

PRIMARY SCHOOL TALKS



THE BEST JOB IN THE WORLD! SHEILA WEE

27 - 28 Feb & 1 - 2, 5 - 6, 8 - 9 Mar (morning and afternoon)
Fee: \$150

P1 - 6

Storytellers tell stories that have been told for thousands of years, and retell them using their own imagination, words and ideas. True storytellers don't memorise the words, but seek to understand the characters, settings and events, so that they can shape the words to draw in their audience. Join Sheila Wee as she shares with you the wonderful world of storytelling and how she crafts timeless tales for all.

IN THE CLASSROOM...

Being a storyteller is a skill honed with practice and dedication. With your students, practise this skill with a twist: ask them to think of a classic fairytale (e.g. Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella, etc.) and put it in a modern-day Singaporean context. Get the students to read the stories out loud to the whole class for a good load of laughs and lots of speech practice!

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Sheila Wee (Singapore)

Sheila co-founded Singapore's first storytelling circle and its first professional storytelling company, and has performed and conducted numerous workshops and courses in Singapore, Australia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the UK. A former freelance writer, who recently contributed to the anthology *A River of Stories: Tales and Poems from Across the Commonwealth*, she is currently working on an anthology of stories and a storytelling handbook for the Hong Kong Bureau of Education.



A WORLD OF SHARING AND CARING SHAMINI FLINT

7 - 9 Mar (morning and afternoon)
Fee: \$150

P1 - 2

Join vibrant children's book author and environmental activist Shamini Flint as she talks about what we can learn about environmental awareness through books and how we can become more aware of the importance of sharing our living world with all the creatures that inhabit it. With a focus on her picture books (like *Turtle Takes A Trip*, and *Panda Packs Her Bags*), this talk promises to show young readers not just the beauty of nature, but the beauty of books as well!

IN THE CLASSROOM...

With your class, discuss what sort of animals we see on a daily basis, in our homes and around our neighbourhood (e.g. cats, pigeons, mynahs, etc.), and how what we do each and every day affects them in some way.

DISCOVERING THE WORLD SHAMINI FLINT

7 - 9 Mar (morning and afternoon)
Fee: \$150

P3 - 6

Shamini Flint, children's book author and tireless environmental activist, shares how to shape tales of adventure and discovery, and create greater environmental awareness through stories. With a focus on her books *The Seeds of Time*, and its exciting sequel *Journey of the Chosen*, nature has never been so thrilling!

IN THE CLASSROOM...

In Shamini's books, our natural environment is alive and kicking and shapes the way we live in major ways! Explore with your class what carbon-based power sources (e.g. diesel, coal, etc.) and green energy devices (e.g. wind turbines, solar cells, etc.) are, how they all shape our man-made environment and affect our natural environment too.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Shamini Flint (Singapore)

Formerly a lawyer, Shamini is now a stay-at-home mum to her two children, as well as a writer, part-time lecturer and environmental activist. She writes children's books with cultural and green themes, including the much loved *Sasha* series, which are all mainly focused on Asia. She also writes the *Inspector Singh Investigates* series of crime fiction novels. Since she began writing six years ago, Shamini's books have sold over 500,000 copies.



FROM ISRAEL TO CHINA: THE STORY OF A CHILDREN'S BOOK AND HOW MUCH WE ARE ALL ALIKE (IN ENGLISH) ELAD WEINGROD

29 Feb - 2 Mar (morning and afternoon)
Fee: \$150

P1 - 4

How do you fantasise in two languages? From a Hebrew children's poem to an internationally acclaimed bilingual book (in both Hebrew and Chinese) to a lively musical: this is the multi-cultural and multi-lingual story of *Like You, Like Me*. Join Israeli author Elad Weingrod in reading the book in three wonderful languages - English, Hebrew and Chinese - and learn about the way it was created, translated and transformed into a musical.

The session will include fun activities in the spirit of the book. Maximum 35 participants.

