

Express Media John Marsden & Hachette Australia Prize Teachers Resource

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It was, is and always will be, Aboriginal land.



**HERE FOR
YOUNG
WRITERS**



John Marsden & Hachette Australia Prize Teachers Resource

The John Marsden & Hachette Australia Prize for Young Writers awards unforgettable opportunities for students of secondary school age, across the categories of poetry, fiction and nonfiction.

The following resource has been created to provide students with inspiration and a starting point for their writing. For teachers, these dynamic and generative exercises are intended to get students enthused about writing for submission. A range of example activities are included for each category and can be linked to the Australian curriculum.

Please note that submissions to the competition are not required to respond directly to these writing activities. The prize is unthemed, and these are simply additional resources for students and teachers to spark the creative process.

Prize winners will receive \$500 and a book pack of YA titles, courtesy of Hachette Australia, publication of their work on the Express Media website plus their names and an acknowledgement printed in Voiceworks, Australia's premier youth literary journal. Fifteen shortlisted writers will also be invited to participate in a writing masterclass, and later have the chance to meet and chat with John Marsden himself.

To submit to the prize, or for more information head to
www.expressmedia.org.au/jmp

All entries must be received by **11.59pm, Sunday 30 June 2019**

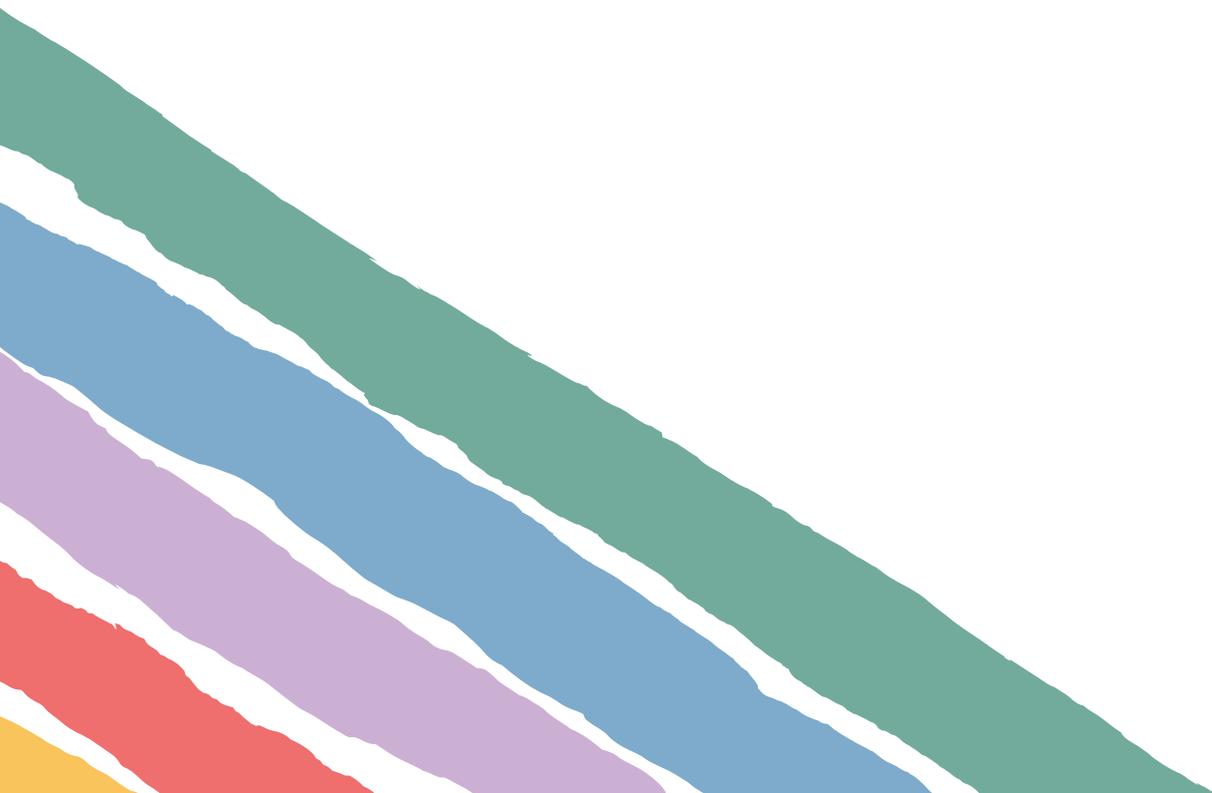
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Outline

