Shed community. Taking the form of personal memoirs, anecdotes, and biographies, they are reflective in nature and provide a useful stimulus for examining this form of personal writing. The stories also provide a valuable opportunity to engage with the stories and experiences of members of the local Brisbane community. These stories may resonate, develop understanding, or foster students making connections between the ideas, experiences and lessons of the author and those of themselves or people in their own lives.

Personal and biographical writing can include a number of text types and allows writers to develop their own style - an authorial voice. Memoirs, of varying length, are a common form of biographical writing and one through which students can develop their own voice as a writer, as well as develop critical reflective skills. In appropriate contexts, the sharing or the collaboration in writing and editing of these texts can also contribute to a classroom community. Further detail about language and communication choices appropriate to personal/biographical writing is provided in the resource.

Claire, P., & Rogers, S. *Stories from the Shed: Connecting Communities, Histories and Legacies: A Curriculum Guide for Upper Primary/Junior Secondary Programs.* (2021). As part of the series, *"Stories from the Shed"*, Mount Gravatt Men's Shed: www.mtgravattmensshed.org.au

Australian Curriculum Links
Cross Curriculum Priorities

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures
Australia is privileged to be home to the oldest continuing living cultures in the world, within which the tradition of storytelling is a powerful means of expression, memory, understanding and engagement in relationships with land, culture and community. This cross-curriculum priority emphasises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Identities and these are developed through developing knowledge and understanding of Country/Place, Culture, and People, and the interconnectedness of these elements.

This resource offers students and teachers the scope for community engagement with local Elders or members of the school community to share their stories, reflect on learnings, and enrich understandings of the strength, resilience, diversity and richness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Storytelling traditions (including oral narrative) occupy an important place in First Nations Cultures, and provide opportunities to develop appreciation and understanding of the cultural and spiritual connections to people and place, as well as unique histories and personal stories documenting significant events in the lives of individuals and communities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are advised that stories from the collection may contain images of, references to, and the names of people who are deceased.

Adapted from: https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/cross-curriculum-priorities/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-histories-and-cultures/ (for further information)

Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia
Australia is part of the Asian-Pacific region, and 'Asia is the most populous region in the world', home to a number of dynamic, complex and diverse societies. Australia's engagement with Asia and the Asian region is evident in the political, economic, strategic and cultural exchanges and interactions. This cross-curriculum priority emphasises students learning about the diversity of the Asian region and the cultures, beliefs, environments of Asian societies, and connections between these communities, the region, and the world.

Some of the stories in this resource include detail and reflections of cross-cultural exchanges within the Asian region, and the resource offers opportunities for community engagement or with members of the school community to contribute stories using the resources provided. Teachers may curate further texts and memoirs written by Australians with Asian heritage suitable to this cross-curriculum priority.

Adapted from: https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/cross-curriculum-priorities/asia-and-australia-s-engagement-with-asia/ (for further information)

Sustainability

This cross-curriculum priority emphasises the development of knowledge, values, skills and views that facilitate sustainable patterns of living in communities, including individual and community actions and mindsets.

A number of stories in the *Stories from the Shed* collection share detail or reflection on interactions with the natural world or economic, social and ecological systems and the way these interactions and experiences have shaped individuals. Similarly, the resource provides opportunities for teachers and students to reflect on a variety of subject matter that fosters an appreciation for sustainable futures, world views and systems.

Adapted from: https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/cross-curriculum-priorities/sustainability/ (for further information)

General Capabilities

	Using the *Stories from the Shed* and supporting resources:
Literacy	• Students develop their understanding of how language is used to create and shape meaning in the context of reflective, biographical writing. They can engage with critical reading and writing strategies to develop their understanding and skills in terms of the grammatical, semantic and contextual components of language, as well as applying understandings of audience and purpose shaping language choices.
Numeracy	• Students have opportunities to develop numeracy concepts when engaging with stories or writing stories involving spatial or quantitative elements, for example in providing description about geographic details with stories and reflections. Likewise, in recalling events, students may draw on sequencing skills and developing timelines accurately reflecting the spatial distance between events.
Information and Communication Technology (ICT Capability	• Students may develop their ICT skills in word-processing applications, as well as extension opportunities that include hybrid or multi-modal elements, or further research into aspects of existing stories from the collection. Such extension opportunities may also involve the use of ICT applications as tools for investigation and creativity.
Critical and Creative Thinking	• Students are encouraged to think critically about the role of significant people, places and events in their own lives, as well as the impact of significant events on the lives of others, as reflected in the collection, while also considering personal reflective texts as sources of knowledge. Students may also develop creative thinking when approaching their own and other reflections by considering the possibilities of language as expression.
Personal and Social Capability	• Students develop an appreciation for language as a form of personal expression and identity, as well as positioning of identities withing social contexts. They can also consider and understand the role of language in personal interactions, within various social contexts and of the perspectives and insights offered by others.
Ethical Understanding	• Students have opportunities to enhance their capacity and understanding towards ethics and ethical responsibilities by reflecting on events or memories of significance to them, as well as reading stories of others. In doing so, students can engage with ethical concepts such as equality, empowerment, inclusion, respect, individual and social behaviours, fairness, making judgements and ethical decision-making.
Intercultural Understanding	• Students engage with a variety of perspectives and experiences from a variety of cultural backgrounds, and have opportunities to reflect on new knowledge and understanding about the significance of people, places and events for different individuals, communities and groups. In reflecting and sharing their own stories, students may also develop understanding of the cultural diversity and richness of experience in their communities.

