

# RESEARCH/ING ENGLISH / DIALOGUE



## Are English teachers giving adequate attention to the diverse readers in their classrooms?

We are again debating the teaching of reading.

While it can be argued that the debates primarily impact early years teachers and learners, it is fair to say that competing conceptions of reading and readers are changing teaching practices in secondary English too.

In this Dialogue Seminar, we use the notion of 're/locating the personal' to foreground the personal experiences and professional knowledge of teachers, and to reflect on the place of complex notions of personal meaning-making and on pedagogies that aim to enhance the reading of diverse students. As English teachers focus on the teaching of generic strategies in ways that are increasingly teacher-centred and explicit, are we able to also support students to see themselves in texts, to build motivation and pleasure in reading, and to grapple with layered meanings that are at once ambiguous and nuanced? Are English teachers giving adequate attention to the diverse readers in our classrooms? And, where do we locate ourselves as teachers of reading and does 'location' matter?

Facilitated by Associate Professor **Amanda McGraw**, Federation University, this Dialogue will begin with an engaging panel discussion with researchers whose expertise is related to the teaching of reading; Professor **Larissa McLean Davies**, The University of Melbourne, and Associate Professor **Margaret Merga**, The University of Notre Dame. There will be an opportunity for teachers to discuss their contextual circumstances in small groups. The seminar will conclude by identifying the practical implications for teaching reading in English.

The discussion at this Dialogue will centre around the research into reading circulated in the [Research Snapshot No. 1](#). This is an opportunity for English teachers to deepen their understandings of theoretical standpoints, and to also critically examine classroom reading approaches as they are experienced by students and teachers of English.

### FACILITATOR:

Amanda McGraw,  
Federation University



Associate Professor Amanda McGraw is a VATE Life member and VATE Council's Research Officer. Amanda uses a range of research methods to tap into life stories including extended conversation, and visual and shared analysis of artefacts. Her research interests include a focus on teaching reading and writing in English, dispositions in teaching, school/university partnerships, and teacher professional learning. She has expertise in developing communities of practice involving practising teachers who use practitioner inquiry to learn deeply about teaching and learning processes.

### DATE:

Thursday 19 June 2025

### TIME:

2 – 4pm

### VENUE:

Live via Zoom

### REGISTRATION:

Concession \$75

Individual \$80

Organisational \$85

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## Research panellists:

**Professor Larissa McLean Davies,  
The University of Melbourne**

Professor Larissa McLean Davies is Deputy Dean and Professor of Teacher Education in the Faculty of Education at The University of Melbourne. A leading Australian academic, her research spans the fields of teacher education and professional learning, literacy and English education and literary studies. Her scholarship is concerned with issues of justice, anti-colonial and feminist practices and sustainability as this is manifest in teacher knowledge and curriculum enactment. Larissa leads large teams that work closely with State and Territory Education Departments on these issues, to improve educational experiences for diverse learners. Larissa's long commitment to Australian writers and writing in education has resulted in invitations to speak at the Melbourne Writers Festival, a partnership with the Stella Prize, and the opportunity to Chair the Australian Literary Studies Gold Medal in 2023.



**Associate Professor Margaret Merga,  
The University of Notre Dame**

Associate Professor Margaret Merga conducts research and provides training and teaching in literacy, libraries, communications, workforce, higher education, doctoral education, knowledge mobilisation and research methods. She has written more than a hundred peer-reviewed and research-informed publications, including six research-informed non-fiction books, such as the recent *School Libraries Supporting Literacy and Wellbeing* (Facet, 2022), *Creating an Australian School Literacy Policy* (Amba Press, 2023) and *Creating a Reading Culture in Primary and Secondary Schools: A Practical Guide* (Facet, November 2023). She is the inaugural Patron of the Western Australian School Library Association, and in 2020 was honoured as inaugural Patron of the Australian School Library Association. In 2021 she won an American Association of School Librarians ESLS Research Grant. Margaret has consulted with schools, professional associations and government departments on a range of projects, such as the Department of Education Western Australia's *Never Stop Reading* program, amongst others.

