



Hills
Grammar

The Learning Centre | 2026 TeachMeets

Teacher Led | For Teachers | By Teachers

Welcome to our TeachMeet Program

TeachMeets are organised professional learning sessions where teachers share innovative ideas, resources and best practices in a collaborative, social atmosphere. They are fast paced, completely interactive, and fun!

In the spirit of collegiality and teacher agency, The Learning Centre is hosting five dynamic TeachMeets during 2026. Live participants can enjoy great food and comradery, and due to our interactive Learning Centre technology, including ceiling microphones and intuitive cameras, virtual attendees will be able to directly speak to our presenters and network with the live audience.

Key Characteristics TLC TeachMeets Or

What's in it for You?

- **Teacher-Led** | Organised by Hills Grammar teachers, for teachers far and wide
- **Informal and with Great Food** | Collegial, collaborative and connective! Relaxed, social gatherings that encourage interaction and conversation
- **Professional Learning** | the TLC 2026 TeachMeet Program offers five diverse topics to interest teachers across all stages of teaching and career development
- **Sharing of Practice** | Our core aim is to share ideas, innovations and success stories in teaching
- **Community Focused** | At TLC we hope to bring together motivated teachers from various sectors and backgrounds to enjoy time together and build professional friendships

TLC TeachMeet Format

All TeachMeets are different, but here is how TLC TeachMeets work:

3.30pm | Arrive | Eat | Network: (If you can – otherwise be here by 4pm)

4.00pm | Five fantastic HG teachers and leaders from across K-12 will each provide a 7-minute maximum presentation – a total of 35 minutes of sharing ideas, provocations and practices.

4.40pm – 5pm | Eat | Meet new people

5pm | TeachMeet concludes



2026 TLC TeachMeets

Date Time	Session	Speaker	Hills Grammar Role
TERM ONE			
Tuesday 3 March 4-5pm	Learning in Action: Differentiating Practice for Future-Focused Primary Classrooms	Melissa Wardell Jason Milner Danielle Lough Tamara Nahirny Sarah Black	Year 6 Coordinator Assistant Head of Junior School Student Engagement Coordinator K-6 Academic Engagement Coordinator K-6 Head of Junior School
Tuesday 10 March 4-5pm	Early Career Classroom Management Strategies	David Hamper Kelly Boyd Ananta Reddy Susan Amiri Deepika Aggarwal	Deputy Principal Head of Senior School Head of Student Wellbeing 7-12 History Teacher Learning Enrichment Coordinator 7-12 Learning Enrichment Teacher
TERM TWO			
Tuesday 5 May 4-5pm	Revision Strategies that teachers can use with Year 11 and 12 students	David Little Andrew Webster Grace Larobina Karen Yager Michael Cantlon	Science Teacher HSIE Teacher Head of Geography Principal HSIE Teacher
TERM THREE			
Tuesday 11 August 4-5pm	Approaches to Teaching ATSI Texts in English Drama EALD	TJ Gerszewski Seshni Hudson Alyssa Gray Jessica Piccin Justine Zarebski	English Teacher English Teacher EALD Coordinator K-12 English Teacher English & Drama Teacher Assistant Head of English
Tuesday 25 August 4-5pm	Vital Visuals!	Philippe Messer Christopher Nelson Jesseca Power Seshni Hudson	Language Teacher Language Teacher Integration Teacher English Teacher EALD Coordinator K-12



Learning in Action: Differentiating Practice for Future-Focused Primary Classrooms

Session Information

Join our team of Junior School educators as they shed insights on empowering educators with innovative tools, differentiated strategies, practical solutions, and forward-thinking pedagogies to shape tomorrow's primary classrooms.