Adapted from https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/ and linked pages.

English

(from: https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/english/)

	Year 5 English	Year 6 English	Year 7 English	Year 8 English	Year 9 English
LANGUAGE					
Language for interaction	Understand that patterns of language interaction vary across social contexts and types of texts and that they help to signal social roles and relationships (ACELA1501 - Scootle) Understand how to move beyond making bare assertions and take account of differing perspectives and points of view (ACELA1502 - Scootle)	Understand that strategies for interaction become more complex and demanding as levels of formality and social distance increase (ACELA1516 - Scootle) Understand the uses of objective and subjective language and bias (ACELA1517 - Scootle)	Understand how accents, styles of speech and idioms express and create personal and social identities(ACELA1529 - Scootle) Understand how language is used to evaluate texts and how evaluations about a text can be substantiated by reference to the text and other sources (ACELA1782 - Scootle)	Understand how conventions of speech adopted by communities influence the identities of people in those communities (ACELA1541 - Scootle) Understand how rhetorical devices are used to persuade and how different layers of meaning are developed through the use of metaphor, irony and parody (ACELA1542 - Scootle)	Understand that roles and relationships are developed and challenged through language and interpersonal skills (ACELA1551 - Scootle) Investigate how evaluation can be expressed directly and indirectly using devices, for example allusion, evocative vocabulary and metaphor (ACELA1552 - Scootle)
Text structure and organisation	Understand that the starting point of a sentence gives prominence to the message in the text and allows for prediction of how the text will unfold (ACELA1505 - Scootle) Understand how the grammatical category of possessives is signalled through apostrophes and how to use apostrophes with common and proper nouns (ACELA1506 - Scootle)	Understand that cohesive links can be made in texts by omitting or replacing words (ACELA1520 - Scootle) Understand the uses of commas to separate clauses (ACELA1521 - Scootle)	Understand that the coherence of more complex texts relies on devices that signal text structure and guide readers, for example overviews, initial and concluding paragraphs and topic sentences, indexes or site maps or breadcrumb trails for online texts (ACELA1763 - Scootle) Understand the use of punctuation to support meaning in complex sentences with prepositional phrases and embedded clauses (ACELA1532 - Scootle)	Understand how cohesion in texts is improved by strengthening the internal structure of paragraphs through the use of examples, quotations and substantiation of claims (ACELA1766 - Scootle) Understand the use of punctuation conventions, including colons, semicolons, dashes and brackets in formal and informal texts (ACELA1544 - Scootle)	Understand that authors innovate with text structures and language for specific purposes and effects(ACELA1553 - Scootle) Compare and contrast the use of cohesive devices in texts, focusing on how they serve to signpost ideas, to make connections and to build semantic associations between ideas (ACELA1770 - Scootle) Understand how punctuation is used along with layout and font variations in constructing texts for different audiences and purposes (ACELA1556 - Scootle)
Expressing and developing ideas	Understand the difference between main and subordinate clauses and that a complex sentence involves at least one subordinate clause (ACELA1507 - Scootle) Understand how noun groups/phrases and adjective groups/phrases can be expanded in a variety of ways to provide a fuller description of the person, place, thing or idea (ACELA1508 - Scootle)	Investigate how complex sentences can be used in a variety of ways to elaborate, extend and explain ideas (ACELA1522 - Scootle) Understand how ideas can be expanded and sharpened through careful choice of verbs, elaborated tenses and a range of adverb groups/phrases (ACELA1523 - Scootle) Investigate how vocabulary choices, including evaluative language can express shades of meaning, feeling and opinion (ACELA1525 - Scootle)	Recognise and understand that subordinate clauses embedded within noun groups/phrases are a common feature of written sentence structures and increase the density of information (ACELA1534 - Scootle) Understand how modality is achieved through discriminating choices in modal verbs, adverbs, adjectives and nouns (ACELA1536 - Scootle)	Analyse and examine how effective authors control and use a variety of clause structures, including clauses embedded within the structure of a noun group/phrase or clause (ACELA1545 - Scootle) Recognise that vocabulary choices contribute to the specificity, abstraction and style of texts (ACELA1547 - Scootle)	Recognise that vocabulary choices contribute to the specificity, abstraction and style of texts (ACELA1547 - Scootle) Identify how vocabulary choices contribute to specificity, abstraction and stylistic effectiveness(ACELA1561 - Scootle)

