

WISH YOU WERE HERE!

Postcards
from future
Queensland



LESSON 4: THREE YEARS AFTER LOCKDOWN

Write a tourist guide to your hometown, pointing out your favourite *new* local landmarks.

For your challenge this week we've asked you to write a tourist guide to your hometown, pointing out your favourite new local landmarks.

Place is absolutely important for writers—whether you're working on an epic fantasy trilogy set in a far-off world or if you're writing realist fiction set down the street from where you live. Now I know you've all been in lockdown so maybe you haven't been able to explore as much as you'd like recently, however writers have been writing about places they can't see for ages. Here are some tips.

First, do some research. If you can't get outside, there a huge number of tools to help you. Google maps is one of the very best! I often stalk my locations on Google maps to get a sense of how the streets intersect, what the houses look like, what kinds of trees and plants I can see from the road. Geography is specific and it can vary hugely, even in small places.

Visit hass.uq.edu.au/wish-you-were-here to send us your postcard!

We can't wait to read your dreams and visions, and stories of another world.

Second, create a clear image in your mind and focus on details that bring that place alive: the colour of a garage door, the way a tree has been lit. You don't need to describe everything – just choose one or two concrete details that stand in for the whole place.

Three, push it further. I've lived in three different countries and one thing I have learned is that landscapes are a record of the way people live; they shape people just as they are shaped by people. This is a long process that has gone on throughout history and is still happening today. So, think about what people do differently where you live? Do they go to the beach? Are there local watering holes? Are there lots of shops around you? How often do you see your neighbours? How long does it take you to get to school? All of these things matter for the way that landscape works.



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