Topic 1 | Unlocking Literacy: Differentiation Strategies for Dyslexia Learners | Melissa Wardell | Year 6 Coordinator

Topic 2 | Wellbeing Through Differentiation | Sarah Black | Head of Junior School

Topic 3 | Technology Enabled Differentiation | Jason Milner | Assistant Head of Junior School

Topic 4 | Stretch and Support: Differentiation for Gifted and High-Potential Learners | Danielle Lough | Student Engagement Coordinator K-6

Topic 5 | Differentiating Assessment for Inclusive Classrooms | Tamara Nahirny | Academic Engagement Coordinator K-6

Melissa Wardell | Year 6 Coordinator

Melissa brings passion and empathy to every classroom she has taught in, with 15 years of experience across lower and upper primary. She is committed to research-based pedagogy and student wellbeing and brings a collaborative leadership style to every team she works with. Before entering education, Melissa earned a degree in economics and held management roles in finance, equipping her with strong analytical, problem-solving, and data-driven thinking skills.

Her unique background allows her to connect classroom learning to real-world applications, particularly in English, where she fosters creativity, critical thinking, and communication. Melissa creates nurturing, inclusive environments where every student feels valued and supported. As a lifelong learner, she continually seeks new strategies to grow professionally and empower her students to become curious, confident, and compassionate learners, ready to thrive in a future-focused world.

Sarah Black | Head of Junior School

Sarah Black has worked in a variety of Independent Schools across her career in education. Her experience includes the delivery of inclusive curriculum within mainstream settings for students with a wide variety of individual needs. Soon after completing her early career years as a teacher, Sarah began to serve her school communities as a leader of special education initiatives. She is passionate about all students from Early Childhood to Year 12 Teachers having equal access to curriculum and wellbeing programs within their school communities. As an Alumnus, Sarah enjoys reflecting upon aspects of Hills Grammar that are special, like ways in which the School has always valued the 'Hills Original'. She has also been the Metropolitan Co-ordinator of ASPECT (Autism Spectrum Australia) School Outreach program across Sydney and liaised with parents within Western Sydney establishing family centred behaviour management for students with Autism.

Jason Milner | Assistant Head of Junior School

Jason Milner has had 12 years of experience working in Primary Education. He has worked in a range of different school developing skills in classroom teaching, music, leadership, curriculum, agriculture, and technology. As an Apple Distinguished Educator, Jason has a passion for purposeful and innovative approaches to the integration of technology in learning. In his previous role as an integrator in the innovation and technology team, Jason's focus was on utilising technology to enhance and reach learning outcomes, curriculum and assessment design, teacher professional learning, parent technology development and student and educator empowerment. Jason has joined THGS as the Assistant Head of Junior School and is excited to collaborate with staff, students and families to create lovers of learning.

Danielle Lough | Student Engagement Coordinator K-6

Having taught across all grades over her 25 years of teaching, Dani has gained valuable experience in designing, creating and implementing innovative and creative lessons across K-6. At Hills Grammar she consistently supervises Teacher Practicum Students and uses this experience to not only support the teaching profession, but to remain abreast of innovative teaching and learning techniques being researched and used by universities. As a creative thinker, bringing innovation, technology and challenge to her classroom, Dani transforms mainstream learning experiences into enticing and engaging learning opportunities that spark interest, curiosity, and real-world application.

Tamara Nahirny | Academic Engagement Coordinator K-6

Tamara Nahirny has been in education for almost 25 years and brings to her role experience across a diverse range of settings, including disadvantaged schools, mainstream classrooms, support classrooms, and programs for gifted and talented students. She has taught all grades from Kindergarten to Year 6 and is passionate about inclusive education, committed to designing engaging, differentiated learning experiences that cater to the needs of all students. Tamara values the integration of research and technology to support deep learning and is dedicated to using rich literature and meaningful content to help students connect their learning to real-world contexts. With qualifications in both Education and Commerce Marketing, Tamara fosters collaborative partnerships between students, families, and the wider community. In her role as Junior School Academic Engagement Coordinator, she is dedicated to nurturing lifelong learners who are equipped to navigate an ever-changing world, ensuring that learning is both accessible and meaningful across all areas of the curriculum.