IN THE CLASSROOM...

Like You, Like Me has been translated into a language (Chinese) that is very different from the original (Hebrew). Using Google Translate (or another free translation software), explore with your class how computers can translate text automatically from one language to another but can sometimes get the meaning quite muddled up, as sentence structure and common expressions (such as 'time flies like an arrow') differ widely from one language to another - something a computer can't quite understand but we humans can!

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Elad Weingrod (Israel)

An Israeli author, journalist and a web content manager, Elad was editor and writer for a number of significant Israeli newspapers for 9 years. His book *Like You, Like Me*, a bilingual children's poem in both Hebrew and Chinese, has gained success in Israel and China, and was adapted into a musical. His latest book, a collection of children poems, will be published in 2012.

Supported by Embassy of Israel, Singapore



FROM BROKEN HOME TO INTERNATIONAL BEST-SELLING AUTHOR NEIL HUMPHREYS

5 - 9 Mar (morning and afternoon)
Fee: \$150

P1 - 6

How does a kid from a one-parent family and broken home on a poor housing estate in the UK go on to become a contented, successful published writer? Join international best-selling author, journalist and former newspaper editor Neil Humphreys in this inspirational talk on how he pursued a career in the arts, overcame financial hardship, dealt with 'kiasu' families, and put aside his wayward teenage years and wrong career choices to finally pursue his passion, rather than a pay cheque.

IN THE CLASSROOM...

Everyone has dreams about what they want to do when they grow up. Explore with your class what their dreams are and how they hope to reach their dreams someday. If there's time, go one step further and ask your students to identify someone whom they think is a role model and explain to the class why they've chosen that person.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Neil Humphreys (UK/Singapore)

Neil has written columns for Singapore newspapers like *TODAY*, *The Straits Times* and *The New Paper*, as well as other Singapore and overseas publications. One of the most successful Singapore-based authors of the past decade, he has sold 130,000 books so far. His works include *Notes from an Even Smaller Island* (2001), *Scribbles from the Same Island* (2003), *Final Notes from a Great Island* (2006), *Be My Baby* (2008) and *Premier Leech* (2011). He is currently working on a new Singapore title.





THE A, B, Cs OF WRITING A STORY ELIZA TEOH

5 - 9 Mar (morning and afternoon)
Fee: \$150

P3 - 6

What goes into writing a story? What do the terms narrator, plot and characters mean? What is a protagonist? What is an antagonist? How do these work together to form a story? These ideas will be explained in a fun way with the use of graphics and examples from popular literary works by writers such as Roald Dahl, Holly Black, Lemony Snicket and Kate DiCamillo. Author Eliza Teoh will also show examples from her own *Ellie Belly* series. This talk not only serves to get students interested in the process of creating a story, it also aims to get children interested in reading and inspire them to read the books mentioned during the talk.

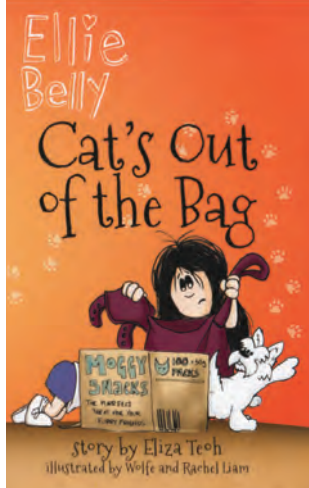
IN THE CLASSROOM...

Like many good books for young readers, Eliza's *Ellie Belly* series has terrific text and delightful illustrations. For a fun time out of the classroom, take your students to the library and ask them to select a book that they really enjoy reading - one with both text and accompanying illustrations - and get them to think about how the text and the illustrations go together to tell the story as a whole, and how the story would have been so much more different with entirely different illustrations!