By participating in the following activities and submitting original work to the competition, students will be able to:

- 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**)
- Explore and reflect on personal understanding of the world and significant human experience gained from interpreting various representations of life matters in texts (**ACELT1635**)
- 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**)
- Analyse text structures and language features of literary texts, and make relevant comparisons with other texts (**ACELT1772**)



Fiction

Warm-up Task: Exploring Different Forms

*“To: questionsformargo@magicmargopodcast.com
From: sarah.fox@outlook.com
Subject: Being followed by a hawk”*

As you can see from Matilda Bolt’s [winning fiction entry](#) for 2018, a story is not just about the events that happen, but also the form that the narrative takes. In ‘The Hawk’ the story unfolds through a series of one-sided email exchanges between a young woman and the host of a life advice podcast.

This warm-up activity gives students the chance to be creative with the way they tell a story, and provides them ideas about the many different forms a story can take.

Step one: Students to choose a story they know well. This can be from their own life or from a book/movie they love.

Step two: rewrite a scene or scenes from that story so that it takes the form of one of these unique forms of narrative:

- Email or letter
- News article
- Text message exchange
- A list (shopping list, dot point, note to self)
- Overheard conversation
- Or any others they think of

Class discussion:

Were there any rewritings that worked particularly well? What was it about the form that facilitated (or changed) the narrative? Are there any famous stories that could benefit from a fresh form?

Writing

Although it is never explicitly stated in Bolt's story, it is possible to believe that the hawk following the narrator is her missing brother. In this next exercise, students are encouraged to think about how loss and change is explored in fiction and how this can be used in their own writing.

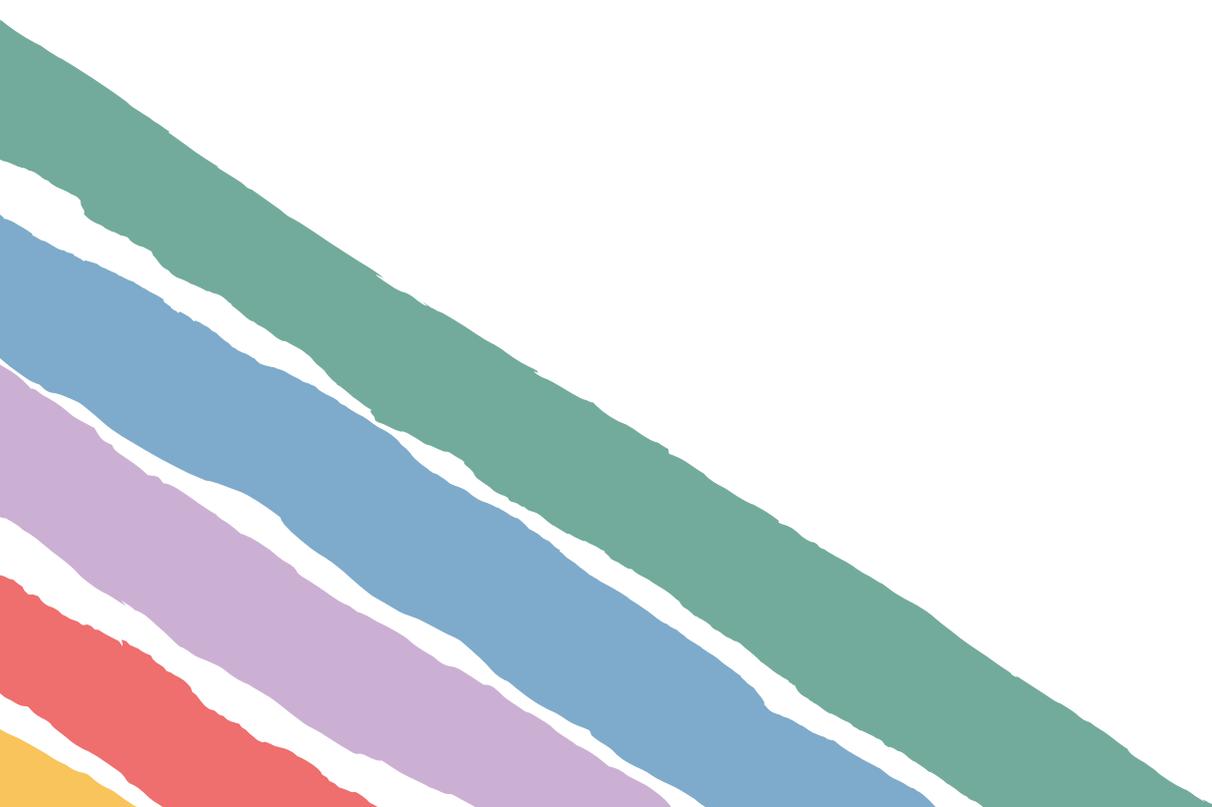
“Anyway, I really should turn in. The house is freezing, probably because I keep forgetting to turn the heater on and put the blinds down. My big brother used to do that, but he’s not around anymore.”