Attendance

When | Tuesday 3 March | 4-5pm

Where | Join us in person at Hills Grammar, Kenthurst, Sydney, or attend virtually

[Click here to RSVP](#)



Early Career Classroom Management Strategies

Session Information

Join our teachers, mentors and leaders speak about great “back-to-basics” student management strategies that really work.

Topic 1 | Universal Design Strategies | Susan Amiri | Learning Enrichment Coordinator 7-12

Topic 2 | Behaviour Choice Theory | Ananta Reddy | History Teacher

Topic 3 | De-escalating Behaviour | David Hamper | Deputy Principal and Head of Senior School

Topic 4 | Supporting Student Wellbeing in the Classroom | Kelly Boyd | Head of Student Wellbeing 7-12

Topic 5 | Using Explicit Instructions to Enhance Learning for All Students | Deepika Aggarwal | Learning Enrichment Teacher

Susan Amiri | Learning Enrichment Coordinator 7-12

Susan Amiri is the Senior School Learning Enrichment Coordinator for Years 7–12 at Hills Grammar. Since beginning her teaching career in 2019, she has worked across the Department of Education (DET) and the Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese (CSPD) in a range of teaching and middle leadership positions, including EALD Teacher, Leader of Year Group- Wellbeing, Leader of Learning and Support, and Classroom Teacher of History and English.

Susan has a strong background in inclusive education, working collaboratively with students, teachers, and families to develop Individualised Plans (IPs), deliver modified and Life Skills curriculum pathways, and implement evidence-based differentiation. She has also mentored pre-service teachers, guiding them in adapting instruction for diverse learners and managing challenging classroom behaviours.

Holding postgraduate qualifications in Teaching, History, and English, Susan approaches education holistically, recognising that student wellbeing and academic achievement are deeply connected. She is passionate about creating inclusive learning environments that prioritise both academic success and student wellbeing.

Ananta Reddy | History Teacher

Ananta Reddy is a senior school teacher in the History Department at Hills Grammar. She brings over ten years of experience working in Western Sydney schools across both the Department of Education (DET) and the Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese (CSPD). Ananta has also served as a Learning and Support Teacher, delivering modified History content and the Life Skills curriculum in support settings. She has mentored pre-service teachers during their practicums and guided beginning teachers through the accreditation process, providing support in areas such as differentiating for diverse learning needs and managing challenging classroom behaviour. Ananta is passionate about fostering student growth and believes that recognising both student wellbeing and learning needs is essential to achieving success in the classroom.

David Hamper | Deputy Principal and Head of Senior School

With almost 3 decades of experience in education David has held a number of senior roles in diverse independent schools across Sydney with portfolios including teaching and learning, wellbeing, innovation, staff development, human resources and school operations. Across his career David has also held a number of special advisory appointments including in curriculum design and assessment with state and national curriculum authorities, teacher education with universities in Australia and the United States and in teacher professional learning with a number of professional associations. He is a prolific writer having authored, edited and contributed to numerous books, journal articles and atlases across diverse topics from the humanities and within professional domains.

Kelly Boyd | Head of Student Wellbeing 7-12

Kelly Boyd is currently the Head of Student Wellbeing, Years 7-12 at Hills Grammar. Kelly has over ten years' experience working in the Design and Innovation Department teaching a range of subjects. From 2009 – 2016 Kelly was also employed at Western Sydney University working as both a lecturer and a tutor and was involved in the development and implementation of curriculum content for pre-service teachers undertaking their Master of Teaching degree. During her time at Hills Grammar, she has worked in a number of leadership positions including Head of House. In her role as Head of Student Wellbeing 7-12 she has been involved in providing advocacy and practical support and referral to other services, such as the Learning Enrichment Team & School Psychologists, for the students in Senior School. Kelly enjoys working with students and their families through difficulties, triumphs and transition periods, using the school's wellbeing model to guide her way.

Deepika Aggarwal | Learning Enrichment Teacher

Deepika Aggarwal is a Learning Specialist with almost 20 years of experience in helping students with varied learning needs both in literacy and numeracy across different age groups. She is passionate about standardised assessments, movement-based intervention and effective evidence-based programs and instructions, including how these programs can be used to enrich mainstream classroom teaching-learning experience and improve overall student outcomes.