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Eliza Teoh (Singapore)

A Singapore Press Holdings scholar, Eliza was a journalist and sub-editor at *The Straits Times*. Inspired by her daughters' antics, she created the *Ellie Belly* series to capture hilarious moments shared with them. Aside from entertaining young readers and nurturing a love for animals, she also hopes to encourage the learning of good English in a fun way. Her second book, *Ellie Belly: Cat's Out of the Bag*, was released in November 2011.



JOHN BOYNE'S MODERN FAIRYTALES JOHN BOYNE

29 Feb - 2 Mar (morning and afternoon) & 3 Mar (afternoon)
Fee: \$150

P1 - 6

John Boyne's delightfully whimsical *Noah Barleywater Runs Away* isn't just a children's book about the fantastical and fabulous, it's a fairytale, pure and simple. So, what then are fairytales? And how can they survive and thrive as a way of telling the very best stories, in our day and age? Join John Boyne as he shares how he wrote *Noah Barleywater Runs Away*, and talks about the traditional themes of fairytales and how he has made them modern and relevant in this spellbinding novel.

Minimum 100 students.

IN THE CLASSROOM...

Fairytales are entertaining (and occasionally scary!) stories that are enjoyed by children everywhere. But they do a lot more than just amuse young readers; they also teach children how to distinguish good from bad, and right from wrong. Get your students to share a few well-known fairytales and discuss what kind of lessons they can learn from the characters along the way.

THE BOY IN THE STRIPED PYJAMAS AND OTHER HISTORICAL IMAGININGS FOR CHILDREN JOHN BOYNE

29 Feb - 2 Mar (morning and afternoon) & 3 Mar (afternoon)
Fee: \$150

P4 - 6

All writers have the responsibility to write wisely and well. But, children's book writers, writing about history in children's literature, have added responsibilities. Join John Boyne, bestselling author of *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, as he shares how this touching story about life and friendship developed and grew into the richly textured, much-loved fable that it is today.

Minimum 100 students.

IN THE CLASSROOM...

Watch the movie *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* (2008) with your class and discuss why you think this novel about the friendship between two young boys is set against one of the darkest periods in Germany's history. Before this, the class might want to do some basic background reading concerning this period in European history.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

John Boyne (Ireland)

John was born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1971. He is the author of seven novels for adults and two for children, including the international bestsellers *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, which was made into a feature film, and *The House of Special Purpose*. His novels have won many literary awards and are published in over 40 languages. John's latest book for younger readers is *Noah Barleywater Runs Away*.



THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JAMES ROY JAMES ROY

27 - 28 Feb (morning and afternoon) & 29 Feb (morning)
Fee: \$150

P3 - 6

Award-winning children's book author James Roy loves writing, talking about writing, thinking about writing, and writing some more. Join him as he talks about how writers create stories, what makes a great story, and the importance of having enough Maltesers to eat as you write!

This talk is best suited for large groups and assembly programmes.

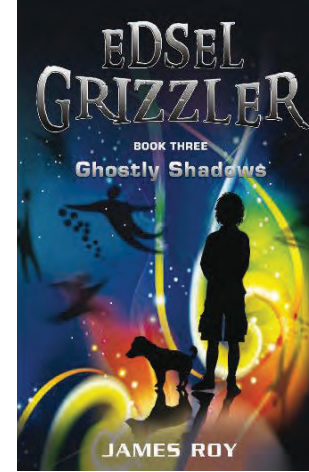
IN THE CLASSROOM...

In books like *Captain Mack* and *Billy Mack's War*, James creates characters in crisis - people who are quite different but are brought together by difficult circumstances to find the bravery and strength they both need. As a class, get your students to talk about a situation where they have formed unlikely friendships, and how these have helped them grow and develop as a person.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

James Roy (Australia)

Arguably one of Australia's leading authors for young people, James is a popular visitor to schools and festivals throughout the country and internationally, where he conducts author talks and creative writing workshops. His works, including novels, short story collections and chapter books, span from his first novel *Almost Wednesday* (1996) to the award-winning *Town* (2007). James lives in the Blue Mountains near Sydney with his wife and two daughters.