Students are to write a scene where a person thought to be missing finally returns home, however, they are not the same as when they left. John Marsden often discusses the importance of “giving characters a distinctive voice”. How has your missing person’s voice changed? Perhaps they’ve picked up some new traits, or drastically altered what they look like. Are they an imposter? Or even human? Encourage students to spend some time brainstorming details about the character and the journey they’ve taken to lead them up to here.

Specific Learning Outcomes Possible From These Exercises:

Create literary texts, including hybrid texts, that innovate on aspects of other texts, for example by using parody, allusion and appropriation (**ACELT1773**)

Analyse text structures and language features of literary texts, and make relevant comparisons with other texts (**ACELT1772**)



Nonfiction

We washed the body three times. Taking odd bowls and cups found in her cupboards and filling them with warm soapy water as Nana lay on her maple dining table covered with towels. She almost disappeared beneath the thin white sheet that covered her. Everyone seemed to have their place in the room but me.

Octavia Chandler's winning nonfiction piece [*In My Mind*](#) explores the religious rituals around a death in her family. Due to her upbringing, she is removed enough to be able to reflect on these rituals and their role in the lives of those around her, while also still being able to recognise their effects.

In the following exercises, students are encouraged to reflect on the rituals present in their own life, and their purpose, as well as what these rituals say about them and society as a whole.

I know Nana could feel nothing, but the feeling that I could comfort her, comforted me.

Warm-up Task:

Students to brainstorm their own list of rituals in the following different groups:

Personal rituals, (eg: good luck routines leading up to an exam, something you have to do before starting your day)

Family rituals, (eg: eating at the table together, Christmas at Gran's house)

Social rituals, (eg: chanting songs at the football, eating free sausages after voting, or even religious rituals)

If students need help coming up with ideas, ask them to consider 'routines' or 'habits' within these three groups.

When finished, come together as a class and write down their responses on the board. Discuss if some are more unique than others, their purpose, or what they say about each group.

Can also reflect on the difference between rituals and habits/routines.

Writing

Students to choose one (or more if relevant) of the rituals from the warm-up task, and write about it as if explaining it to someone on the outside.

