



AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S
TELEVISION FOUNDATION



MY:24

STUDY GUIDE

ENGLISH



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"THE MIND IS A NARRATIVE DEVICE: WE RUN ON STORIES. STORIES UNITE ALL WORLDS. IT IS THE COMPELLING NATURE OF STORIES AND THEIR TELLING THAT IMPACTS ON HOW WE RELATE TO EACH OTHER, HOW WE DEFINE WHO WE ARE, AND HOW AND WHAT WE LEARN. STORIES ARE AN ENTRY POINT FOR MEANING-MAKING - A PLACE WHERE LEARNING AND LIFE MERGE. STORIES CONTRIBUTE TO OUR DEVELOPMENT AS WHOLE, COHERENT, HUMAN BEINGS." (K. Lowe, 2002, p.7)

USING MY:24 IN THE CLASSROOM

A narrative, as described in the Australian Curriculum: English (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)) is 'a story of events or experiences, real or imagined. In literary theory, narrative includes the story (what is narrated) and the discourse (how it is narrated).' (ACARA, 2014). In MY:24, each episode is a personal narrative about events or experiences that have occurred, each narrative a life story revealed and shared.

One of the unique and most compelling aspects of MY:24 is the way in which each narrative unfolds. The narration is informal, honest and personal. Each character shares their story with the audience in a unique and special way. Each episode is part narrative, part reflection, part storytelling.

Storytelling is an oral tradition as old as time. In MY:24 a diverse group of regular, yet inspirational, young people tell their personal stories to engage, inform and advise us. Storytelling has evolved, as we have evolved, and where once families and communities sat around a fire at night and told stories about the day's activities, today stories are told via television, social media and other digital platforms. A well told story has the power to move us, to involve us, to change us. It can transport us through time and emotionally links us together. Stories help us to know, remember and understand one another and our world.



MY:24
THE DAY
THAT CHANGED
THEIR LIVES
FOREVER

Narratives can be either traditional fiction or modern fiction. Traditional fiction includes folk tales, fables, fairy tales as well as myths and legends. Modern fiction includes contemporary, realistic, historical fiction as well as fantasy and science fiction. A narrative tells or narrates a sequence of events that involves a problem faced by a character or characters in a specific time and place. Narratives can be traditional, such as a fairy tale or fable or modern such as a picture story book, a cartoon, a short story with a simple plot or a longer story with a much more complicated plot. Narratives are usually written in the first or third person and can be fantasy, historical, mysteries, romance, horror or science fiction to name just a few.

Narratives texts are written to amuse and entertain, to inform, to instruct or explain and usually have a basic structure, a beginning or introduction known as the orientation, the middle known as the complication and the end known as the resolution. Not all narratives follow this same basic structure, the narratives in *MY:24* use this structure effectively and skillfully.

Within the *MY:24* episodes we see within the narrative, each character reflecting on their situation, analysing events in their life, examining their thinking and feeling and through this reflection making sense of their experience and learning from it. Reflections enable us all to look more closely at a situation, analyse it and through this understand ourselves a little better.

In *MY:24* each character has taken the time to reflect on their experiences; to make sense of what had happened and then all have moved forward in a positive direction. Reflection was a powerful way they explored, considered and questioned their feelings, attitudes and beliefs.

Source: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), downloaded from the Australian Curriculum website on June 2014.

SERIES SYNOPSES

In an upbeat, visual feast of social-media-inspired storytelling, *MY:24* is a factual series chronicling the life-changing events from just one day in their lives that has shaped a diverse and fascinating collection of young Australians. In each episode, two individual stories are interwoven, with both participants taking us on a personal journey to relive their '*MY:24*' event and the transformational impact it's had on their lives.

What sets this true-life format apart is that in each episode the young person is the driver in the telling of their own story – the series is built not only on their own words, it is constructed with the contribution of their own content created specifically for the series. With this emphasis on individual perspective, *MY:24* is a factual entertainment series where social history meets autobiography for kids.

26 young people, aged between 11 to 21 years from around Australia, tell their own story about the one day that changed their lives forever and how the events of 24 hours can fundamentally change attitudes and aspirations.

TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

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01 THEMES

SYNOPSIS EPISODE: JAKE

Jake is the current open male world champion in rope skipping and holds the world record as the fastest skipper as at 2013.

Jake had been training for years as an elite swimmer when he happened upon the sport of competitive skipping at a school fete. It offered him a whole new world of passion and possibilities but the reaction of his family and peers caused considerable friction and heartache: he was bullied at school for joining the skipping group and did so behind his disapproving dad's back.

Jake is now studying primary education at university, a career direction inspired by his skipping coach Carolyn. He coaches a junior team of skippers and works for the Heart Foundation: visiting schools, giving skipping demonstrations and promoting the organisation's "Jump Rope for Heart" physical activity and fundraising program.

In future Jake wants to continue to give back through coaching, better his record at the next world titles, be an advocate for the acceptance of students who go against the norm, and give those students the skills to build their confidence.

Jake, 20, lives with his family on Queensland's Gold Coast and is the middle son of three boys.

CURRICULUM LINKS :

English: Literature - Responding to literature
Analyse and evaluate similarities and differences in texts on similar topics, themes or plots *ACEL1614*

English: Literature - Responding to literature
Share, reflect on, clarify and evaluate opinions and arguments about aspects of literary texts *ACELT1627*

English: Literacy - Interpreting, analysing, evaluating
Use comprehension strategies to interpret and analyse information and ideas, comparing content from a variety of textual sources including media and digital texts *ACELY1713*

Source: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), downloaded from the Australian Curriculum website on June 2014.

SUMMARY FOR TEACHERS

The theme of a story is the central idea, the main message, the author is trying to convey. Often the author does not lay the theme out clearly, rather the author will suggest the theme and then it is up to the viewer/reader to reveal it.

The series of *MY:24* has a strong underlying theme and each of the episodes within the series have compelling and thoughtful themes. Some themes are clearer than others; some take time and deliberation to work out, some episodes even have multiple themes to discover. All are timeless themes that can be explored in depth by your students.

Encourage students to reflect on the theme in each episode as they are viewed; support them to build up a strong picture of the theme that runs through the series as well as the themes running through individual episodes. When viewing each of the *MY:24* episodes, allow students time to consider the

character, the complications they have faced and then reflect on the resolution of that particular **MY:24** story. Through students sharing their understandings and insights with each other, they are supported to reflect on the character's story as well as their own. This reflection may include considering other resolutions that may have occurred if a character had chosen a different path. Through sharing and clarifying their thoughts and opinions students are able to come to understand the underlying themes, and their world, in greater depth.

This activity aims to support students to understand that the theme of a story is the central idea, the main message the author is trying to convey. Through discussion and these activities students will become familiar with common themes in narratives and become aware of some of the themes within *MY:24*.

