

# Newsletter

May - November 2015

## A Maze of Story Inc

Explore . Imagine . Write .

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It has been a very busy half year for the A Maze of Story Board, Committee members, Story-weavers and Tutors.

### Our goal for 2016

Our primary aim for 2016 is to take our Creative Writing Workshops into twice as many schools, thereby doubling the number of children who will benefit from our program.

### Website innovations

Some of you may have noticed that our website has been changing.

Over time, we intend to transform the site and make it more attractive for all our target audiences, particularly schools and young writers.

Members who are in a position to do so, are invited to help with developing content for the revamped site. For further details please contact me.

Check out what's happening on the website here:

[www.amazeofstory.org.au](http://www.amazeofstory.org.au)



### Our Inaugural AGM

A Maze of Story had its first AGM on the 14<sup>th</sup> October. We are pleased to report that thirty people in total, attended.

Once the important business side of the meeting was completed, two of the children's stories were expertly read to the audience. They brought smiles and laughter, and admiration for the children's imaginations.

Our guest speaker, WA writer Annabel Smith, followed with a wonderful presentation on the joys and importance of writing and reading. She stressed the underlying understanding of self and others that we gain from these two activities.

The evening concluded with wine and a selection of delicious cheeses.

### Thanks to Lorraine March

One of our valued Funding & Market committee members – Lorraine March – has resigned due to ill health. AMoS extends Lorraine our wishes for a speedy recovery, and we thank her for her support and her time spent on writing up grant applications to Lotterywest, Westpac Bank, and Fogerty Foundation.

Unfortunately we were not successful with the first two, but have been encouraged to apply again in 2016. We will know by the end of this year the results of our application to the Fogerty Foundation.

### Our 8<sup>th</sup> workshop

We are pleased to announce that our 8<sup>th</sup> Creative Writing Workshop will be completed on the 30<sup>th</sup> November. This final workshop for 2015 was held at Tuart Hill Primary School.

To date, we have been to: Ashfield, Anzac Terrace, Bassendean, Maylands Peninsular, Woodbridge, Eden Hill and Embleton Primary Schools.

Each of these schools has been welcoming and helpful.

## Volunteers required

In order for us to achieve our goal of taking AMoS into twice as many schools in 2016, we need to find many more volunteer tutors. Please consider signing up.

If you don't have time yourself, perhaps you know someone who you think might be perfect for the job! If so, please encourage them to put their hand up!

Each tutor mentors two students, helping them to do the exercises and encouraging them to write their stories.

There is more information about volunteering on our website  
[www.amaeofstory.org.au](http://www.amaeofstory.org.au)

## AMoS evaluation

One of our volunteers, Rhonda Zappelli, is an experienced social researcher and program evaluator. She will be putting together an evaluation plan for us, for 2016 onwards.

This is an important step for AMoS as many potential funders require applicants to provide evidence of the effectiveness and efficiency of the programs for which they are seeking funding.

## Seasons greetings

On behalf of the Board, I wish you all a very happy Christmas, relaxed summer holidays and a wonderful New Year.

Gae Oaten, Founder and Chairperson

## Focus on fund raising

To support a very ambitious year ahead, we need to devote our attention to fundraising. We are therefore planning to hold an Art Auction. Our Funding & Marketing Committee has many ideas for the auction and is looking forward to bringing the event to fruition for July 2016. Early in the New Year I will be calling for interested helpers. Peter Keenan, one of our members, has offered to be the auctioneer, and Trish Keenan will be joining our art auction team. AMoS appreciates their support and interest.

We also have other fund-raising events planned, which we will be sharing with you in the future.

## Feedback from schools

Once each workshop is completed, the students are excited and proud to be presented with their books.

A number of Principals and teachers have commented on the positive changes they have observed in some students' attitudes towards their work.

Changes reported include students approaching their school work with more confidence, participating more readily in class activities, and an overall general improvement in their communication.

This is great feedback for AMoS and helps reaffirm our enthusiasm for and commitment to the program.

## Why AMoS is important in today's world

Creative writing is one of the most important skills a child can learn. It stretches the imagination and offers a wonderful outlet for expression. It helps create orderly thought and can be the basis for a lifetime of clear communication and self-expression.

Writing can also be the catalyst for helping children who are having problems in other areas of their life ... a kind of therapy for today's children, who are growing up in a world of bullying, peer pressure, anger and family challenges. Overlaying this is a world in conflict.

Children who have mastered the art of expressing themselves particularly through the written word have a better capacity to cope as well as the tools to excel both educationally and socially.

The AMoS Board is fortunate to have the support of its members, and the wonderful volunteers who so generously give their time. Thank you for helping us change children's lives, one workshop at a time.