YOU DON'T KNOW JACK! JACK HEATH

27 - 29 Feb (morning and afternoon)
Fee: \$150

P4 - 6

Prepare yourself for an hour of fun learning and laughter with award-winning children's adventure novelist Jack Heath as he examines (with humour and a good dose of wit) the importance of reading, punctuated with anecdotes from his personal and professional journeys. Readings from his works are available on request, and questions from the audience are enthusiastically welcomed.

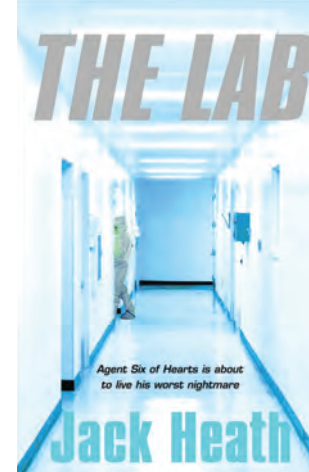
IN THE CLASSROOM...

Action and adventure stories - especially those for young adults - have always been very popular and they certainly entertain adults too. But just how far back do such stories go? What was the first ever adventure story recorded? Explore with your class just what makes a good adventure story and challenge them to find the oldest recorded adventure story ever!

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Jack Heath (Australia)

Jack started writing his first novel, *The Lab*, at age 13, and earned a publishing contract for it at 18. His second book, *Remote Control*, was shortlisted for sci-fi book of the year at the 2007 Aurealis Awards. When he is not reading or writing, Jack is performing street magic, composing film music, teaching or lecturing at schools and festivals, or playing a variety of instruments including the piano and the bass guitar. Now 25, his books are popular in eight countries. His latest novel is *Hit List*.



PRIMARY SCHOOL WORKSHOPS



THE STORY I ALWAYS TELL MYSELF JON DOUST

P3 – 6

6 - 8 Mar (morning and afternoon)
Duration: 1.5 hours
Fee: \$15 per student

Everyone keeps telling themselves certain stories throughout their lives. Jon Doust was always telling stories about magpies and then, one day, he wrote a book with his friend Ken Spillman. This was *Magpie Mischief*. In this workshop, Jon will encourage students to remember their own stories and write them down. He may also read from his own life and show a remarkable home movie of a magpie, four cats and a dog all playing together.

IN THE CLASSROOM...

In *Magpie Mischief*, a group of kids band together to save a family of daring, mischievous magpies who roost (noisily but harmlessly) near their school but are being constantly teased by some schoolyard bullies. Discuss with the class the effects of bullying, and explore what sort of action students can take against bullies and how they can safely help defend those who are being bullied.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Jon Doust (Australia)

Hailing from a small village in Western Australia, Jon was 12 when his parents sent him to boarding school in Perth. He wasn't a very good student but knew he loved to write. All his crazy life, he kept notes and read books other people wrote. When he was old enough, he wrote his own books. He wrote two with Ken Spillman (*Magpie Mischief* and *Magwheel Madness*) and then a book about his years in the boarding school (*Boy on a Wire*). Along the way he ate plenty of fruit, vegetables and chocolate.



THOUGHTS – MEMORIES – POEMS ELAD WEINGROD

P3 – 6

29 Feb - 2 Mar (morning and afternoon)
Duration: 1.5 hours
Fee: \$15 per student

How can your own thoughts and memories become short stories and poems? Join renowned children's book author and seasoned online and print journalist Elad Weingrod as he takes students back down memory lane, and shows them how to turn personal stories and wild imaginings into literary creations.

IN THE CLASSROOM...

Poems don't need to be profound or serious to be meaningful and engaging. Some of the most delightful poetry (like limericks) is a light-hearted celebration of the everyday and the whimsical. Together with your students, find examples of poems that make you smile, discuss how and why they are so entertaining, and (if there's time) get your class to try to write some happy poetry of their own!

