



abc.net.au/heywire

TEACHING NOTES

FOR THE

ABC HEYWIRE COMPETITION

PREPARED BY THE
VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION
FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH (VATE)

FOR TEACHERS

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

The ABC's Heywire competition calls for stories from young people about life in their part of regional Australia. Each September the ABC chooses roughly 35 winning entries from around Australia. Winners collaborate with ABC staff to produce their story into a mini-documentary to be featured on the ABC radio or abc.net.au. They also win an all-expenses-paid trip to the prestigious Heywire Forum in Canberra.

The themes found in the Heywire stories are very familiar to English teachers. Notions of identity, place, the individual and the community are recurrent topics in the English curriculum, and provide a stimulus for student's own writing and storytelling. The following ideas and activities use winning stories from recent Heywire competitions to encourage students in Years 10, 11 or 12 to write their own non-fiction narratives and submit them to Heywire.

Winning stories can be found at abc.net.au/heywire (click on 'winners' in the menu bar) or you can contact Heywire for an audio CD.

The Heywire stories express a range of issues that young people are grappling with in regional and rural Australia today. They evoke a sense of time and place, and allow us an insight into what it is to be a young person living in regional and rural Australia in the early 21st century.

The voices of young people are authentic and that makes this collection unique – the authors are the storytellers, and their stories are presented for themselves and their communities to hear.

The recordings are the result of drafting, collaboration and development for broadcast by the team at Heywire, and they provide a rich model for use in the English classroom. By exploring the stories, investigating how they are put together and what makes them compelling, students discover ways of telling their own stories of self and community.

The recommended length for a Heywire story is 400 words or in the case of multimedia entries: 2-3 minutes or 10 photos.

**For more info or to receive an audio CD
of winning stories contact:**

Dan Hirst ABC Heywire, 1800 26 26 46, abcheywire@abc.net.au

FOR STUDENTS

PRE-LISTENING AND READING

Imagine that you have been given the opportunity to be the 'voice' of your regional community. You have been invited to share a story with the rest of Australia about what it's like being a young person in your neck of the woods.

In pairs: What is it that you want to share with the rest of Australia that will reflect your patch?

It might be something you like about living where you do, or it could be a problem in your community and how you'd fix it. It could be something unique about you or your town, or a personal story about a challenge that you have overcome.

Discuss your list with the rest of the class and the reasons behind your choices.

LISTENING AND READING

Visit the Heywire website (abc.net.au/heywire) and click on 'Winners' to view recent winning Heywire stories. Choose three winners from the map and click on them to read or listen to their stories.

POST LISTENING AND READING

With your partner choose one of the stories that you selected and complete the following questions/activities.

1. What is the topic/issue being presented?
2. In two sentences, summarise the story or the speaker's perspective.
3. What is the tone of the piece? Provide evidence to illustrate your answer.
4. How does the story impact on you, the listener?
5. What elements of storytelling make this piece effective? How does it create a sense of place? Give some examples from the story.
6. How does the story achieve its purpose of giving a voice to regional and rural youth?
7. This is a narrative or story, as well as a memoir or personal account. The writer (speaker) has made some decisions about how he or she wants to convey the story. The language used, the way the story is structured, the effects employed to enhance the story, and the way the story is read, are all authorial choices. To help you understand what these elements are, and how they assist the author to achieve the purpose and reach the audience, you are to conduct an investigation.

Working with a partner, begin by filling out the table on the next page.

LANGUAGE FEATURE	EXAMPLE	EFFECT ON THE AUDIENCE
Narrative voice (e.g. first person, third person)		
Verb tense (e.g. past, present, a mixture)		
Sentence types (declarative, interrogative, etc)		
Vocabulary (e.g. slang, colloquialisms, etc)		
Cohesion and coherence (e.g. metaphors, transition phrases such as 'however', 'next')		

8. If you chose an audio story, describe each of the following techniques as used in this story and explain how each helps to make the story effective.
- Use of the author's own voice (rather than a professional actor or reader)
 - Intonation, stress, pace and volume of the speaker's voice
 - The speaker's accent
 - Sound effects and music

WRITE YOUR OWN HEYWIRE STORY, IN BROADCAST-STYLE

Return to your pairs' list of story ideas. Each select a topic that interests you, which you can develop into a personal story about you and/or your community.

Write a 400-word piece that 'tells it like it is'. Use the framework provided in activities 1-8 to help you develop your own Heywire narrative.

UPLOAD YOUR STORY TO HEYWIRE

Go to abc.net.au/heywire and click 'sign up'. Follow the instructions to upload your story. Entries are open all year round. You can enter as many times as you like and in any format: text, audio, video or photos.

Each September the ABC chooses roughly 35 winners from around Australia. Winners get to collaborate with ABC staff to produce their story to be featured on the ABC. And winners score an all-expenses-paid trip to the prestigious Heywire Forum in Canberra, where you get to have your say in the corridors of power.

Help and feedback:

ABC Heywire, 1800 26 26 46, abcheywire@abc.net.au