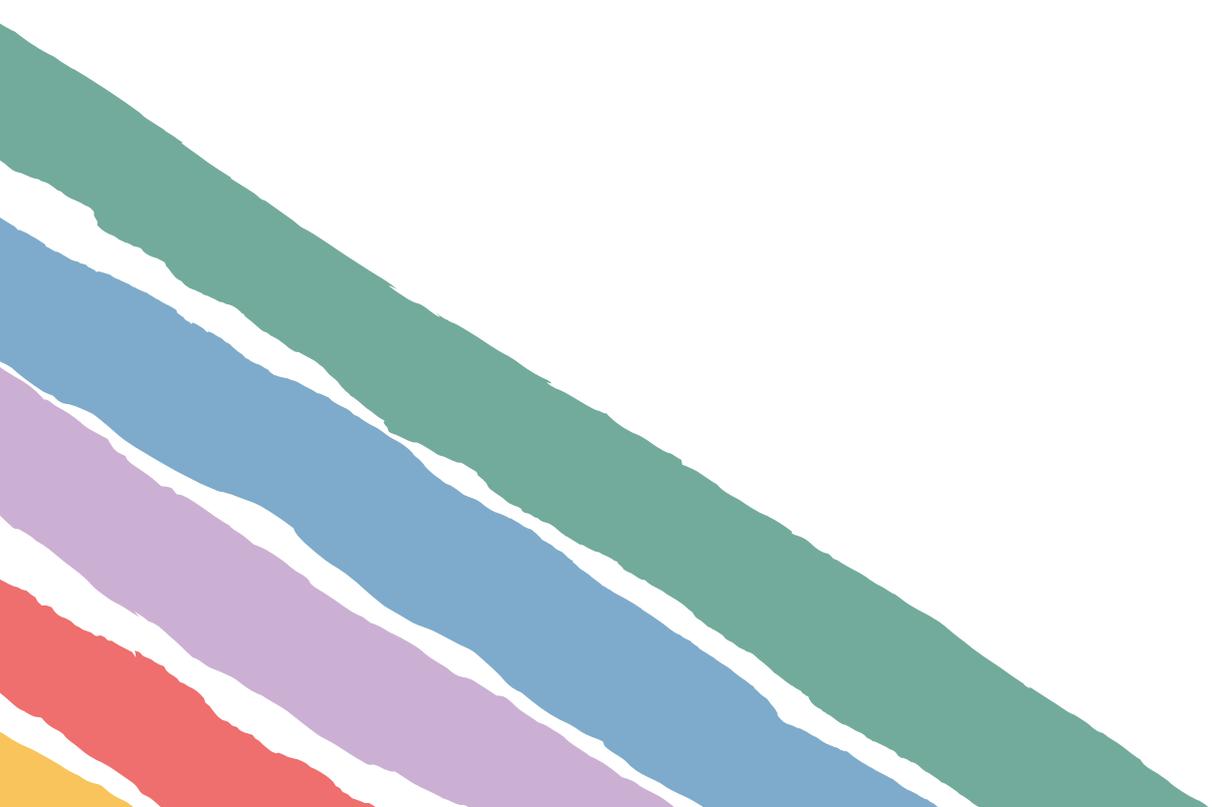
Questions to prompt - how did this ritual start? What is the importance of it? What makes it unique? Has it been broken or forgotten, and what would happen if it was?

Extension - how does this ritual fit into the wider world? For example, what does a yearly family vacation say about the importance of shared time in single-parent families? How does one religion's approach to death differ from another's?

Specific Learning Outcomes Possible From These Exercises:

Interpret and compare how representations of people and culture in literary texts are drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts
(ACELT1633)

Explore and reflect on personal understanding of the world and significant human experience gained from interpreting various representations of life matters in texts
(ACELT1635)



Poetry

Discussion: The power of single images

As an event that would be burned into the minds of many Americans, the assassination of JFK is rich with details and powerful images. Skillfully blending past facts with an imagining of the future, Niamh Brazil's winning poem *Camelot* uses metaphor and vivid description to create a new imagining of the killing and its aftermath for his wife.

*“They give her red roses in Dallas; not yellow buds,
sun-steeped and honeyed, like the ones thrust in her
arms on each other Texan airstrip”*

To start, provide the class a series of images without context and see if they are able to recognise or guess what they are about (see below).



“Apollo 11” by Kevin M. Gill is licensed under CC BY 2.0



“Footsteps to misery...” by Saad Sarfraz Sheikh is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0



“World Trade Center” by YU-bin is licensed under CC PDM 1.0



“Polar Bears on Thin Ice” by Christopher.Michel is licensed under CC BY 2.0

As a class, discuss the meaning of these images, their context and power.