BEFORE VIEWING

Class Discussion:

The theme of a story is the central idea or message that the author is writing about. The theme is not explicit in the text but rather is a message or messages implied by the author. The author usually 'suggests' the theme and then it is up to the viewer/reader to discover it.

Fairy stories and fables have themes.

- Think back to some stories/texts you have read/viewed.
- Can you remember a central message that was suggested?

Start a list of common themes that run through stories the class has read.

These may include:

- Coming of age
- Circle of life
- Love and sacrifice

The title of this episode is called **MY:24 Jake**. While viewing this episode, jot down notes, draw your thoughts about:

- What happened to Jake?
- What problems did he face?
- What control did he have over what happened to him?
- How did Jake resolve these problems/issues?
- How else could Jake's story have ended?

AFTER VIEWING

Class Discussion:

- What happened in Jake's story?
- What were the problems Jake faced?
- How did Jake overcome these problems?
- What messages do you think Jake, as the author of this story, is sharing with us?

- Come to a class consensus on the central theme of this episode.
- You may like to consider the theme/s of each episode as you view them, and continue to add to your class list.



02 CONNECTING TO TEXT

SYNOPSIS EPISODE: DAVE

Dave suffered depression until, aged 15, he went to a Sydney gym for the first time and met Greg. After that first workout he was hooked: the gym was his new anti-depressant and Greg became his trainer and mentor. Eight months later Dave was still on anti-depressants but believed the gym and Greg were more effective in enabling him to adopt a healthy mental and physical outlook and manage his anxiety and depression.

The support of his family has also been hugely important in managing his disorder: his mum and dad often work out at the gym alongside him. His mum also plays a crucial part in an arrangement that allows him to forego school when a panic attack is approaching and head for the gym instead. But he catches up on his schoolwork later of course.

As a result of sending the YMCA his story as part of a competition, Dave won a free year-long membership for his entire household and became part of the YMCA family. He has given presentations on behalf of the organisation and works part-time for the local YMCA. He has also talked publicly at his own school about how to identify depression and help friends with mental health issues.

Dave is passionate about spreading his message and aims to develop a career as a motivational speaker or within the mental health sector, perhaps within the public sector or as a lobbyist.

Dave says he feels happy and loved, and has a strong sense of belonging; sensations he never dreamed possible for himself. Months now pass without the dull fog of depression or panic attacks.

CURRICULUM LINKS:

English: Literature -**Literature and context**

Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts *ACELT1613*

English: Literature -**Responding to literature**

Present a point of view about particular literary texts using appropriate metalanguage, and reflecting on the viewpoints of others *ACELT1609*

English: Literacy -**Interpreting, analysing, evaluating**

Use comprehension strategies to interpret and analyse information and ideas, comparing content from a variety of textual sources including media and digital texts *ACELY1713*

SUMMARY FOR TEACHERS

Careful and considered teaching supports students to connect to the text viewed/read. When a student actively engages with a text, they develop a clearer, deeper understanding of it and are better able to connect the text to their lives, to other texts and to the world around them.

The experiences audiences have impact the meaning made from the text and also the attitudes developed towards the characters and events. Through viewing this episode of MY:24 students can understand that the way they personally interpret the text can be effected by what they, the viewer/reader, brings to the text. The characters and events in the text may be a little different to the social and cultural situations that they are familiar with however through finding connections to the characters and events represented they gain a more insightful understanding of the text and its significance.

An important part of students connecting to a text is their ability to activate their prior knowledge and use this to make links to the text. These links enable students to connect to the text and so comprehend more clearly the text they are viewing/reading. The connections students make; text to self, text to text and text to world, enable them to engage with the text in a deeper, more thoughtful way.

This activity aims to support students to understand how they can connect to texts through using the strategy of; text to self, text to text and text to world. When connecting to the text, students will also be encouraged to present their points of view about the episode, especially the characters and events in the text using appropriate metalanguage to express their opinions as well as acknowledge and reflect on the viewpoints of others.

BEFORE VIEWING

Class Discussion:

In order to gain a deep understanding of the text we need to connect to it in different ways. If we have clear and real connections we are more able to understand the text and to develop a greater comprehension of the text.

We do this in a number of ways:

- Text to self – How does this text relate to me?

- Text to text – Does this text remind me of something else I have viewed/read?
- Text to world – Could this really happen?

When viewing Dave's **MY:24**, think about your connections to his story: text to self, text to text and text to world.

AFTER VIEWING

In small groups students discuss:

Text to self-connections:

- Does Dave's story remind you of anything?
- Can you relate to Dave? How?
- Does anything that happened to Dave remind you of anything that has happened in your own life?

Text to text connections:

- Does this remind you of anything else you have viewed/read?
- How is Dave's story similar to other things you have viewed/read?
- How is Dave's story different to other things texts you have viewed/read?

Text to world connections:

- Does this text remind you of an actual event that has happened?
- How are the events in Dave's story similar to something that has happened to other people?
- How are the events in Dave's story different to something that has happened to other people?

Class Discussion:

- What connections helped you to understand Dave's story in more depth?
- Do these connections help you to understand Dave and his story?



03 AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE

SYNOPSIS EPISODE: LYNDSEY

Lyndsey was one of the naughty kids in her Sydney high school up to the point when she met her "big sister" Kathy through a mentorship program. Kathy made her see that she shouldn't spend her time planning and executing pranks, then helped her set some life goals and gave her the confidence to pursue those goals.

When Kathy stood by Lyndsey during a particularly tough period it was Lyndsey's **MY:24** and it created an unshakeable bond between them.

Since then Lyndsey has graduated from Bradfield Senior College and completed an audio engineering course at a music college. A self-taught guitarist, she now writes her own music and songs.

Kathy's continuing support and influence has had a wider and more far-reaching affect than Lyndsey could ever have imagined: it has given her the power and confidence to take control of all areas of her life including the sometimes difficult arena of family. She has moved out of her dad's home, and lives with her grandad now.

One of Lyndsey's dreams is to attend acting college and she is currently saving up to cover the tuition fees and other costs. She knows she has to be financially independent to achieve that goal but has developed a determination and drive that is sure to see her through.

CURRICULUM LINKS :

English: Literature - Examining literature

Recognise and analyse the ways that characterisation, events and settings are combined in narratives, and discuss the purposes and appeal of different approaches
ACELT1622

English: Literacy - Interpreting, analysing, evaluating

Use comprehension strategies to interpret and analyse information and ideas, comparing content from a variety of textual sources including media and digital texts
ACELY1713

English: Literacy - Interacting with others

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

SUMMARY FOR TEACHERS

When we write, we write with a purpose and an audience in mind. The text structure we use and the language we chose when we write, shapes the meaning of the text and this varies according to the purpose and the audience of the text we are writing for.