Attendance

When | Tuesday 10 March | 4-5pm

Where | Join us in person at Hills Grammar, Kenthurst, Sydney, or attend virtually

[Click here to RSVP](#)



Revision Strategies that teachers can use with Year 11 and 12 students

Session Information

Join fellow educators to explore practical strategies for boosting HSC success! A collaborative TeachMeet exploring effective revision tools, AI-assisted learning and evidence-based strategies for improving student writing and engagement.

Topic 1 | Revision Strategy Tools | David Little | Science Teacher

Topic 2 | Using Notebook LM (AI) as a Tool to Assist Student Revision | Karen Yager | Principal

Topic 3 | Essay Planning Strategies | Grace Larobina | Head of Geography

Topic 4 | How to Use Stimulus Material for Creative Answers | Andrew Webster | History Teacher

Topic 5 | Using Peer Marking to Boost Student Engagement and Learning | Michael Cantlon | History Teacher

David Little | Science Teacher

David is an experienced Science educator with over 30 years of teaching expertise across both government and independent schools. A graduate of the University of New South Wales with degrees in Science and Education, he has taught a wide range of HSC courses including Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Investigating Science, and Extension Science. David also delivers compressed HSC courses through TAFE NSW and has held Head of Science positions for more than a decade. He has a proven record of curriculum innovation, having established the Junior Agriculture program and agricultural plot at Loreto Normanhurst. David has a strong professional interest in improving the teaching and understanding of Indigenous Science in Australian classrooms.

Karen Yager | Principal

A progressive and creative leader, Karen brings more than 26 years' experience to our School, most recently as Deputy Headmaster K-12 at Knox Grammar. Her work in the education and academic world has been recognised with numerous awards, including the NSW Professional Teachers Council Award for Outstanding Service to Education in 2019.

With an emphasis on developing each student's unique strengths, agency and voice, Mrs Yager will continue to nurture, grow and inspire our Hills Originals to achieve their potential for greatness.

Karen commenced as Hills Grammar's fifth Principal in January 2022 and is enjoying meeting the Hills Grammar community – students, staff and families.

Grace Larobina | Head of Geography | Geogrphay & Legal Studies Teacher | Year 7 Mentor

Grace teaches Geography Year 7–12 at Hills Grammar and has had extensive experience as a Geography teacher. As a Council member of the Geography Teachers' Association NSW she has coordinated and shared her expertise as an HSC Geography marker with regional and metropolitan teachers at annual HSC Geography in Review events. Grace has published resources in the NSW Geography Teachers' Association Bulletin that reflect current teaching methodology and is a contributing author to a national and NSW focused series of textbooks to support the Australian Curriculum: Geography NSW Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum; Cambridge Books. She has been actively involved in the promotion of Geography in Primary Schools and provided NESA registered PD through Hills Grammar endorsement, supporting teachers delivering the K-10 Geography Syllabus. She has represented the Association of Independent Schools NSW on NESA and ACARA panels related to the development of the Australian Curriculum: Geography. Grace is currently maintaining her NESA Teacher Accreditation at Highly Accomplished and has enjoyed the opportunity this has afforded for reflection on her growth as an educator. In 2016, Grace was awarded the Professional Teaching Council of NSW Outstanding Professional Service Award.

Andrew Webster | HSIE Teacher

Andrew has been an educator for almost 20 years and has taught a wide range of HSIE subjects in schools throughout Sydney, and Portland Oregon. He is a graduate of Macquarie University with a double degree in Ancient and Modern History, with minors in Linguistics and Archaeology, and a Diploma of Jazz Studies from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. He is an experienced HSC marker and brings a wealth of real-life experience into his classroom, including several years in the construction industry, 5 years as a session musician in Sydney and Los Angeles, and most recently as Head of Sales North America for national label company.

