This issue of *English in Australia* brings you stories about English teaching and English teachers: stories others tell about us, and those we tell about ourselves; stories that circulate in texts within and beyond the curriculum; and stories from the past as well as those for our times.

Stories are core business for English teachers and they are central to educational research. Despite the quantitative ‘data flood’ precipitated by current accountability and audit regimes (Taubman, 2009), classrooms and schools remain qualitatively complex places. Teaching and learning happens in quite specific places with casts of characters who have desires, needs, and backstories that impact on what takes place. Events are organised through time as well as space, plotlines develop and motifs and themes become apparent. Complications and resolutions provide the rhythms of practice. Voice is important and narrative form compels us to attend to point of view, and to consider which other perspectives might be possible and how to represent these. Stories of practice tend to make more modest claims than those that underpin quantitatively driven top-down reform processes, but they also may be more accessible, more recognisable and perhaps more useful for teachers who can read themselves, their students and their schools in relation to the particular scenes and stories told of other teachers, students and schools. The research papers in this issue are loosely connected through the notion of story, and present quite different takes on stories, however this focus on story will thread through forthcoming issues more explicitly.

The first two papers are most explicit in their attention to story. In ‘Storytelling and Professional Learning’ Brenton Doecke positions storytelling as provisional, particular and responsive to complexities in ways that exceed the reductionism of current standards discourses. In ‘Both alike in dignity’, Steve Shann co-authors the story of a practicum experience teaching *Romeo and Juliet* to 15-year-olds with beginning teachers CeCe Edwards, Libby Pittard, Hannah Germantse. Like all good short stories, it provokes readers to look beyond the surface of events, to explore characters in depth, and to speculate on other potential resolutions and plotlines.

The third and fourth papers turn to representation, attending to stories in contemporary Asian-Australian texts and strategies to develop Asian literacies. In ‘Exploring representations of Asian Identities in Films for the Australian Curriculum’, Deborah Henderson and Anita Jetnikoff position English as a site for the contestation of cultural imaginaries, for investigating and constructing dynamic cosmopolitan notions of identities and cultures. Jetnikoff continues this line of inquiry in ‘Exploring intercultural and ethical understanding through “ethical intelligence” and drama in Asian texts for the *Australian Curriculum: English*’. She introduces an ethical criticism toolkit for investigating gaps and silences in texts.

The next paper turns, in part, to the stories teachers tell about themselves as writers. In ‘The impact of “Writing project” professional development on teachers’ self-efficacy as writers and teachers of writing’, Terry Locke, David Whitehead and Stephanie Dix bring in quantitative data to complement qualitative analysis. They incorporate concepts and approaches from social sciences, but fundamentally their paper remains focused on issues of importance to English teachers and researchers.

The remaining papers are oriented towards the familiar territory of the humanities. They are written by literary scholars and they tell stories through literary texts. In ‘Canon Fodder: YA literature as a tool for critiquing canonicity’, Erica Hately interrogates a rage of fictional texts whose teenage characters encounter and make sense of literary classics in and out of school, suggesting that these texts operate as technologies for subjectivity and acculturation. The final paper, ‘Tradition, authority and innovation in Literary teaching and learning’ by Peter Holbrook, was a keynote address at the 2013 AATE conference in Brisbane. Holbrook positions the work of English teachers as inherently humanistic in its attention to imagination, language and close engagement with texts that can develop the advanced and sophisticated literacies that are crucial in the present. The canon, from Holbrook’s perspective, is not monolithic, but rather rests on a history of alterity, originality and radical difference.

Thanks also to our regular contributors Deb McPherson and the authors of the National Perspectives reports and to Rory McFarlane and Paul Sherman who have submitted poems. Also thanks to AATE President Elect Garry Collins for sharing the quirky versification that amused audiences so much at the national conference. Congratulations to Guy Bayly-Jones as recipient of Life Membership for 2013 in recognition of his dedication to AATE.

**References**