There are many and varied purposes of a text; texts can entertain, persuade, provide information, educate. When we write, the audience and purpose of our text, guides the structure of the writing and the language features we chose to use.

We may be writing a post to a friend, the purpose of this is to inform them of what is happening, it may also be to amuse or entertain them. If composing a job application the writing will be to inform rather than entertain, our focus will be to write in a clear and formal manner. Who we are writing to and why influences how

and what we write. When we have written a text we need to reflect on the intended audience and whether or not the text has fulfilled its purpose

This activity aims to support students to understand that different text types vary in purpose, structure and focus depending on the purpose and audience. *MY:24* is a series of stories created by adolescents to not only entertain but also to inform others. When viewing this episode, encourage students to analyse the structure and features, discuss the purposes of the *MY:24* series and focus on the appeal of the authorial choices of structure and language that have been made. Through discussion and activities, students will learn to recognise and analyse the ways that characterisation, events and settings are combined in this episode, and then use this information to discuss the purposes and appeal of the approaches used.

BEFORE VIEWING

Class Discussion:

The text structure we use and the language we choose when we write, shapes the meaning of the text and this varies according to the purpose and the audience of the text we are writing.

When we write, we write with an audience and a purpose in mind. Think about the audience and purpose for these texts:

- A shopping list
- A job application
- A Facebook post
- A birthday card

The purpose and audience for writing a shopping list

compared to a business document are very different. When we write an email, the purpose is usually to share information, it may be information about work, or it may be information about us or how friends or family are.

We know and understand our audience and we write for that particular audience.

If we are writing an essay the text is neat, formal and clear and there are (hopefully) no spelling or grammatical errors. How is this different to writing a text to a friend or a Facebook post?

- Write up a chart on the whiteboard, comparing them.

AFTER VIEWING

Class Discussion:

Audience:

- Who is the intended audience of Lyndsey's story?
- Does Lyndsey's story appeal to the intended audience?
- What information in the structure and language of Lyndsey's story conveys this?

Purpose:

- What is the purpose of Lyndsey's story?

- What information in the structure and language of Lyndsey's story conveys this?
- How does Lyndsey's story entertain the audience?
- How does Lyndsey's story inform the audience?
- Has Lyndsey's story fulfilled its purpose?
- Who is the intended audience for the *MY:24* series?
- How does the *MY:24* series appeal to its audience?
- What information in the structure and language of the *MY:24* series conveys this?
- What is the intended purpose of the *MY:24* series?



04 NARRATIVES - STORYTELLING

SYNOPSIS EPISODE: ROMY

Before her MY:24, Romy was a carefree 13-year-old, living with her family and a lot of dogs and kangaroos on a four-hectare property. She loved her big bedroom and riding her bike around the property and she had a passion for playing tennis. Then the Black Saturday bushfires hit.

Romy had to dig deep to find strength she didn't know she had after her family's home and all their possessions and personal treasures were destroyed. She had to will herself to find the drive that would enable her to recover and refocus rather than succumbing to despair.

She now lives in suburban outer Melbourne, a big change from her rural lifestyle, and once the renovations are finished she will have her own room again. She still struggles with aspects of what happened and constantly checks weather reports, especially in the summer, but she has a new appreciation for life and family and for making the most of the here and now. And she loves her new ukulele.

Finding solace in tennis, Romy has also transformed from laid-back country girl to a fiercely driven athlete. She trains every night of the week, is ranked 200th in Australia and plays Grade 1 at Kooyong. Romy dreams of heading to tennis college in the US and playing in the International arena. Her coach is Michael Baroch, who used to coach Maria Sharapova.

CURRICULUM LINKS :

English: Literature - Responding to literature
Share, reflect on, clarify and evaluate opinions and arguments about aspects of literary texts *ACELT1627*

English: Literacy - Interacting with others
Plan, rehearse and deliver presentations, selecting and sequencing appropriate content and multimodal elements for defined audiences and purposes, making appropriate choices for modality and emphasis *ACELY1710*

English: Literacy - Interacting with others
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*

SUMMARY FOR TEACHERS

We have all been told stories, stories about our family, our friends and stories about our community. These stories give us insights into people, what they value, what inspires them, what difficulties they have been through and what helps them through these difficulties. Stories are a way of constructing who we are, our uniqueness, our identity.

When we tell stories we are required to adapt narrative elements and language features and plan and create texts that entertain others. The purpose of these stories is to inform, inspire, educate and emotionally engage our audiences, audiences who are sometimes familiar and sometimes less-familiar. The way we construct and communicate our stories are all factors that blend together to communicate to others the type of person we are.

With the ease of using digital resources many people are able to share their stories with a wide range of audiences

and in a wide variety of ways. In the MY:24 series, each episode is an individual sharing their story. The MY:24 series tells stories of individuals struggling, striving and surviving. Each episode is unique because it is a personal story, some humorous, some sad - all uplifting.

This activity aims to support students to share and reflect on the art of storytelling. Students will be encouraged to clarify and evaluate opinions and arguments about aspects of narratives, focusing on storytelling in particular. Students will be encouraged to use a range of skills and tool to present personal stories, taking care to focus on specific vocabulary, body language, voice quality, etc. Students will also be encouraged to include still and moving images, as well as music and/or sound to add interest and meaning to the story they are telling.

BEFORE VIEWING

Class Discussion:

We have all been told stories since we were very young, stories about our family, our friends and our community. These stories give us insights into others: what they value, what inspires them, what has hurt them and what has helped them.

How we communicate our stories, tells the listener a little bit about who we are, what's important to us and what we value.

- Who in your family tells good stories?
- Why are they good stories?
- Who do you know that is a good storyteller?
- What makes them a good storyteller?

Create a class list of the attributes of a good storyteller, this can be added to during the unit of work.

A good storyteller is able to use a wide range of techniques to capture the audience's interest. These techniques include thinking about the audience and purpose of the story:

- Recognising and selecting appropriate voice effects - such as tone, volume, pitch and pace.
- Selecting specific vocabulary - words influence the meaning and position and persuade the audience.

Think about these techniques while you view Romy's story:

AFTER VIEWING

Class Discussion:

- What images did Romy use when telling her story?
- Did they help you to visualise her story?
- What techniques were used in Romy's story to capture your interest?
- How did Romy use her voice to influence the audience?
- Did Romy select specific vocabulary to influence the audience?
- What values do you think Romy has?
- Have her values changed?
- What do you think inspires Romy?

Collect images (photos or video) from your childhood that evoke strong memories, images that inspire you or tell part of your story, e.g. a sports game, a birthday party, playing with your brother or sister.

Using these images, make some notes about the image:

- Think about your audience
- Select appropriate vocabulary
- Think about voice
- Think about the focus



05 NARRATIVES - STRUCTURE

SYNOPSIS EPISODE: CRYSTAL

Crystal never imagined that a fun spare-time activity with her best friend would eventually become her life's focus even though her circus classes had got into her system by the time she was 12 years of age.