Andrew is a passionate educator and History specialist with teaching strengths in research, communication and story-telling. He prides himself on keeping in touch with emerging educational technologies, pedagogies, and educators from around the world to inform and develop his teaching practice. He is recognised as an Experienced Teacher by the Independent School Teacher Accreditation Authority and is a certified and consistent Mentor & Practicum Supervisor in the National Teacher Accreditation Program.

Michael Cantlon | HSIE Teacher

Michael is an accomplished History educator with over 30 years of teaching experience across Australia and internationally. A graduate of the University of Sydney, Macquarie University, and the University of Auckland, he has taught History, English, and Society and Culture through to HSC level. Michael has held Head of Department positions in several Sydney schools and has worked in government and independent schools in Australia, the UK, Italy, and Spain. He maintains a strong interest in languages and in innovative approaches to language teaching.

Attendance

When | Tuesday 5 May | 4-5pm

Where | Join us in person at Hills Grammar, Kenthurst, Sydney, or attend virtually

[Click here to RSVP](#)



Approaches to Teaching ATSI Texts in English | Drama | EALD

Session Information

Join our expert teachers across English, Drama and EALD, presenting on the significance of incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander texts into Years 7 – 10 student learning.

Topic 1 | EALD Focus – Field Building | Seshni Hudson | English Teacher and EALD Coordinator K-12

Topic 2 | Drama Focus | Jessica Piccin | English and Drama Teacher

Topic 3 | English – Visual Text | Truth in Motion: Kinchela Boys Home and the Power of Visual Storytelling | TJ Gerszewski | English Teacher

Topic 4 | English – Poetry | Poetry as Power: Honouring Indigenous Voice and Student Identities | Alyssa Gray | English Teacher

Topic 5 | English - Prose | Justine Zarebski | Assistant Head of English

Seshni Hudson | English Teacher and EALD Coordinator K-12

With 27 years of K–12 teaching experience, I bring expertise in EALD education, inclusive practices for students with disability, and student wellbeing. I hold a Master of Applied Linguistics from UTS and ground my teaching philosophy in a socio-cultural perspective on learning, valuing the role of relationships, identity, and context. Currently serving as K–12 EALD Coordinator and Head of International Education, I have also held leadership positions with the NSW Department of Education and the Catholic Education Office. I am passionate about innovative practice, equitable learning, and fostering student success through personalised, future-focused education.

Jessica Piccin | English and Drama Teacher

Jessica holds a Bachelor of Arts (English Literature and Theatre Studies) and a Bachelor of Education (Secondary). With over a decade of experience teaching English and Drama across Stages 4–6, she brings a passion for inclusive education and authentic, creative learning. Her philosophy centres on educating the whole student - fostering engagement, confidence, and curiosity through the Arts within a collaborative and supportive classroom culture. Having taught in both the independent and public sectors, Jessica has led literacy initiatives, staff wellbeing programs, and large-scale school productions. She is committed to creating equitable learning environments where students express themselves authentically, think critically, and develop essential 21st-century skills. Through innovative practice and cross-faculty collaboration, she strives to help students find their voice - on stage, in writing, and beyond.

TJ Gerszewski | English Teacher

TJ is an educator and literary scholar currently completing a Master's in English Studies at the University of Sydney, with a primary research focus on the early English novels of the 17th and 18th centuries. He holds a Bachelor of Education (Secondary)/Bachelor of Arts in English Literature from the University of Sydney. Prior to returning to academia, TJ worked in communications/public relations and community organising leading teams in the not-for-profit sector including The McGrath Foundation, Ronald McDonald House Charities Sydney, The Heart Foundation, and The Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute.

Alyssa Gray

Alyssa has a Bachelor of Arts (English and Ancient History) and Bachelor of Education (Secondary) from Macquarie University. She has joined The Hills Grammar School community as a secondary English teacher in 2023. She embodies lifelong learning through innovative practice and a passion for student engagement. As a young leader of learning Alyssa coordinates and leads all aspects of the Stage 4 English curriculum. Her current area of expertise is differentiating the curriculum with a focus on high potential and gifted and talented learners.