	Year 5 English	Year 6 English	Year 7 English	Year 8 English	Year 9 English
LITERATURE					
Literature and context	Identify aspects of literary texts that convey details or information about particular social, cultural and historical contexts (ACELT1608 - Scootle)	Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1613 - Scootle)	Identify and explore ideas and viewpoints about events, issues and characters represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts(ACELT1619 - Scootle)	Explore the ways that ideas and viewpoints in literary texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts may reflect or challenge the values of individuals and groups (ACELT1626 - Scootle)	Interpret and compare how representations of people and culture in literary texts are drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1633 - Scootle)
Responding to literature	Present a point of view about particular literary texts using appropriate metalanguage, and reflecting on the viewpoints of others (ACELT1609 - Scootle) Use metalanguage to describe the effects of ideas, text structures and language features on particular audiences (ACELT1795 - Scootle)	Analyse and evaluate similarities and differences in texts on similar topics, themes or plots (ACELT1614 - Scootle) Identify and explain how choices in language, for example modality, emphasis, repetition and metaphor, influence personal response to different texts (ACELT1615 - Scootle)	Reflect on ideas and opinions about characters, settings and events in literary texts, identifying areas of agreement and difference with others and justifying a point of view (ACELT1620 - Scootle) Compare the ways that language and images are used to create character, and to influence emotions and opinions in different types of texts (ACELT1621 - Scootle)	Understand and explain how combinations of words and images in texts are used to represent particular groups in society, and how texts position readers in relation to those groups (ACELT1628 - Scootle) Recognise and explain differing viewpoints about the world, cultures, individual people and concerns represented in texts (ACELT1807 - Scootle)	Present an argument about a literary text based on initial impressions and subsequent analysis of the whole text (ACELT1771 - Scootle) Explore and reflect on personal understanding of the world and significant human experience gained from interpreting various representations of life matters in texts (ACELT1635 - Scootle)
Examining literature	Recognise that ideas in literary texts can be conveyed from different viewpoints, which can lead to different kinds of interpretations and responses (ACELT1610 - Scootle) Understand, interpret and experiment with sound devices and imagery, including simile, metaphor and personification, in narratives, shape poetry, songs, anthems and odes (ACELT1611 - Scootle)	Identify, describe, and discuss similarities and differences between texts, including those by the same author or illustrator, and evaluate characteristics that define an author's individual style (ACELT1616 - Scootle) Identify the relationship between words, sounds, imagery and language patterns in narratives and poetry such as ballads, limericks and free verse (ACELT1617 - Scootle	Recognise and analyse the ways that characterisation, events and settings are combined in narratives, and discuss the purposes and appeal of different approaches (ACELT1622 - Scootle)	Recognise, explain and analyse the ways literary texts draw on readers' knowledge of other texts and enable new understanding and appreciation of aesthetic qualities (ACELT1629 - Scootle) Identify and evaluate devices that create tone, for example humour, wordplay, innuendo and parody in poetry, humorous prose, drama or visual texts(ACELT1630 - Scootle)	Analyse texts from familiar and unfamiliar contexts, and discuss and evaluate their content and the appeal of an individual author's literary style (ACELT1636 - Scootle) Investigate and experiment with the use and effect of extended metaphor, metonymy, allegory, icons, myths and symbolism in texts, for example poetry, short films, graphic novels, and plays on similar themes(ACELT1637 - Scootle)
Creating Literature	Create literary texts that experiment with structures, ideas and stylistic features of selected authors (ACELT1798 - Scootle)	Create literary texts that adapt or combine aspects of texts students have experienced in innovative ways (ACELT1618 - Scootle) Experiment with text structures and language features and their effects in creating literary texts, for example, using imagery, sentence variation, metaphor and word choice (ACELT1800 - Scootle)	Create literary texts that adapt stylistic features encountered in other texts, for example, narrative viewpoint, structure of stanzas, contrast and juxtaposition (ACELT1625 - Scootle) Experiment with text structures and language features and their effects in creating literary texts, for example, using rhythm, sound effects, monologue, layout, navigation and colour (ACELT1805 - Scootle)	Create literary texts that draw upon text structures and language features of other texts for particular purposes and effects (ACELT1632 - Scootle) Experiment with particular language features drawn from different types of texts, including combinations of language and visual choices to create new texts (ACELT1768 - Scootle)	Create literary texts, including hybrid texts, that innovate on aspects of other texts, for example by using parody, allusion and appropriation (ACELT1773 - Scootle) Experiment with the ways that language features, image and sound can be adapted in literary texts, for example the effects of stereotypical characters and settings, the playfulness of humour and pun and the use of hyperlink (ACELT1638 - Scootle)