Her **MY:24**, the day she made the mental switch that the circus was her passion, she decided to get serious and trekked to a hardware store on a mission to make a stack of hula-hoops. Since then she's been on a steady, glittering trajectory to achieve her dream of one day performing around the world professionally. This has transformed her from an unconfident and hesitant schoolgirl amateur to a rising circus superstar.

Crystal has been with Australia's national youth circus, the Flying Fruit Fly Circus, for two years. She still gets terribly homesick for Broome and, given that her hometown is in the tropics, she greatly dislikes how cold it is in Albury, where the school and performance group is based. Being a circus performer is a very tough life physically – especially due to the pain associated with working with a trapeze. She hasn't settled in completely but is trying to make the most of this wonderful opportunity.

The future is very exciting for Crystal. Once she graduates her dream is to travel the world as part of an international troupe such as Cirque du Soleil.

CURRICULUM LINKS :

English: Literature - Examining literature

Recognise and analyse the ways that characterisation, events and settings are combined in narratives, and discuss the purposes and appeal of different approaches
ACELT1622

English: Language - Text structure and organisation

Understand how texts vary in purpose, structure and topic as well as the degree of formality
ACELA1504

English: Language - Text structure and organisation

Understand how authors often innovate on text structures and play with language features to achieve particular aesthetic, humorous and persuasive purposes and effects
ACELA1518

SUMMARY FOR TEACHERS

Narrative texts are written for a range of reasons including to: amuse, entertain, inform, instruct or explain. Narratives usually have a basic structure, the orientation, the complication and the resolution. When telling a personal story, the resolution can also include a reorientation. A reorientation is when the character/s may describe their life after the complication. This is when the events of the narrative can be drawn together and at this stage a message may be included or emphasised. This can also be described as a reflection.

The *MY:24* series is a collection of stories, with a basic narrative structure that also include a reorientation at the end of each episode. Each personal story has a reflective component at the end which focuses the

audience on the embedded theme/s of the episode.

This activity aims to support students to understand that different text types vary in structure as well as focus depending on the purpose and audience. Through discussion and a range of activities students will become familiar with narratives; the stages of a narrative, how narratives can be composed as well as how narratives can be presented in a range of forms; oral, written and digital and multimedia forms.

BEFORE VIEWING

Class Discussion:

Narratives are texts that are written to amuse and entertain as well as inform, to instruct or explain.

Narratives usually have a basic structure, a beginning or introduction known as the orientation, the middle known as the complication and the end known as the resolution. Not all narratives follow this same basic structure, however, most do.

Discuss with students their understanding of the introduction to a narrative:

- What elements of the story are introduced in the orientation?
- Why is it important for the introduction to help the reader/audience to orient the story in time and place?

Next is the complication or series of events. This is where the activities or problems, involving the main

character, are introduced and considered.

- Think back to some stories/texts you have read. Provide some examples of a complication.

The narrative ends with a resolution; this is where the complication or problem is usually resolved.

- Why is it important to resolve the complication in a narrative?

Explain to students the concept of the reorientation. A reorientation is when the character/s may describe their life after the complication. This is when the events of the narrative can be drawn together and at this stage a message may be included or emphasised.

AFTER VIEWING

Class Discussion:

Identify the orientation, complication and series of events and then the resolution.

Watch *MY:24, Episode: Crystal*, focus on the structure of the episode, taking note of the following:

- How were you introduced to Crystal in this episode?
- What was Crystal's complication?
- How did Crystal resolve this complication?
- How did Crystal complete her story?
- What do you think the message is Crystal is sharing with us?

Find a friend and discuss your notes.

- Could you both recognise the structure of the episode?
- Did Crystal's story fit into the narrative structure?
- What was the purpose of Crystal's story?
- Did it fulfill its purpose?

Revise the structure of Crystal's story, focus on the introduction, the complication/s and the resolution. Write these on the whiteboard.

Watch, *MY:24, Episode: Jake*, again focus on the episode structure, take note of:

- How did Jake's episode begin?
- What was Jake's main problem?
- How did Jake resolve this problem?
- How did Jake complete the episode?
- What is the message Jake has included in his episode?

Find a friend and discuss your notes.

- Are the structures of both Crystal and Jake's stories similar? How?

Think about your **MY:24**:

- How would you introduce it?
- How would you structure it?
- Have a think about the reflection at the end of the episode.
- What would you include in your reflection?

06 STRUCTURE - STORYBOARDING

SYNOPSIS EPISODE: MADISON

Madison practically grew up on the ocean. Because of her parents' love of boats and sailing, she spent her first few years living at sea and the ocean was her second home.

Madison's **MY:24** came when she went on a night dive with her Dad at a reef they'd visited many times previously. She was 14 years of age and was absolutely shocked to only see one shark, a dramatic decline compared to a year earlier when she had swum among a colony of hundreds of these sleek sea creatures.

This experience was Madison's "wake up call": overnight she went from shark admirer to shark conservationist and – to add weight to her cause – serious filmmaker. Her "shark girl" nickname suddenly began to carry more weight.

Madison is currently working on one of the vessels owned by the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society and expects her life to always involve conservation, activism and travel – when at home in Australia, her base is Byron Bay with her dad.

Madison's passionate and occasionally idealistic activism has matured. She is now a politically-savvy campaigner but her aims remain the same: to better protect sharks by lobbying to change the laws about legal shark fishing in marine parks and to educate the public about how amazing the much maligned shark really is.

CURRICULUM LINKS:

English: Literacy - Interpreting, analysing, evaluating

Use comprehension strategies to interpret and analyse information and ideas, comparing content from a variety of textual sources including media and digital texts
ACELY1713

English: Literacy - Interacting with others

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

English: Literacy - Creating texts

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

SUMMARY FOR TEACHERS

Storyboarding

Madison's **MY:24** is an informative and persuasive narrative that raises issues for the audience, around conservation and activism. Using thoughtful language and textual choices, Madison has created an episode that not only tells her personal story and the events that led to her **MY:24**, she also clearly describes a series of events that inform and persuade us to think about our environment, in particular the marine environment and sharks. Madison's story shows us she went from frustration through to gaining a sense of passion and purpose.

This activity aims to support students to interpret and analyse the information and ideas presented by Madison. Discuss the purpose and structure of the episode and compare the content Madison uses with content from a variety of sources including media

and digital texts. Students will then be supported to create their own presentation on a part of the environment they are passionate about. Using a storyboard strategy can help students to organise their ideas and structure their text in a clear and focused way.

Storyboards are a type of graphic organiser; they are generally made up of boxes or frames that are set out in a logical order. The author can then use each box to organise the information and/or images they would like to use in their story. Storyboards can be created either by hand or digitally. The author starts by visualising the story; it may help them to tell the story to a friend. Next the author sequences the story, using the key frames. They may also like to include technical considerations, e.g. where the camera is, the angle of the camera, lighting, etc.