Prompting questions: Are these images effective? What makes them so? What do they signify about the wider issue?

Extension: Students to think of additional events themselves, and the photos or key images associated with these. Note, they doesn't have to be huge or gripping (such as 'Tank Man' in Tiananmen Square), it can be something small the typifies the wider event.

Writing

Students are to pick an image, either from the inspiration list or from their own ideas and are now to write a poem using this image as a way to reflect, explore and highlight details within their event. When writing about a well-known event, remember the advice from John Marsden - “steer away from the predictable and the obvious”!

Prompting and scaffolding

If students are less familiar with writing poetry, you can provide prompt questions or this scaffolding to help them start.

Preparation:

What language will you use to write about your event? What is the tone of your event and what words might you use to get this across to the reader?

First stanza:

What is your key image, and how would you use poetic language to describe it to someone who has never seen it before?

*“jagged fragments of her husband’s skull.
A photograph cannot lie. Not about blood tattooed
across her soft shell of pink. Not about the gauzy veil”*

Second stanza:

What were the circumstances leading up to your event? What was the feeling in country at the time? In the world?

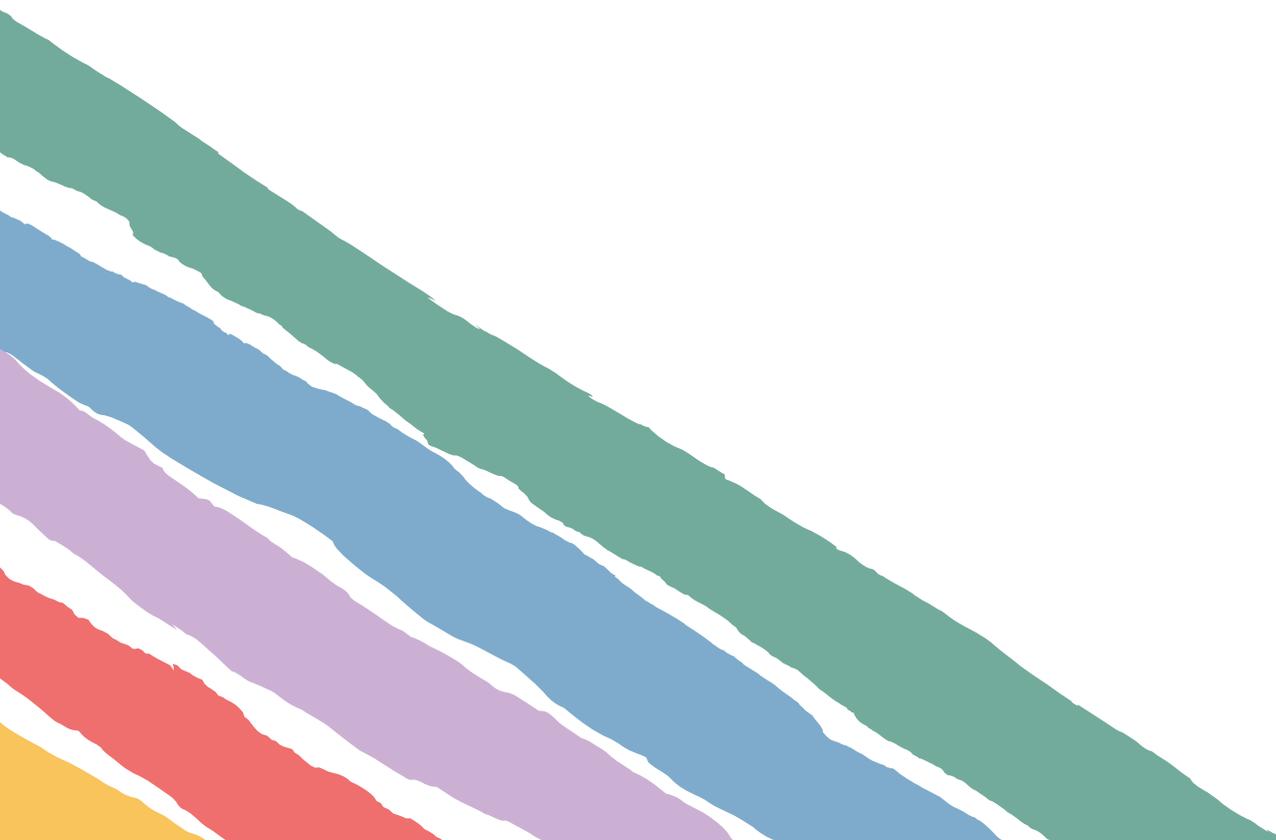
Third stanza:

Aftermath. How have things changed now? What do people feel when they see your image? Are there any echoes with the modern world? Or with the past?

Specific Learning Outcomes Possible From These Exercises:

Investigate how evaluation can be expressed directly and indirectly using devices, for example allusion, evocative vocabulary and metaphor (**ACELA1552**)

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**)



Competition guidelines

HOW TO ENTER

1. All entries must be received by **11.59pm, Sunday 30 June 2019**
2. One entry may be submitted, per category, with a maximum of 2 entries across the 3 categories
3. Each entry must be submitted via the submissions portal, with one entry per submission form. DO NOT put multiple submissions in one word or PDF document
4. Submissions of fiction or nonfiction may be up to 3,000 words in length
5. Submissions of poetry may be up to 100 lines in length
6. All entries must be typed and double-spaced
7. Submittable accounts must be created in the entrant's own name and list the entrant's contact details

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

1. Entries must be original works, written entirely by the entrant, and must not infringe upon anyone else's copyright or intellectual property rights
2. Entries must not, either wholly or partly, have previously been published in print or online (with the exception of an entrant's personal blog or website)
3. The name of the entrant should not be included anywhere on the submission; it should only be entered in the submission form
4. All members currently serving on the Express Media board; and/or all paid, permanent staff of Express Media, are ineligible to enter
5. Entries are only accepted from secondary school aged students (between the ages of 12 and 18 inclusive)
6. Entrants under 18 years of age must have permission from a parent/guardian/teacher to enter the prize
7. While entries are accepted from Candlebark and Alice Miller schools (where John Marsden is Principal), an entry may not have been read by John Marsden prior to its submission.

Express Media and Hachette Australia each reserve the right not to consider a submission if the conditions of entry above are not complied with.

Note: Entrants must acknowledge and agree to these terms upon submission. Parent/guardian/teacher of the entrant must confirm permission for entry upon submission.

PRIZE DETAILS

Shortlisted writers from each prize category receive:

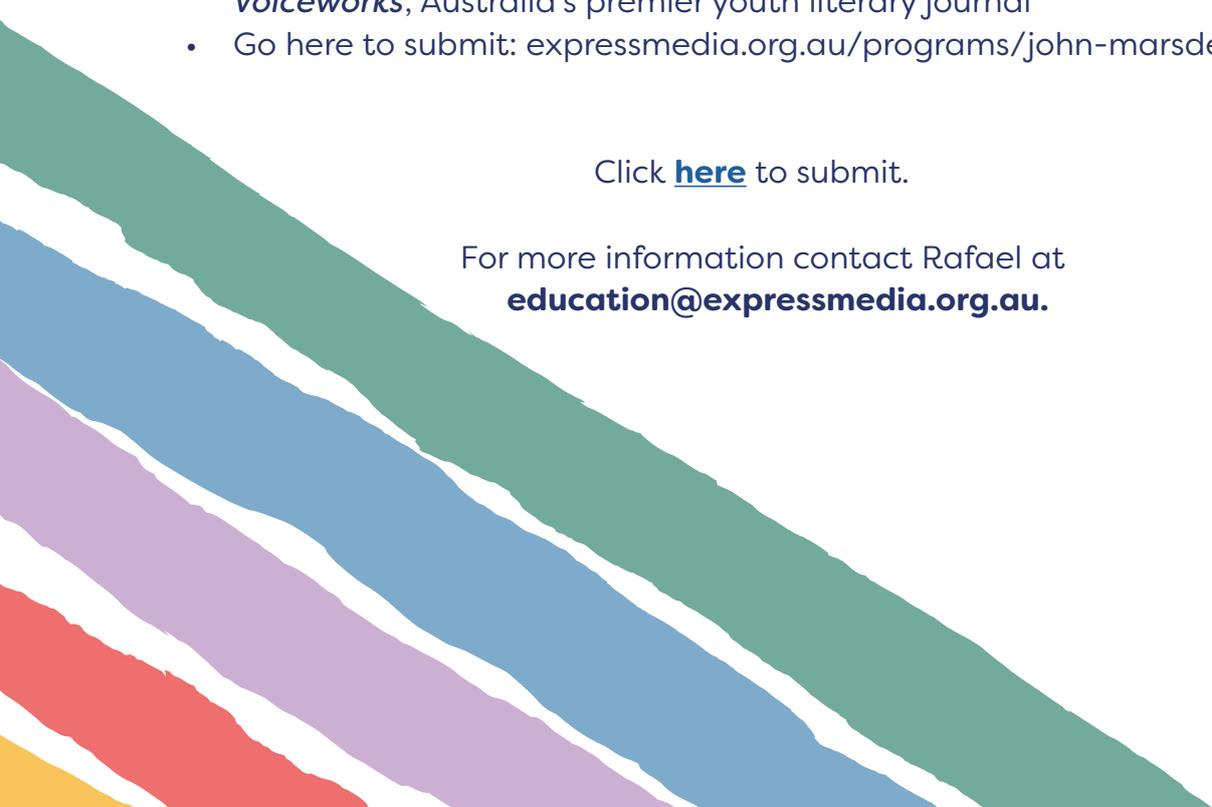
- Feedback on their writing from Hachette Australia and Express Media judges
- An invitation to meet John Marsden over lunch hosted by Hachette Australia and Express Media
- An invitation to take part in an exclusive writing masterclass
- An invitation to attend a premiere event as a guest of the Melbourne Writers Festival

The first place winner of each prize category receives the above, plus:

- \$500 cash prize
- Up to \$500 travel reimbursement to attend the winners' announcement event
- A book pack of selected works from Hachette Australia's young adult publications
- Publication on the Express Media website
- Winner names and an acknowledgement will be printed in *Voiceworks*, Australia's premier youth literary journal
- Go here to submit: expressmedia.org.au/programs/john-marsden-prize/

Click [here](#) to submit.

For more information contact Rafael at
education@expressmedia.org.au.



MEMBERSHIP

If you're aged 13 to 30 with an interest in writing, reading, or storytelling, become a member of Express Media and subscribe to Voiceworks to access opportunities to develop, share, and publish your writing. Plus, you'll receive invites to launches, events and workshops and join a community of young writers across the country!

Express Media Membership

\$25 per year includes:

- A subscription to the monthly Express Post newsletter packed full of the latest writing and publication opportunities
- Unlimited submissions to Express Media's publications, prizes and fellowships
- Unlimited access to Express Media's courses, workshops and events
- A PDF version of the latest issue of Voiceworks delivered to your email inbox each quarter

Add a print subscription to Voiceworks for just \$50!

To sign up for an Express Media Membership visit expressmedia.org.au/membership

We offer joint memberships with writers centres across Australia – find the membership suitable to you in your state via our website.

Voiceworks Subscription (4 issues)

\$60 per year

The best way to get involved with Voiceworks is to read it! Each issue is stuffed to the gills with a varied selection of work by remarkable young writers and artists. Over the past year, our pages have been filled with stories about moon-visiting dogs and hidden queer identities; essays about Maltese prickly pears and murderous kookaburras; poems about clones and teenage gorgons; and comics about intimacy and the Dutch Golden Age.

Sign up for an annual subscription to get four issues a year delivered straight to your door.

Add an Express Media Membership for just \$15!

To sign up for a Voiceworks Subscription visit [our website](#).