	Year 5 English	Year 6 English	Year 7 English	Year 8 English	Year 9 English
LITERACY					
Interacting with others	Use interaction skills, for example paraphrasing, questioning and interpreting non-verbal cues and choose vocabulary and vocal effects appropriate for different audiences and purposes (ACELY1796 - Scootle)	Use interaction skills, varying conventions of spoken interactions such as voice volume, tone, pitch and pace, according to group size, formality of interaction and needs and expertise of the audience (ACELY1816 - Scootle)	Use interaction skills when discussing and presenting ideas and information, selecting body language, voice qualities and other elements, (for example music and sound) to add interest and meaning (ACELY1804 - Scootle)	Use interaction skills for identified purposes, using voice and language conventions to suit different situations, selecting vocabulary, modulating voice and using elements such as music, images and sound for specific effects (ACELY1808 - Scootle)	Use interaction skills to present and discuss an idea and to influence and engage an audience by selecting persuasive language, varying voice tone, pitch and pace, and using elements such as music and sound effects (ACELY1811 - Scootle)
Interpreting, analysing, evaluating	Identify and explain characteristic text structures and language features used in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts to meet the purpose of the text (ACELY1701 - Scootle) Use comprehension strategies to analyse information, integrating and linking ideas from a variety of print and digital sources (ACELY1703 - Scootle)	Analyse how text structures and language features work together to meet the purpose of a text (ACELY1711 - Scootle) Use comprehension strategies to interpret and analyse information and ideas, comparing content from a variety of textual sources including media and digital texts (ACELY1713 - Scootle) Analyse strategies authors use to influence readers (ACELY1801 - Scootle)	Analyse and explain the ways text structures and language features shape meaning and vary according to audience and purpose (ACELY1721 - Scootle) Use comprehension strategies to interpret, analyse and synthesise ideas and information, critiquing ideas and issues from a variety of textual sources (ACELY1723 - Scootle)	Analyse and evaluate the ways that text structures and language features vary according to the purpose of the text and the ways that referenced sources add authority to a text (ACELY1732 - Scootle) Use comprehension strategies to interpret and evaluate texts by reflecting on the validity of content and the credibility of sources, including finding evidence in the text for the author's point of view (ACELY1734 - Scootle)	Interpret, analyse and evaluate how different perspectives of issue, event, situation, individuals or groups are constructed to serve specific purposes in texts (ACELY1742 - Scootle) Use comprehension strategies to interpret and analyse texts, comparing and evaluating representations of an event, issue, situation or character in different texts(ACELY1744 - Scootle)
Creating texts	Re-read and edit student's own and others' work using agreed criteria for text structures and language features (ACELY1705 - Scootle) Develop a handwriting style that is becoming legible, fluent and automatic (ACELY1706 - Scootle) Use a range of software including word processing programs with fluency to construct, edit and publish written text, and select, edit and place visual, print and audio elements (ACELY1707 - Scootle)	Re-read and edit students' own and others' work using agreed criteria and explaining editing choices (ACELY1715 - Scootle) Develop a handwriting style that is legible, fluent and automatic and varies according to audience and purpose (ACELY1716 - Scootle) Use a range of software, including word processing programs, learning new functions as required to create texts (ACELY1717 - Scootle)	Edit for meaning by removing repetition, refining ideas, reordering sentences and adding or substituting words for impact (ACELY1726 - Scootle) Consolidate a personal handwriting style that is legible, fluent and automatic and supports writing for extended periods (ACELY1727 - Scootle) Use a range of software, including word processing programs, to confidently create, edit and publish written and multimodal texts (ACELY1728 - Scootle)	Create imaginative, informative and persuasive texts that raise issues, report events and advance opinions, using deliberate language and textual choices, and including digital elements as appropriate (ACELY1736 - Scootle) Experiment with text structures and language features to refine and clarify ideas to improve the effectiveness of students' own texts (ACELY1810 - Scootle) Use a range of software, including word processing programs, to create, edit and publish texts imaginatively (ACELY1738 - Scootle)	Create imaginative, informative and persuasive texts that present a point of view and advance or illustrate arguments, including texts that integrate visual, print and/or audio features (ACELY1746 - Scootle) Review and edit students' own and others' texts to improve clarity and control over content, organisation, paragraphing, sentence structure, vocabulary and audio/visual features (ACELY1747 - Scootle) Use a range of software, including word processing programs, flexibly and imaginatively to publish texts(ACELY1748 - Scootle)

PART ONE: ENGAGING WITH STORIES FROM THE SHED

Personal reflective and biographical writing
Learning intention:
- *Students develop their knowledge and understanding of the purpose and content of personal reflective writing.*

Notes

Personal reflective writing can take many forms, but a common feature is the notion of reflecting on issues, people, places, events or items of significance to the author. Given that individuals have a variety of experiences and form connections (in varying patterns) with the world around them, the topic(s) of piece of reflective writing might differ in scope and scale. The *Stories from the Shed* illustrate this scope and scale, and teachers are encouraged to select stories, or extracts from within, that suit the unique circumstances and learning intentions for their classes.

Reflective writing often includes a process of remembering, recollecting and recounting the personal experiences with which individuals engaged. Moreover, this process might include analysing and evaluating the reactions, thoughts, feelings, behaviours, and conversations that were involved in order to learn from them or make comments about how they have shaped the individual. In reflective texts, individuals may include information about the people, places, and events that have shaped their lives, or their understanding of a particular topic. It is important to note that reflective texts often have an 'anchoring idea' or focus that helps tie reflections together, especially if it is a longer text.

Individuals, friends, families and communities might reflect or share reflections for a variety of reasons, including as a mechanism to celebrate and remember events from the past, commemorate individuals or events, avoid making similar mistakes, for growth/development, self-discovery, to share experiences, and fulfil human curiosity with an intent to learn.

Activity	Why?

• Students complete a ***think, pair, share*** routine to deepen their knowledge about reflection using the following prompting questions:
    ○ What is reflection?
    ○ Why do people reflect?
    ○ Where do we see or read reflection? (Think broadly)
    ○ What do people reflect on or about?
	The goal here is to generate collective knowledge and understanding about reflection and orient students to this type of thinking and writing.

• Facilitate a **class brainstorm** about the ideas of *memory* and *reflection* using a ***concept map/mind-map*** graphic organiser.
    ○ Prompt students with the questions above if needed.
    ○ This could be completed by encouraging students to think about the <u>associated ideas and words</u> for each prompt.
    ○ Use these associations to extend the thoughts and guide students to make connections between their associations
    ○ At the conclusion of the brainstorm, invite students to write their own understanding of both memory and reflection in 25 words or less for each.
	This activity can help students form connections between their ideas by visualising the relationships between concepts and their associations. It can also help students synthesise this information to demonstrate understanding.

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Characteristics of autobiographical, reflective writing, and memoirs

Learning intention

- *Students develop their knowledge and understanding of the textual characteristics of biographical writing, including content, structure, language and style.*

Notes

The material here is some brief reference material teachers might use or adapt to guide students through some key features of personal stories, reflection and memoirs. *It is not definitive* and can be adapted for use with various classes as per the needs of individual teachers and students.