BEFORE VIEWING

Class Discussion:

Storyboards are a type of graphic organiser used by an author and are generally made up of boxes or frames that are set out in a logical order. The author then uses each box to organise the information and/or images they would like to use in their story.

In groups, research different aspects of storyboards and present your findings to the class.

Group Activities:

Storyboards were first developed (in the form we use today) at the Walt Disney Studios in the early 1930s. Research why storyboards were used by animators in the early 1930s and how the process has developed since.

Develop a definition of what a storyboard is and how it is used. Research storyboard templates, present some useful examples to your class.

Research storyboards and how they are used in today's society. List the range of professions where storyboards are now used. Include information on some of the technical vocabulary used in relation to storyboards that may be useful when developing your own text.

Search for digital storyboard templates online, evaluate the effectiveness of the templates, present your findings to the class.

AFTER VIEWING

Individual Activity:

Using a digital storyboard template, retell Madison's MY:24 episode.

Small Group Activity:

Present your storyboard to your group, discuss the benefits of using a storyboard to organise the structure of the story.

Class Discussion:

Madison was inspired by her local environment - the sea.

- What makes Madison's story compelling?
- What inspires you about Madison? Why?

Madison has always been passionate about the sea, in particular sharks and filmmaking, she was able to combine her two passions – sharks and filmmaking and she now uses these strengths and her passion to make a positive difference on the planet.

What are you passionate about in your environment? How can you share what you know with others?

Individual Research:

Research sharks:

- Have your views on sharks changed?
- Do you agree with Madison? Why/Why not?
- Present your findings.

Research marine life and find another sea creature that is in danger.

- Investigate why it is in danger?
- What you can do to help preserve its existence?
- Present your findings.

Think about your local community environment.

- Do you have any areas of concern or things you would like to see changed?
- Investigate these concerns and find out how you can help to change the situation and make a difference.
- Present your findings to the class using a multimedia presentation.

07 SYNTHESIZING

SYNOPSIS EPISODE: RIDA

At the age of 16, Rida chose to be part of mainstream contemporary Australia rather than adhere to her traditional Pakistani upbringing.

Her **MY:24** was taking the frightening first step of standing up for herself by refusing to leave her new home in Australia and her educational aspirations here for a life she felt would be limiting – a life she saw would involve an enforced return to Pakistan, an end to her formal education and the possibility of an arranged marriage. This necessitated breaking away from her family and seeking the support of friends and professionals in her local community to help her finish her schooling.

Now 18, Rida is a productive and free-spirited young woman who has retained her faith and cultural identity. After completing her Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) with sponsorship from her employer, the Australian Taxation Office, she was accepted into University, and now lives independently. She is heavily involved in community radio and is soon to launch a new program titled *Colourful Australia*, has won several short story competitions and is working on her first novel, and has been invited back to Pakistan to speak to the media about women and choice.

Rida is determined to continue to contribute to society's cultural understanding and advocate for greater freedoms. She dreams of becoming a philanthropist who helps rebuild communities in poorer nations and of studying psychology in order to be a better counsellor.

CURRICULUM LINKS:

English: Literature - Literature and context

Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts *ACELT1613*

English: Literature - Examining literature

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*

English: Literacy - Creating texts

Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, choosing and experimenting with text structures, language features, images and digital resources appropriate to purpose and audience *ACELY1714*



SUMMARY FOR TEACHERS

In Rida's **MY:24** she shares her story of growing up in contemporary Australia while also living within a traditional Pakistani family. This story allows students a window into Rida's life and upbringing and may help them to identify and explore the issues of culture and gender that Rida faced. This **MY:24** also explores how Rida has worked hard to retain her faith and cultural identity, an integral part of her story.

Students are encouraged to think carefully as they watch this episode, they are encouraged to reflect on the issues that arise, and explore them in-depth. In doing so they will start to synthesise the information presented. When we are actively involved in the viewing/reading process our thinking evolves and changes. The main reason we view/read is to learn something new or to add to what we already know, to integrate what we know and understand with what we are viewing/reading.

Synthesising is an important skill for our students to learn. The new information students may gain from

Rida's **MY:24** may reinforce aspects of things they already know, it may give them further insights or give them a different view, a new perspective on their thinking about something. In this way they come away from the story with not only deeper understanding of the issues involved but with new understandings of the issues involved.

The aim of these activities is for students to identify and explore different perspectives, focusing on those based on culture and gender. Through encountering new perspectives, students will have the opportunity to broaden and develop their ideas and viewpoints about the events, issues and the characters represented in this episode. Through exploring these perspectives, students will start to recognise the influence our different social and cultural experiences may have on the meaning we take from a text and when we spend time actively engaging in the text we are then able to synthesise the information and create new, deeper understandings.

BEFORE VIEWING

This is the story of a young Pakistani girl, Rida, who has a strong connection to her family, her culture and her faith.

Class Discussion:

What does culture represent to you?

'Culture is a defining feature of a person's identity, contributing to how they see themselves and the groups with which they identify. Culture may be broadly defined as the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings, which is transmitted from one generation to another. Every community, cultural group or ethnic group has its own values, beliefs and ways of living.'

NSW Government, Education and Communities, 2013, *Racism No Way. Anti Racism for Australian Schools* website

- What does culture mean to you and your family?
- What values and beliefs do you and your family hold?

Rida is a Moslem living in Australia. Her **MY:24** occurred when her family wanted her to return to Pakistan and take part in an arranged marriage, she wanted to stay in Australia and get an education.

AFTER VIEWING

Class Discussion:

- What do you believe Rida's cultural values may be?
- How did Rida's cultural values affect the way she handled her parents wanting her to return to Pakistan?
- How else could she have responded to her parents wanting her to return to Pakistan?
- Did Rida's cultural values help or hinder her decisions?

- What does it mean to have your own cultural identity?
- If culture defines our identity, what do you believe your cultural identity consists of?

On a poster illustrate/write about your/Australia's cultural identity. Present your poster to a small group.

08 NARRATION

SYNOPSIS EPISODE: LUCAS

Lucas's Melbourne childhood was defined by profound learning difficulties because of his profound dyslexia, and relentless, seemingly fruitless special education classes. His MY:24 was the day he decided that enough was enough: he no longer wanted to be singled out for his disability or to feel separate and different from his peers.

Lucas has subsequently changed from "special ed" kid to a creative powerhouse by embracing his passion for filmmaking, celebrating the heightened creativity he feels dyslexia has given him and taking control of his persona and his life – he now makes his own educational choices and this is working for him and his parents.