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Elad Weingrod (Israel)

An Israeli author, journalist and a web content manager, Elad was editor and writer for Israeli newspapers for 9 years. His book *Like You, Like Me*, a bilingual children's poem in both Hebrew and Chinese, has gained success in Israel and China, and was adapted into a musical. His latest book, a collection of children poems, will be published in 2012.

Supported by Embassy of Israel, Singapore



THE HUNT FOR HUMOUR IN WRITING NEIL HUMPHREYS

P1 – 6

5 - 9 Mar (morning and afternoon)
Duration: 1.5 hours
Fee: \$15 per student

How do we write funny? Can it be taught? Are there any taboos in humour? Does it restrict or release a writer? Using and discussing examples of his own work, join best-selling humour author Neil Humphreys as he guides students in writing and group activities to draw the wit from every budding young writer.

IN THE CLASSROOM...

Engage your students in the hunt for humour with this simple yet challenging task: bring to class a story or video that you think is funny, then tell everyone *why* it is funny. It seems easy, but in reality what makes something side-splittingly funny or simply annoying and cringe-worthy is a very fine line indeed!

HOW TO BECOME A SPECIALISED WRITER NEIL HUMPHREYS

P1 – 6

5 - 9 Mar (morning and afternoon)
Duration: 1.5 hours
Fee: \$15 per student

Have a passion for sports? Love to write about movies? Wax lyrical about your smartphone? With the rise of online, multi-media platforms, writers will need to be specialists – experts in their subject matter – to have a future. Through activities and discussion, international best-selling author, journalist and former newspaper editor Neil Humphreys explains how the specialised journalist/author will survive and why future writers should think about their areas of passion/expertise now to hone their craft.

IN THE CLASSROOM...

In order to write well, good writers first need to do a lot of research to find all the information available on the subject they are writing about. Get this process going by creating a box of random topics for students to find out more information about (e.g. the history of the toilet bowl, who invented the comb, why jeans are usually blue, etc.), and then let them loose in the library or computer lab to write the world's most thrilling report on what they've found!

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Neil Humphreys (UK/Singapore)

Neil has written columns for Singapore newspapers like *TODAY*, *The Straits Times* and *The New Paper*, as well as other Singapore and overseas publications. One of the most successful Singapore-based authors of the past decade, he has sold 130,000 books so far. His works include *Notes from an Even Smaller Island* (2001), *Scribbles from the Same Island* (2003), *Final Notes from a Great Island* (2006), *Be My Baby* (2008) and *Premier Leech* (2011). He is currently working on a new Singapore title.



THE STORY FACTORY SHEILA WEE

P4 – 6

27 - 28 Feb & 1 - 2, 5 - 6, 8 - 9 Mar (morning and afternoon)
Duration: 1.5 hours
Fee: \$15 per student

Good oral storytelling is a blend of careful preparation and well-timed, on-the-spot improvisation. In this workshop by renowned storyteller Sheila Wee, students will be introduced to activities that explore these two aspects of oral storytelling skills. They will learn an easy method of planning an effective original story and discover how creative their imaginations can be when they dare to say the first thing that comes into their heads!

IN THE CLASSROOM...

Imagination sometimes requires inspiration! Get this process going by asking your students to find a classical painting (easily available online through the Google Art Project, and the websites of many museums) that they like. Ask each student to construct a tale inspired by what they see, and then gather the class to hear the stories read out loud and see the paintings which inspired these stories.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Sheila Wee (Singapore)

Sheila co-founded Singapore's first storytelling circle and its first professional storytelling company, and has performed and conducted numerous workshops and courses in Singapore, Australia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the UK. A former freelance writer, who recently contributed to the anthology *A River of Stories: Tales and Poems from Across the Commonwealth*, she is currently working on an anthology of stories and a storytelling handbook for the Hong Kong Bureau of Education.