Short autobiographical writing and memoirs *Reference material*	
Content and characteristics	- Reflective text type, meaning these texts focus on subject matter related to the memories, achievements, learnings, events (that can vary in scope and scale), people, places, and so on, that have influenced individuals, shaping their life and possibly even sense of identity, values, and purpose. - Personal stories, told from 1st person perspective. - More reflective autobiographical writing and memoirs aim to emphasise the experience/s and reactions to the topic over the topic itself, however, personal stories may cover the subject in detail with brief reflection. - Emotions, feelings, thoughts, reactions to the specific topic or subject matter may form a significant part of the text/story, as well as content related to the learnings and impacts of the topics. - Subject matter is emphasised using different forms of description and descriptive language. - Autobiographies generally account for a whole life, whereas a memoir is more focused in scope and scale. - Purpose and audience - Can vary depending on context, but is commonly about informing audiences about the subject matter and the author's life/experiences. - Other purposes may include to inspire, persuade or entertain, depending on context and content. - Reflections/memoirs may also be for limited readers, or might be personal records and reflections to document experiences, such as for journaling. Adapted from: Housden, E. (2013). *Senior text types: A writing guide for students 2nd Ed.* Farr Books. Lattimer, H. (2003). *Thinking through genre* (p. 45). Portland, Me.: Stenhouse Publishers. MasterClass. (2020, November 08). How to Write an Autobiography: 8 Steps for Writing Your Autobiography - 2021. Retrieved January 14, 2021, from https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-write-an-autobiography#what-is-an-autobiography
Structure and organisation	- Overall organisation is commonly chronological, however thematic and conceptual organisation might be used. - Variable and influenced by length, possibly divided by chapters or sections and sub-sections.

	- Structure and organisation can both be influenced by purpose. - Narrative structure might be followed to develop a story (e.g. orientation, body, resolution), with key reflection occurring in summary. - Time markers and connectives help orientate readers and show passing of time (e.g. *meanwhile, earlier, a few days later...*) - A compelling opening might be used to engage readers/audiences and establish the subject matter of the story/reflection. - Key turning points in the event or story might be used to help organise information. - Generally written formally, with complete sentences, though sentence structures may be varied for effects and to express unique voice of the author. Adapted from: Housden, E. (2013). *Senior text types: A writing guide for students 2nd Ed.* Farr Books. MasterClass. (2020, November 08). How to Write an Autobiography: 8 Steps for Writing Your Autobiography - 2021. Retrieved January 14, 2021, from https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-write-an-autobiography#what-is-an-autobiography

Language elements	Purposeful use of language to communicate story and engage readers, depending on the subject matter and context: including
	- 1st person perspective
	- Use of an appropriate tense (e.g. past when recalling events)
	- Formality of language is typical, though variations may be suitable for personal reflective texts and context of publication or readership. Autobiographies are typically formal, but language is used to reflect the author's voice and style.
	- Variations in the use of the following can enhance details and explanations of events, people, reflections and effects:
	    o Descriptive language choices, (e.g. verbs and adjectives)
	    o Figurative language
	    o Emotive language (reference or appeals to emotions)
	    o Sensory details (language to show the five senses)
	    o Dialogue or reported speech
	- Potential use of idiom or vocabulary and language that reflects the identity and personal style of the of the author and their purpose and audience.
	
	Adapted from:
	Housden, E. (2013). *Senior text types: A writing guide for students 2nd Ed.* Farr Books.

References
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Lattimer, H. (2003). *Thinking through genre* (p. 45). Portland, Me.: Stenhouse Publishers.
MasterClass. (2020, November 08). How to Write an Autobiography: 8 Steps for Writing Your Autobiography - 2021. Retrieved January 14, 2021, from https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-write-an-autobiography#what-is-an-autobiography

Examining sample stories, excerpts and extracts from the collection

Learning intention:
- *Students develop their knowledge and understanding of the stylistic purposes of biographical writing, including purpose, pacing, authorial style and themes.*
- *Students interact with the biographical stories of real people and identify similarities and differences in experience, learn lessons from the experiences of others and apply*

Notes: (teachers might engage with other stories to find suitable or engaging excerpts or stories from the collection to use with their classes)

Activity	Why?
Students read the account by an author of a **moment that changed their life, perspective or behaviour, or provided them with new insights into aspects of their community, or society more broadly**. Students analyse tales for text structures that build suspense and gravity about the content and subject matter. A number of the *Stories from the Shed* include narrative detail about life experiences. - Suggested *Stories from the Shed*: *I Joined the Navy* - John S Westwood *Memories of Ships* - Andrew Wilson *Experiences of Culture and Language: Story 1* and *Story 4.3* - Kim Tvede - Students identify sections of text which generate interest and invite the reader to continue reading, particularly: phrases that build **suspense**, **foreshadow**, provide **detailed or immersive detail** and/or provide **profundity**. - Brainstorm possible life changes with students: e.g. moving house, migrating (state/country); gaining/losing a pet, friend, relative or object; winning/losing an event or competition; recognition for a service, deed or achievement. - Read one of the *Stories from the Shed* (or students could be grouped and given a variety of *Stories from the Shed*) and ask students to identify the life changes or events in the story and discuss the way the author writes about the influence of each of these. Discuss that changes can be shades of good, bad or neutral, and may have long term consequences that change this: e.g. a move of locality, which at first seems bad, may lead to a good outcome after time. Also discuss that some changes, events or experiences can be traumatic. Highlight that teachers, guidance counsellors, administrators and trusted adults are always available to privately listen and identify those people that can help best.	The goal is for students to identify that good text encourages the reader to continue reading, and that authors can use specific literary tools to encourage this.