Lucas now lives and breathes film and filmmaking and is inventive and prolific. His bedroom is a shrine to film – especially to his idols Quentin Tarantino and Woody Allen – and he watches about eight films a week. He is almost always working on some aspect of his next planned production.

Lucas has a full-time scribe he jokingly refers to as his assistant. People have suggested that he try audio books and technology so that he isn't as reliant on this kind of help, but he says having a lot of close contact with people helps him focus his thoughts and share and build on his ideas. The future is most definitely paved in pictures and sound for Lucas, although he's got some way to go before finishing his formal schooling, and dyslexia has most definitely taken the backseat in his life.

CURRICULUM LINKS :

English: Literature - Responding to literature
Compare the ways that language and images are used to create character, and to influence emotions and opinions in different types of texts *ACELT1621*

English: Literature - 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*

English: Literacy - Texts in context

Show how ideas and points of view in texts are conveyed through the use of vocabulary, including idiomatic expressions, objective and subjective language, and that these can change according to context *ACELY 1698*

SUMMARY FOR TEACHERS

Stories can be narrated in a number of ways, how they are narrated can change the feel of the story, first person narratives tend to have a warmer more friendly feel while third person narratives tend to be more formal.

First person narration is when the story is told by one of the characters, usually the main character, the stories in the *MY:24* series are narrated by the main character. In third person narratives the audience is left to make the connections about what the main character is thinking and the writer/narrator's viewpoint, the audience has a clear, broad view of events, however, this can also mean that the audience is distanced from the story. The narrative becomes a general story being told rather than an intimate story being shared.

First person narratives allow the viewer/reader to connect to the story in a more personal way. First person narratives is a little like sharing a story with a friend. Even though first person narratives are limited to the main character's perspective, other information can become

part of the story in a number of different ways, e.g. an interview with another character, a flashback, or an overheard conversation can all give information regarding others thoughts, feelings or behaviours. In this way you have the intimacy and friendliness of first person narrative as well as the benefit of being able to include important information if it is important to the story being told. First person narrative allows the audience to come closer to the emotional core of the story.

The aim of these activities is for students to recognise that ideas in literary texts can be communicated from several viewpoints, which can lead to different interpretations and responses to the same characters and events. Through experiencing the same character and events through first and third person narration, students will experience the difference between a clear, broad view of events outlined in a story compared to a more intimate, personal view of the same story.

BEFORE VIEWING

Class Discussion:

Stories are usually narrated in the first person or the third person. First person narration is when the story is told by one of the characters, usually the main character.

MY:24 uses first person narration, the main character tells their story. The problem with first person narration can be that the story is limited to what the character telling the story knows.

The benefit is that writing from this perspective draws the audience into the story, it allows the audience to get to know the main character and introduces a compassion and closeness for them that is usually missing from third person narratives.

Individual Research:

Research articles written on Lucas Haynes, search websites including: The Age, Banyule City Council, etc.

Choose an article.

- What is the narrative voice of the article?
- Who do you think is telling Lucas' story in this article?
- Why do you think the author wrote it in this way?
- What have you learnt about Lucas from this article?
- Do you empathise or sympathise with Lucas?

AFTER VIEWING

Class Discussion:

- Who is telling Lucas' story in this episode?
- What is the narrative voice of this story?
- What do you know about Lucas from this story that you didn't know before?
- Do you empathise or sympathise with Lucas more now? Why/Why not?
- Why do you think Lucas created his story in this way?

Individual Activities:

Research Dyslexia.

- In small groups discuss the impact it can have on someone's life.
- Make a list of prominent successful people who have dyslexia.
- Find out how they 'overcame' or used their dyslexia in a positive way.

Research other learning difficulties.

- In small groups discuss the impact a learning difficulty can have on someone's life.
- Make a list of prominent successful people who have a learning difficulty.
- Find out how they 'overcame' or used their learning difficulty in a positive way.

We all have different abilities and strengths.

- Investigate Multiple Intelligences,
- Complete an online Multiple Intelligences survey.
- In groups, discuss your strengths. Are your strengths related to areas that you are passionate about e.g. kinesthetic – sports, musical – drum player etc.
- Were you surprised by your results? Why/Why not?



09 DESIGN

SYNOPSIS EPISODE: HARRY

Harry was a regular Melbourne kid with a love of video games when his baby sister Millie was born three months prematurely and was later diagnosed with Down syndrome.

He is now an adoring older brother who gets his satisfaction, not from the solo pursuits of sitting upstairs in front of his computer, but from being downstairs engaging with his family and playing with and helping to care for Millie. There's a lot to do: feeding her, changing nappies, providing entertainment and making her laugh.

The wonderful new addition to the family has largely shaped Harry's future goals and aspirations: he now wants to become a teacher working with kids with disabilities and help to educate people about what it's like to have a sibling with Down syndrome or other illness or genetic disorder.

CURRICULUM LINKS:

English: Language - Text structure and organisation

Understand how authors often innovate on text structures and play with language features to achieve particular aesthetic, humorous and persuasive purposes and effects *ACELA1518*

English: Literacy - Interpreting, analysing, evaluating

Use comprehension strategies to interpret and analyse information and ideas, comparing content from a variety of textual sources including media and digital texts *ACELY1713*

English: Literacy - Creating texts

Use a range of software, including word processing programs, learning new functions as required to create texts *ACELY1717*

SUMMARY FOR TEACHERS

Harry's story uses a number of creative devices to design a story that encourages empathy and understanding for the main characters. Harry's **MY:24** is designed in such a way as to not only introduce us to Harry and his little sister Millie, but also to give us insights into their feelings. This builds empathy for the characters point of view as well as concern for their health and well-being. Harry uses a combination of approaches and media to design his story so that it has a strong impact on the viewer.

Each **MY:24** episode is told using a range of digital storytelling devices. These devices or strategies are used to present a point of view and show the personality of the person telling the story, this helps the audience connect to both the character and the story they are telling.

The design of a story shows that there is more to telling a good narrative than just having a structure for the story. The design of the narrative can include a range of devices to support and enhance audience participation and Understanding. As a writer we communicate our personality by choosing and using a range of different devices that tell the audience more about us than the words and images we are using.

Different parts of the design include:

- The focus of the story, the focus holds the story together and gives it purpose. The focus also helps the author stay on track as well as help the audience organise what is happening.
- The voice that we use tells the audience about the character, are they easy going, relaxed, enthusiastic, animated, slow, forceful, etc.
- How the character relates to other people in the story. Are they insistent, timid, tentative, aggressive, cheeky, confident, etc.?
- Dramatic tension can be used to build a situation, it doesn't have to be powerful or confrontational, even a small moment can build into a tense situation.
- Flashbacks are useful ways of filling in a backstory and giving the audience more information. Flashbacks can include memorable images and/or digital footage and have been used in most **MY:24** episodes. Flashbacks are a good way to explain a character's actions, attitudes and even their relationships to others.
- Drawing part of a story can be a creative and resourceful way to help tell parts of a story, especially parts that represent memories or re-enact an event, this device has also

SUMMARY FOR TEACHERS

been used in a number of MY:24 episodes (*Episode: Fablice* and *Episode: Rida*).

