

Western Australian writer and environmentalist, Dianne Wolfer, author of The Shark Caller, visited Year 7 and 8



On Thursday 12 September, week 8, the highly acclaimed author of our Year 7 novel, Dianne Wolfer, visited the College and presented to both the Year 7 and the Year 8 cohorts. Wolfer has been writing historical fiction, children's novels and picture books for the past 20 years and has won numerous awards for her authenticity and clever portrayal of environmental messages embedded in engaging stories. She has completed her PhD in a specific study on the use Anthropomorphism in literature and this is evident in the voices she employs her animal characters with in her writing.



The students were led through stories about Wolfer's life growing up in Australia in coastal areas and how she has seen changes in the environment. They listened intently to the levels of research she shared about what goes into creating a novel. She also shared stories of how students could collect inspiring ideas and nurse them into short stories and even into full length novels. Our students were very absorbed and Dianne was impressed with our College and the level of attentiveness that the students displayed in a large group presentation. After the presentations, 30 selected students participated in a writing workshop with Dianne Wolfer. They were led through character building exercises and ways to bring settings to life through creative writing.

Wolfer's novel The Shark Caller has engaged our students for the past couple of years in our Year 7 English class novel study. The underlying environmental messages are interwoven with an underwater world filled with highly identifiable characters. The students learn to empathise with these creatures and build stronger connections to the coastal environment. Themes of strong family ties, cultural complexities and an appreciation of environmental sustainability lead our young readers into informed ways of viewing themselves in their world and hopefully enable them to be aware of their impact on the world and empowered enough to make even a little bit of difference.



Mrs Leigh-Jones and Mrs Ponton