Students read the account of **an event which the author will never forget**. Such a story **could be based upon a success, recognition, a brush with fame or another memorable event**. Some of the *Stories from the Shed* share detail about the **interactions between people and cultures**, as well as significant events that have shaped the author's life path. Students analyse the source for • Emotive text • Detailed and/or evocative descriptions and expressions • Suggested *Story from the Shed*: *Be Proud* – John S Westwood	The goal is for students to learn that emotive and descriptive language makes writing relatable and approachable, and that experiences can be explained in ways which makes the reader feel that they are part of the event themselves.
Students read an account by an author which has **a distinct lesson or moral**. Some of these stories may take the form of **observations**, or **parable**. Students apply such thought to their own lives. • Students explore the concept of a 'moral' • Students examine the structure of a moralistic tale or parable: introduction (perhaps involving foreshadowing), complication, climax, consequence and lesson. • suggested *Story from the Shed*: *A brief background of a Danish-Australian Migrant* – Poul Tvede	Students learn the importance of passing on lessons to others, through the relating of experiences. Students develop an appreciation for the experiences of others, particularly elders.
Focused around light-hearted tomfoolery, students read accounts of Author's **experiences with crazy plans, mix-ups, narrow escapes and coming off second-best**. Students analyse tales for text structures that build suspense and humour. Students look at how authors set up humour, whether by: • plays on words • short, snappy prose • elaborate, built-up jokes • wry humour • sarcasm • exaggeration • a combination of the above, or other styles. • Suggested *Stories from the Shed*: *Why I don't ride horses* – Kim Tvede *The Way We Were: Magpies* – Bert Savage	Students understand that humour is one of the greatest mediums for sustaining interest and winning your audience. It is also the greatest way to build positive connections between people.

After choosing a story to focus on, **make contact with the author and arrange an interview**. As a class, students read the account, and devise questions to find out more about the tale and its context. A class interview is conducted, either face to face (bringing a local author to the school) or via video link. Questions could be forwarded to the author ahead of time to aid in answering (this could also avoid awkward or difficult lines of questioning). Questions could involve asking for: • further details around particular events or happenstance • information about people within the account • insight into thoughts, feelings or observations • what happened next	Students make a connection with the community and also gain personal insight into events. Likewise, authors become connected with their community and pass on their experiences, wisdom and insight to others that may make use of them.
Many of the stories provided use language that students may not have encountered. This gives the opportunity to play with language, **finding alternate ways to convey meaning** in their own writing. • Students make a list of unknown words from a text • Students use a thesaurus or internet search to define terms, and find other synonyms (and antonyms as an extension) • Discuss the use of particular words and their appropriate use, including context, audience and writing style.	Students gain access to words they have not used or encountered before, and practice the use of such words.
Elder's Stories (Differentiated Task) Students create a series of questions to **conduct an interview with a significant adult in their family or an adult mentor**, and write an account of an event in their life. This process could include • recording using either video or sound recorders • making notes and plot points • fleshing out the story • proof-reading it with the family member.	Some students may find it difficult to connect with the life events of strangers, or have no interest others beyond their own sphere of experience. Using a familiar family member makes this process easier.

PART TWO: WRITING PERSONAL REFLECTIVE STORIES

Reflection and writing prompts

Learning intention:

- *Students reflect to identify, explore and explain topics (related to people, places, and events) of significance to them at this point in their life.*

Notes

These activities are a collection of prompts that can help students reflect upon the people, places, and events that are, or have been, significant to them, as well as the ideas, objects, or themes that may relate to these. Teachers could select or adapt any of these to suit the specific needs and nuances of their students, and support these activities with some of the thinking organisers that have been indicated throughout this resource.

It is important to note that reflection can be challenging for some students both as a cognition and in terms of potential subject matter, and teachers are encouraged to set parameters based on their knowledge of their students and ensure class protocols are in place for the safety of students. This should be informed by the specific age group of students, as well as procedures and processes in place within schools. Modelling these activities to students is one way that teachers might help facilitate appropriate reflection, as well as setting an expectation of how 'deep' reflections might be. These activities do not require or expect students to engage with unsettling subject matter beyond their level or maturity and teachers should ensure this is clear in how they establish and explain activities to students.

Activity	Why?
Students complete an individual **Y-chart** with each section representing the groups of 'people', 'places', and 'events' that students feel are important to them or have had an impact on them at this point in their lives. • After a short brainstorm/listing of these responses, students select one of their responses and explore this further by listing and detailing *why* this is important to them and how they feel it has impacted them. • Teachers could use prompting questions with 'how 'and 'why' stems to guide students.	The goal is for students to generate a list of possible reflective topics. The Y-chart can help organise different categories or groups and for students to see the breadth of possible topics.
Students are given a time limit (e.g. 7 minutes) to write a **short autobiography**. • Students then select one detail from their original response and have another 6 minutes to write about this detail only. It might be a person, an object, and particular memory, place, event and so on. • Guide students through a brief reflection about that they notice about the differences in the two responses, and what this might show about reflection and choosing subject matter to write about.	This activity can help students distinguish between different types of information, the goal being to write more deeply and focus in on specific details. A time limit can also help students be discerning about what to include.

