

# **Your story matters**

**Carly Findlay for City of Melbourne Libraries**

# Acknowledgement of Country

I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land, the Woi Wurrung and Boon wurrung people of the Kulin Nation. I pay my respects to Aboriginal elders, past present and future, extending my friendship to those who are in the room today. I am thankful to Aboriginal people for looking after our land so well - your care allows us to work and play on it. Thank you for sharing your traditions, stories, art, culture and wisdom with us. Sovereignty was never ceded and treaties have never been signed. This is stolen land.

As a writer who's a guest on Aboriginal land, I want take this opportunity to give gratitude to Aboriginal writers. They have been telling stories here for over sixty thousand years - and right now there are so many writers who are doing important work. Please ensure you read widely - go find the books of Tara June Winch, Melissa Lucashenko, Bruce Pascoe, Anita Heiss and Ellen Van Neerven and many more in book stores and libraries.

In this workshop, Carly Findlay will talk about her memoir *Say Hello* and the upcoming anthology *Growing Up Disabled in Australia*, suggest ways to tell your own story, how writing can empower marginalised people, and how to find a strong writing community.

# Lord Mayor's creative writing awards

I want to let you know about the Lord Mayor's Creative writing awards 2020

Participants can win up to \$12,000

There are four categories

Entries close 3 May 2020

More details are on City of Melbourne website

<https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/libraries/whats-on/creative-writing-awards/Pages/lord-mayors-creative-writing.aspx>

# My story

- I write, speak, do podcasts, write training, do TV and radio.
- Blogging, writing for the media, speech writing, book!
- I wrote Say Hello - a memoir; and am editing Growing Up Disabled in Australia - part of the Growing Up series with Black Inc Books. I've written for other books too - Growing Up African in Australia, the Me Too Anthology and a few others.
- Imposter syndrome still exists!
- Community is important to me.

**If you want to be a  
writer, write.**

(And show up every day.)

# What's your story?

- Think about something interesting about your life - and write about that.
- You don't have to write your whole life story all at once.
- Why should you tell your story? Will it help you? Will it help others? Will it just be for fun?

# Why is it important to write your story?

- Passing on knowledge and skills
- Sharing experiences
- Knowing yourself
- Learning about other people and issues
- Own voices - search Corinne Duyvis “**ownvoices** is a hashtag movement, started on Twitter, used to recommend books about diverse characters that have been written by authors from that same diverse group. In 2015, Young Adult author **Corinne Duyvis** posted on Twitter a suggestion that people use the **#ownvoices** hashtag to recommend books.”
- Getting paid
- Making connections



# Do you have to reveal everything?

- Get permission to write about other people
- Write what feels safe for you to share
- Write what makes you happy
- Write what scares you

# Find a space to write

- A diary or journal
- A notebook
- A computer or phone
- A blog
- Social media accounts
- A podcast
- YouTube

# Go public

- Editors and publishers want to see your writing and that you can build an audience
- Create public social media platforms - Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, podcasts, newsletters
- Share your writing! Tell your friends.

# Make time to write

- Set aside fifteen minutes to half an hour to write
- Make notes on your phone
- Write lengthy Facebook posts and turn them into articles
- Add a piece of writing to your Instagram posts
- Share only if you wish

# A short writing exercise

- Think of a time you shared a meal with someone you love. Maybe it was when you were a child - your parents or grandparent teaching you how to cook? Maybe it was with a friend recently? Maybe it is a meal you eat as part of self love.
- Write 300 words about that memory. Describe the food. What were the expressions on your loved ones' faces? What did it smell like? What were the sounds of cooking, eating, laughing? What did it smell like? What makes you think of that meal today?

# Connect with and learn from other writers

## Attend writers festivals (when they're back)

- Write Around the Murray
- Emerging Writers Festival
- National Young Writers Festival
- Council-run writers festivals
- Feminist Writers Festival
- Melbourne Writers Festival
- National Young Writers Festival

## Connect online

- Social media – Twitter, Facebook, Instagram

## Listen to podcasts

- [So you wanna be a writer](#)
- [The First Time](#)
- [The Creative Penn](#)
- [The Garret](#)
- [Better Reading](#)
- [Booktopia](#)
- [Penmanship](#)
- [Magic Lessons](#)

# Young writers' resources

- [NANO WRIMO Young Writers program](#)
- [Writers Victoria Young writers page](#)
- Oz Authors Online <https://youtu.be/tsFStU67fws>
- [Express Media](#)
- [National Young Writers Festival](#)
- [National Young Writers Month](#)
- [Young Australian Writers Facebook group](#)

# Writing a book

- Practice writing
- Develop a folio of your work - and make it public
- Prepare a book proposal - summary of book, chapter outline, who is its audience, three chapters, about you, your work and your existing audience
- Find an agent (search the Australian Literary Agents Association <https://austlitagentsassoc.com> (or not))
- Pitch it to publishers via your agent - or on your own
- Wait... wait some more...dust yourself off after any rejections
- Get a book deal (or self publish)
- Write that book - it involves writing lots of drafts, editing, more editing
- Promote your book



**Not everyone has to write  
a book, and that's ok.**

**All types of writing matters.**

# Memoir can be in many forms

- Podcasting
- Instagram
- Tiny letters
- Diary
- Cookbooks
- Writing competitions - journals, councils
- Call outs for anthologies - <https://youtu.be/Jwkj0fZQ084>

**And don't forget to read!**

Reading makes good writers.

# Find me

[CarlyFindlay.com.au](http://CarlyFindlay.com.au)

[facebook.com/tune.into.radio.carly](https://facebook.com/tune.into.radio.carly)

@CarlyFindlay on Twitter  
and Instagram

Say Hello  
Growing Up Disabled in Australia