Justine Zarebski

Justine is a vibrant educator who takes great pride in her ability to communicate, share expertise, and build professional relationships. She has completed post-graduate studies in English Literature at the University of Sydney, where she was mentored in Creative Writing by acclaimed author Fiona McFarlane. Justine has published exemplar work for Cambridge Checkpoints Advanced and Standard English (HSC) and has presented her short stories at the University of Sydney's Creative Writing Evening, reflecting her ongoing engagement with literary practice and scholarship.

Her academic and creative interests extend to global literatures, postcolonial writing, and the intersections between identity, power, and storytelling. She is particularly passionate about how literature from diverse cultures reimagines history and gives voice to marginalised perspectives.

As the Assistant Head of English at Hills Grammar, Justine regularly shares her expertise with colleagues and students and runs co-curricular literature workshops in creative writing. Recognised as an Experienced Teacher by the Independent Schools Teacher Accreditation Authority, she continues to impart knowledge, foster curiosity, and model refined literary analysis and composition for her students.

Attendance

When | Tuesday 11 August | 4-5pm

Where | Join us in person at Hills Grammar, Kenthurst, Sydney, or attend virtually

[Click here to RSVP](#)



Vital Visuals!

Session Information

Join our eclectic Team to enjoy a range of ways that you can use visuals to inspire student engagement!

Topic 1 | The Teacher as a Visual | Philippe Messer and Christopher Nelson | Language Teachers

Topic 2 | Learning Through Osmosis | Philippe Messer | Language Teacher

Topic 3 | Using Culturally Relevant Visuals | Christopher Nelson | Language Teacher

Topic 4 | Using Visuals to Assist Students with Challenges | Jesseca Power | Integration Teacher

Topic 5 | Using Thinking Routine Visuals to Boost Student Learning | Seshni Hudson | English Teacher and EAL/D Coordinator K-12

Philippe Messer | Language Teacher

Philippe is a big fan of using technology in the classroom and creating a real sense of wonder for language students. He is a language teacher with almost 20 years' experience who has taught French, EALD and Japanese in countries like the UK, Spain, Japan and Australia. Philippe regularly runs PD sessions and presents at conferences for NAFTA, MLTA, FATFA and Pearson as well as helping prac teachers create engaging lessons in the language classroom. You can expect an interactive workshop style session that encourages experimentation and creativity no matter what your technology skills.

Christopher Nelson | Language Teacher

Chris is dedicated to improving young people's engagement with the Latin language (amongst other languages). He has taught in the NSW system for 25 years, has a doctorate and is the father of two teenagers.

Jesseca Power | Integration Teacher

Jesseca is a dedicated and passionate educator committed to creating inclusive and engaging learning environments where every student can thrive. With expertise in behaviour management and providing emotional and social support, she ensures that all learners feel safe, valued, and understood. Jess designs and implements differentiated programs that cater to diverse learning styles, abilities, and interests, promoting success for every student. Using the CPA (Concrete–Pictorial–Abstract) framework, she builds deep conceptual understanding and confidence in learning. Jess believes strongly in a collaborative approach, working closely with colleagues, families, and support staff to foster positive educational outcomes. Jess is dedicated to nurturing not only academic achievement but also the personal and emotional development of all students.

Seshni Hudson | English Teacher and EALD Coordinator K-12

With 27 years of K–12 teaching experience, I bring expertise in EALD education, inclusive practices for students with disability, and student wellbeing. I hold a Master of Applied Linguistics from UTS and ground my teaching philosophy in a socio-cultural perspective on learning, valuing the role of relationships, identity, and context. Currently serving as K–12 EALD Coordinator and Head of International Education, I have also held leadership positions with the NSW Department of Education and the Catholic Education Office. I am passionate about innovative practice, equitable learning, and fostering student success through personalised, future-focused education.

Attendance

When | Tuesday 25 August | 4-5pm

Where | Join us in person at Hills Grammar, Kenthurst, Sydney, or attend virtually

[Click here to RSVP](#)