Individually or in pairs, students write a list of **10 lessons or pieces of advice** they would pass on to younger students in the school. This could also be completed as a whole class with discussion throughout. • Give students a time limit to think and/or discuss and compile their list. • Ask students to share their lists with each other (or with another pair) and make note of any similar advices, thinking about why they think this might be the case. Students could write these on the list. • Discuss with students why certain lessons or pieces of advice were selected, prompting students to identify and explain the details.	This activity can encourage students to reflect on a variety of topics or experiences or their own knowledge by asking them to distil their experience to a specific point. Explaining why helps expand on the relevant details. Comparing can help to identify collective or individual experiences.
Students compile a **short soundtrack** for their lives, selecting **five songs** they consider significant to them. Make note of any copyright issues where relevant. Prompt students with the following questions: • What does this song mean to you? Why? • What memories (e.g. people, places, events) does it help recall?	Here, students have an opportunity to think about subject matter of significant by using creative stimulus to prompt their reflections.
Students identify and reflect on some of their **childhood or adolescent favourites**, such as books, films, television shows. Prompt students to explore these with questions such as: • What was the significance of this book/tv show/film for you? • What are the memories you might associate with this text? • What, if any, lessons or impacts has it taught you? • Does it still resonate with you? If so, why?	The goal here is for students to form connections between a text and the memories or associations they have with said texts, and explaining these connections.

Writing your own personal story

Learning intentions:
- *Students continue developing their knowledge and understanding of personal reflective stories by planning and writing their own story.*
- *Students begin developing their understanding of personal (authorial) voice as a writer and the language choices that contribute to their personal writing style.*

Notes

These activities include a series of prompts for more specific personal stories than the reflective activities above. The previous activities, though intended to generate reflective thinking, could nevertheless be used as stimulus or subject matter for more extended writing similar to the *Stories from the Shed*. Following the prompts is an example scaffold that could be used to help students plan, draft and edit their story. This can be readily modified by teachers or supplemented with other resources based on the specific needs or phase of learning for each class/student. Again, modelling some of the thinking or ideas here could useful for students.

Activities

Write about someone important to you
 	
 • Encourage students to select and reflect on a person that has importance to them. This might be a parent, grandparent, sibling, relative, friend, neighbour etc.
 • Students could use a **concept map** to list and extend their thinking about this person, putting the person in the centre and then listing around them some of the following:
     o The significant memories associated with this person.
     o What sensory associations are there for this person (think of the five senses) and why?
     o Are there any images or words that come to mind when you think of this person, and if so, what are they and why?
 • Students can use these ideas to help plan their reflective story. Teachers could give students a prompt to help them start, depending on year level or learning needs.
 • This prompt could be readily adapted to focus on an object of significance.

Retelling a time/moment you felt a particular emotion and the lesson/s you learned
 	
 • Provide students with a list of (appropriate) emotions or feelings, or generate a list through class discussions.
 • Students then unpack this particular moment or time using the 5 Ws and H (who, what, where, when, why, and how).
     o Remind students to provide enough detail for their reader.
     o The particular moment might be part of a bigger story or journey.
     o Students could adopt a **narrative structure** for telling the story, concluding with the key lessons or learning that occurred, or, how this particular moment has shaped them as an individual.

Skills or knowledge and telling the story of how you developed these
- Students reflect on any key skills or specific knowledge they have, or are developing.
- Some prompts could include hobbies, arts/crafts, sports, clubs and societies, passion topics or interests, technical skills, achievements etc.
  - Students could use a **flow chart** to help show the progression of learning or skill development, and what happened at key stages of this journey.
  - This should include providing more detail about the people, places, and events involved, as well as explaining the different thoughts, feelings, and reactions felt as the learning or skill development occurred.
  - Students should also include a reflection in their story, linking the skill and/or knowledge to an explanation of why it is important or meaningful to them.

Writing about places you have been (if relevant)
Some students are fortunate to have travelled (regionally, nationally, internationally), while others might have significant place in their local community, or place from earlier in their life. Any of these options could work as the subject of a reflective personal story, though the prompts here are intended to help students think about a place they have visited.
- Invite students to think about the places they have been or the places that are significant or memorable to them.
  - Students should use descriptive and sensory language to create an image of the place, such as the smells, textures, colours, sounds, atmosphere etc.
  - Encourage students to use some figurative language (e.g. metaphor, simile) or poetic devices to help create images for their readers.
  - Students can expand on the significance of the place by incorporating the people and/or events involved, as well as using narrative structure.
- A reflection summarising why this place is significant, and how it has shaped them, should be included.

Scaffold for planning and writing

Subject/topic of story	
Title (make it engaging)	
Brief summary of details (use prompts about who, what, where, when, why, how to help summarise content)	
Intended readers/audience and purpose in sharing this story/reflection. Is there a specific message or learning you want to communicate?	
What are the key details, plot points, or turning points in the story or reflection? Why is each one significant?	
Internal details about the topic/subject matter/event. What are the thoughts, feelings, emotions, reactions you will include?	
External details about the topic/subject matter/event. What are the observable elements of the story? The things other people could see, hear, feel, observe and so on.	
Opening/beginning. How will you begin the story in a way that establishes the subject matter and engages your reader? Will this be with a description of the time and place? Or perhaps posing a question or sharing a thought? Or a statement about the topic/event/memory?	

Claire, P., & Rogers, S. *Stories from the Shed: Connecting Communities, Histories and Legacies. A Curriculum Guide for Upper Primary/ Junior Secondary Programs.* (2021). As part of the series, "Stories from the Shed", Mount Gravatt Men's Shed, www.mtgravattmensshed.org.au .