- A performance can also be a device to help provide more information about the character in the story and can include dancing, singing, use of sound effects and/or music.
- Interviews show the personality of the person telling the story from someone else’s perspective, an interview can help fill in information from another character’s point of view.
- Information boxes give the audience facts about an area of interest from the text.

This activity aims to support students to recognise and analyse the use of digital storytelling devices or strategies that clearly present a point of view and vividly show the personality of the main character. Through individual and class discussions students will become aware of a range of devices they can use to connect the audience to the both the character and the story being told.

BEFORE VIEWING

Class Discussion:

Storytelling devices or strategies are used in digital storytelling to visibly present a point of view and clearly show the personality of the person telling the story.

These devices help the audience connect to both the character and the story they are telling.

These devices include:

- The focus - holds the story together and gives it purpose.
- The voice - tells the audience about the character e.g. easy going, relaxed, forceful, etc.
- How the character relates to others - insistent, timid, cheeky, confident, etc.
- Dramatic tension can build a situation - a small moment or a dramatic one.
- Flashbacks - give the audience more information -

explain a character’s actions, attitudes, etc.

- Drawing – one way to represent memories or re-enact an event.
- A performance - provides more information about the character e.g. dancing, singing.
- Use of sound effects and/or music.
- Interviews – fill in information from another character’s perspective.
- Information boxes – give the audience added information.

Group Activity:

In groups of two or three, watch *Episode: Harry* and as you watch it, list the devices used to present his point of view as well as enhance the audiences engagement and understanding of the story.

Discuss the devices used and how effective they were.

AFTER VIEWING

Class Discussion:

- How did Harry combine different modes and media to create this story?
- What impact did Harry’s choice of design have on you?
- How did Harry use humour in his story?
- How did Harry’s use of humour impact on the story and on you?
- What strategies does Harry use to both amuse the audience and show insights into his feelings?
- How does Harry build empathy for his points of view and concern for his and Millie’s welfare?
- What device did Harry use to inform the audience about Downs syndrome?

Group Activities:

Harry’s goal is now to educate people about what it’s like to have a sibling with Down syndrome, a genetic illness or other illness.

In groups of two or three, research Down syndrome (or another genetic disorder), develop a communication (pamphlet, poster, multimedia presentation, etc.) to inform others about this condition.

Remember to think about audience and purpose.

- What will your focus be?
- What devices are you going to use to help audiences connect with the text?

10 EXPLORING CURRENT CULTURAL VIEWPOINTS

SYNOPSIS EPISODE: FABLICE

Fablice is a 20-year-old Melbourne-based hip-hop artist who has performed with one of Australia's greatest music legends. His life now is a world away from his time as an orphaned 11-year-old soldier during the civil war in the Republic of Burundi in Africa.

Fablice was able to relocate to Australia only after a courageous escape and a stint in a refugee camp. His flight to and arrival in his new country has given him opportunities he never dreamed were possible. He is currently studying International Business at university while living in student accommodation.

Fablice and his nephew G-Storm (see below) write and perform together under the name FLYBZ, an African/American rap act. They have wowed crowds at venues as big as the Melbourne Cricket Ground – during a football game – and their debut single Child Soldier is a collaboration with singer/songwriter Paul Kelly.

Fablice and G-Storm made a very touching return to Burundi to tour schools and inspect projects under the AidAction Australia banner. They were very touched by the trip, which inspired them to work harder at their music in order to spread a message of peace. By achieving great things in Australia they believe they can give the people of Burundi the help they feel they owe them.

CURRICULUM LINKS:

English: Literature - Literature and context

Identify and explore ideas and viewpoints about events, issues and characters represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts *ACELT1619*

English: Literature, Responding to literature

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*

English: Literacy, Interacting with others

Participate in and contribute to discussions, clarifying and interrogating ideas, developing and supporting arguments, sharing and evaluating information, experiences and opinions *ACELY1709*

SUMMARY FOR TEACHERS

Fablice offers us all a glimpse into what it is like to live in a different social and cultural situation to our own. His story is so different to ours but he engages the audience through his warm and enthusiastic personality as he shares with us his deeply personal story. Fablice's **MY:24** is a unique and exceptional story that tells, in at times a confronting way, but always thoughtful style what it is like to live as a refugee. Rather than us considering or wondering what it might be like, we get to share his moving story and the story of his family.

Through viewing Fablice's **MY:24** students will also become aware of the range of devices used to connect the audience to both Fablice and his story. Students will be encouraged to reflect on and compare their personal viewpoints on this text and discuss and justify their responses with evidence from Fablice's **MY:24** as well as other texts they have investigated.

These activities aim to support students to identify and explore ideas and viewpoints about events, issues and characters represented in texts drawn from different social and cultural contexts to their own. Through class discussions and individual research and analysis, students will start to recognise the influence our different historical, social and cultural experiences can have on the meaning we make from the text and the attitudes we may develop towards some characters, actions and events. Students will be given the opportunity to analyse arguments for and against refugees and asylum seekers, issues currently part of community debate. Students will be encouraged to investigate and research this area of community debate and reflect on and then justify their personal stance.

BEFORE VIEWING

Individual Activity:

From what you know at the moment - draw a newly arrived refugee; spend some time including what they may be thinking, feeling and experiencing.

Class Discussion:

- Where do Australians learn about refugees?
- List all responses.

Group Research

In groups of three, find 3 or 4 articles on refugees or asylum seekers from media outlets and analyse the focus of each article. Look at words used to describe

refugees and asylum seekers, the images used to support the article, etc.

Share your findings with the class.

- Where else can we find information on refugees?
- Add to the first list

Divide the class into groups and have each group choose one of the areas listed e.g. UNESCO website, etc.

Each group investigates an area listed. Share a summary of the type of information that can be found with the class.

AFTER VIEWING

Class Discussion:

- What do you know about refugees that you didn't know before you watched Fabrice's story?
- How is Fabrice's story similar to ours? Why?
- How is Fabrice's story different to ours? Why?
- What is our country's policy on refugees? How do we find out what it is?
- Does this policy impact on what we believe and how we think about refugees?
- What is the difference between refugees and boat people?
- Has Fabrice's MY:24 changed your view on refugees? Why? Why not?

Individual Activities:

Write a journal of a refugee who, like Fabrice and his family, has had to flee from a refugee camp in a war torn country to live in Melbourne, Australia.

- How will their lives change? How will they feel?

Research other refugees who have made a positive impact on Australian society.

