

## Writing a peaceful story – some do's and don'ts

### DO

- ✓ DO Show potential conflict solutions and give hope for peaceful futures (not necessarily a happy ending)
- ✓ DO Allow people to get to know characters and resonate with them (including villains)
- ✓ DO Make way for dialogue and conversation between characters, encourage empathy and willingness to understand the other
- ✓ DO Reflect on the morality that your story promotes and ethical implications it might have
- ✓ DO Place a focus on shared humanity and empathy if different groups are portrayed
- ✓ DO Acknowledge ideological, economic and political power imbalances if portrayed
- ✓ DO Actively engage with and work with the consent and cooperation of communities that you are portraying
- ✓ DO Encourage aesthetic narrative engagement with the piece
- ✓ DO Make your piece as engaging and accessible as possible
- ✓ DO Label peace directly in stories - it makes a difference!

### TRY TO AVOID

- ✗ TRY TO AVOID Portraying peace as an end-state or a utopia at the end of the story
- ✗ TRY TO AVOID Reducing characters to purely “good” or “evil”
- ✗ TRY TO AVOID Reinforcing singular perspectives of what is “right” or “wrong” without character interaction
- ✗ TRY TO AVOID Nudging people towards certain behaviours by portraying harsh punishments for those who fail to fulfil them
- ✗ TRY TO AVOID Portraying physical violence and confrontation as “natural”, a necessity or “the only option”
- ✗ TRY TO AVOID Naturalising systems of oppression by uncritically reproducing them
- ✗ TRY TO AVOID Speaking for or over people that you are portraying
- ✗ TRY TO AVOID Moving on too quickly from a story without encouraging people to further engage with it