Body of the story. How have you chosen to structure and organise your story? Will you write chronologically or will you organise your work using concepts/themes/ideas related to the topic or subject matter? This is the main part of the story so plan this carefully. At each point (whether chronological or not), make sure you include enough detail about the event, people, place/s involved. Expand on the 5Ws and H when providing further detail. Also, think about the **language elements** that can best help you share the **internal and external details** of the story, such as: • Descriptive language (e.g. verbs, adjectives) • Figurative language • Emotive language • Sensory details • Poetic language devices • Dialogue or reported speech • Humour, tension, intrigue etc. • Vocabulary choices You could also incorporate brief reflections about these key points throughout, helping lead you to your final reflections on the event/person/topic/place in the concluding remarks.	*A useful sequence for each point might include:* • *Description* • *Discussion of thoughts/feelings/reactions* • *Evaluation/judgement about the impact*

Concluding remarks. Main reflection about the story/subject matter. Consider the things you learned from this experience, individual, place, or about the topic, and why. What changes, if any, occurred? What did you learn and how has this shaped you? Is there a broader message or lesson that this experience or this story can provide readers, and what is it?	
Editing and proofreading your work. This could be completed individually or in peer groups looking for: • Grammatical accuracy • Content and engagement • Flow of ideas and coherence • Application and use of genre conventions • Vocabulary choices • ...and the details in the sections above.	• *Read work in a low voice to yourself to identify small errors.* • *Have a peer read your work back to you. This helps you hear what you have written from a fresh set of eyes.* • *Reread your work after making corrections to ensure the content is coherent and flows, and that you have included the relevant details.*

Further engagement

- Students could develop their stories further by incorporating multimodal elements to make digital presentations or video editing software to turn their stories in micro-documentaries. This could be integrated with Media Arts curriculum or as part of a school project.

- Teachers or students might like to widen the writing of short stories to a school-based writer's group of interested students.

ON DIFFERENTIATION

The differentiation of tasks is dependent greatly upon the individual needs of students within the cohort, including academic level (including students on Individual Curriculum Plans for higher or lower curriculum intent), ability or disability, language, culture, interests and learning styles. Fortunately, it is rare that adjustments to curriculum do not benefit the majority of students, so the following suggestions can be used across the board. Adjustments for specific students should be made with those students in mind, and may require the input of other personnel, including parents, advocates, teacher aides, Heads of Department, and Heads of Curriculum.

Adjustment Area	Adjustment	Notes
Experiential	**Contemporary photographs** Many of the stories available in the collection include photographs of the author taken at the time of the event. Be sure to include these, as it creates a connection for those students who have difficulties with accessing literature, or have attention deficits. If images are unavailable, acquire generic images of the approximate area and time period that could be used to create such connections. Use as either a gallery of images, or break up your chosen story by dispersing relevant images throughout.	- Particularly useful for students who are visual learners, EALD, low literacy, students with verified disabilities such as Intellectual Disabilities (ID), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Speech Language Impairment (SLI).
	Contemporary Artefacts Having artefacts that are mentioned in the story available for students to have a hands-on experience is a very engaging activity. Whether uniforms, tools, medals, awards, samples of plants or other relevant objects, artefacts create an experience that provides a tangible link to an event. Such artefacts could be provided by staff members, the Queensland Museum or other institutions, or be borrowed from or brought by the author himself during a school visit.	- Artefacts have the greatest connection factor, as they allow exploration with more senses than sight. The weight of a tool, or the smell of a leaf, the taste of food, or the sound of an instrument, especially if described in the story, bring the experience to life for the student. These are especially useful for students that have a vision impairment – a description of an object can be unhelpful – but the ability to hear, pick up, hold, feel, weigh, smell or taste, in conjunction with a description, makes a visual scene more accessible. An example of this could be a description of an Australian Freemantle class patrol boat, accompanied by a scale model that they can manipulate.

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	Timelines and Historical References Use the stories in the collection in concert with wider historical events. This is particularly useful when the stories themselves are part of wider local or international events. Placing the events of the story within a wider timeline helps connect students to global events, and may serve as an insightful eyewitness account of particular events, such as living through World War II. Visually, timelines create continuity and help students to understand the span of time over which event take place.	- Some students may find placing events from their own lives in a timeline of events from a tale grounding. Including the major events for a family member, particularly for one who lived concurrently to events from the story can also be beneficial. Students with ASD may find this particularly useful, as it connects the story with people that they already have an attachment to.
Language	**Modifying Original Source Text** To be true to the story, source material should be kept in original condition as much as possible. However, it may become necessary to modify language to aid in comprehension by students who are EALD, have an Intellectual Disability, or Speech Language Impairment. In these cases, paraphrasing, chunking text and reformatting are entirely appropriate and can significantly increase engagement and outcomes.	- When paraphrasing, either translate words to easier terminology, or provide an easy-to-read glossary. - Reducing the length of the overall text, but maintaining key passages can be useful as a reminder or reviewing tool. - Chunking and reformatting to create clear distinctions in text, particularly between events, can be useful to encapsulate ideas. This is more than just using paragraphs, and can be useful to highlight specific sections of text that the reader should be paying attention to.
	Highlighting Language Elements Instead of providing a text and then asking students to identify text structures and language elements, provide a copy with key structures and elements already provided (preferably highlighted or bolded) and ask students to classify them according to their bank of definitions. This is particularly useful for EALD students, students with Speech Language Impairment, or Intellectual Disabilities, that have trouble identifying small elements of language inside larger blocks.	- Once text structures and language elements have been taught in this way, encourage students to create similar language structures in their own writing. - During proofing, encourage students to identify the parts of their text that use similar structures and elements to the original source.