Find out more about Fabrice:

- Why might Fabrice, a former child soldier from Burundi, be studying International Business at RMIT University?
- Why might Fabrice, a hip-hop artist, be collaborating with Paul Kelly on a debut single titled *Child Soldier*?
- Find the words to *Child Soldier*. What is the purpose and who is the audience for this song?



LINKS

Australian Curriculum Assessment Authority (ACARA). (2014). *Australian Curriculum English website*, retrieved from www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/english/Glossary

Kaye Lowe. (2002) *What's the Story? Making Meaning in Primary Classrooms*. NSW, Primary English Teaching Association

NSW Government, Education and Communities. (2013). *Racism No Way. Anti Racism for Australian Schools website*, retrieved from www.racismnoway.com.au/



Additional Resources and Links:

Australian Centre for the Moving Image(ACMI)

www.generator.acmi.net.au/storyboard

Australian Children's Television Foundation

www.actf.com.au

Australian Curriculum

www.australiancurriculum.edu.au

Australian Literacy Educators Association

www.alea.edu.au

Australian Association of Teachers of English

www.aate.org.au

Banyule City Council

www.banyule.vic.gov.au/Home

Beyond Blue - Depression and Anxiety

www.beyondblue.org.au

Documentary Australia Foundation

www.documentaryaustralia.com.au/films/details/1565/shark-girl

Lifeline

www.lifeline.org.au

Lesley Wing Jan. (2001) *Write Ways Modelling Writing Forms*. Victoria, Oxford Press

Libby Gleeson. (2007) *Writing Like A Writer*. NSW, Primary English Teaching Association

Racism No Way

www.racismnoway.com.au

The Age

www.theage.com.au

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

www.en.unesco.org

BEHIND THE CAMERA

Penny Robins, executive producer, producer

Penny Robins is an independent Sydney-based producer and executive producer who loves telling stories that entertain audiences and make a difference.

She has produced and executive produced for ABC Television, SBS, Canal Plus, BBC and Film Australia, where she worked as an executive producer from 2003 to 2008. From long-form documentaries to series, Penny has worked with some of the country's top talents and has drawn the best from an array of subjects.

At Film Australia she was one of the founding executive producers on the hit Australian series *Who Do You Think You Are?*, produced with Artemis and Serendipity Productions, and on the *LIFE AT* series with Heiress Films. Both have since become long-running repeat series.

Since going back into the world of freelance filmmaking in 2009 she has executive produced and produced, with Paul Clarke, a body of award-winning social history series for ABC TV: namely *Bombora the Story of Australian Surfing*, *Wide Open Road* and most recently *Whitlam: The Power and The Passion*.

Penny initiated, produced and was an executive producer on the 13-part youth series *MY:24* for Essential Media and Entertainment. The series was borne out of a passion to make stories for young people that allow them to speak openly and honestly about contemporary life and it will air on ABC3 in early 2014. *MY:24* is Penny's first children's television production.

Carmel Travers, executive producer

Carmel is Head of Children's Content and Executive Producer at Essential Media and Entertainment. With four decades of experience in the film and television industry, Carmel has headed up major production

companies and been a senior network executive. As a Partner and Executive Director of Essential Media and Entertainment, she is overseeing the growth of its children's, youth and online content.

Bernadette O'Mahony, executive producer

Bernadette O'Mahony is Head of Development and Production at the Australian Children's Television Foundation (ACTF).

She has worked in film and television since the 1980s, and her name is linked to a number of prominent Australian productions including *The Henderson Kids*, *The Flying Doctors*, *Spotswood*, *The Man From Snowy River* and *Crackers*.

Since joining the ACTF, Bernadette has worked on *Crash Zone*, *Legacy of the Silver Shadow*, the award-winning series *Mortified*, *Lockie Leonard* (series 1 and 2), *Dance Academy* (series 1, 2 and 3) and *My Place* (series 1 and 2), *Worst Year of My Life*, *Again!* and *Bushwhacked!*

Amanda Isdale, associate producer

Amanda Isdale is a producer/writer/development consultant who has been working in the children's television industry for more than 10 years. She has considerable experience in both live-action and animated children's factual/entertainment and also documentary television production, and is particularly drawn to working with the 10-14 age group. She is passionate about providing an empowered and genuine voice for them to share their real stories and real experiences with others.

After completing a journalism degree at the University of Queensland, Amanda worked in the children's and documentary Unit at Network Ten, then moved to London and Vancouver to gain international experience. She returned home to Sydney four years later and has had various local production and development roles with broadcasters and independent production companies since 2011.

Amanda's skills encompass producing, directing, writing, script-editing, format consulting, research and development. Her clients include Network Ten, CBBC, DHX Media, Disney Channel Australia, ABC3, Little Airplane Productions, The Feds, The Glorious Picture Company, Beyond Productions, activeTV, Blacklab Productions, and Essential Media and Entertainment.

Amanda was the producer of ABC3's children's television series *My Great Big Adventure*, which recently won the 2013 Association of International Broadcasters Award in London in the category for children's factual program or series.

Dan Mansour, field director

Dan is a passionate writer/director/producer who loves telling stories that can truly make a difference.

He studied film and television at Macquarie University and the University of North Carolina, and for the past 10 years has directed, produced and written for the Nine Network, ABC Television, SBS TV, Ambience Entertainment, The Feds, ASTRA, XYZnetworks, Nickelodeon and MTV, where he worked as a producer/director from 2006 to 2011.

From long form documentaries to animation and live awards shows, including the ASTRA Awards and the MTV Awards, Dan has an eclectic showreel.

His clear vision and people skills help him to get the best performance from both the talent/subject as well as the crew.

Dan produced, directed and edited an original rock 'n' roll documentary series in the USA for MTV, alongside his creative/business partner Tim "Gonzo" Ryan. He wrote, produced and directed the critically acclaimed documentary film *The Final Word* which premiered on ABC2 in 2013.

Britt Arthur – field director

Since making her first multi-award winning documentary *Not in Front of the Kids*, Britt Arthur has worked on more than 100 hours of programming for commercial, public and cross-platform broadcast.

Whether she is crafting a story about celebrities, buildings or the sex lives of the elderly, there is an empathy, candour and sense of humour that illuminates her work.

Her films have screened at prestigious international festivals such as IDFA and won a bunch of awards, including the Australian Directors Guild Awards and the ATOM Awards.

Her credits include *Grand Designs Australia*, *The Force*, *Life at Three* and *Who Do You Think You Are?*

Mike Connerty, supervising editor

Mike Connerty has more than 20 years experience in post-production, documentary, lifestyle and reality programming, public affairs and children's programming.

Recent projects include the feature documentary *The Crossing*, which won the audience award for best documentary at the Sydney Film Festival, the ABC3 music series *Stay Tuned*, a pilot for MTV International titled *The New Crowd*, and the acclaimed documentary *The Final Word*, which was part of the ABC TV's *Opening Shot* series.



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