

## Will Kostakis: Courage & Sexuality

Secondary School, Years 8–10

- 'Over the past seventy days, I have asked teenagers what they would do if they had the power to change the world. The climate is a pressing concern, but not their only one. They want to better support the homeless. They want to end refugee detention. They want to stifle discrimination in all its forms.' – Will Kostakis

**Writing Prompt:** There is so much happening in the world right now. Look at the news. What is one thing you are worried about? What is one positive thing that is happening?

- 'The most popular joke of my teens was saying, "Gay," when someone did something we didn't like or understand. It was hilarious. Not allowed now. Some might call it political correctness. Others might wonder why it was ever funny in the first place.' – Will Kostakis

**Research & Discuss:** The history of the word 'gay'.

- 'I am bowled over by today's teens. They are kind and open-minded in ways we all aspire to be. I watch the ways they embrace their LGBTQIA peers, strike for climate change, strive for refugee justice, and when I leave after a long day, my heart is full. The future is so bright. Then I scroll through Twitter, and I wish the future would get here faster. Our teens put our leaders to shame.' – Will Kostakis

**Discussion Point:** Why do you think Will says, 'Our teens put our leaders to shame?'

## Key Curriculum Areas

**Learning Areas:** English, Humanities & Social Sciences

**General Capabilities:** Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability, Ethical Understanding, Intercultural Understanding

## About the Session

Join award-winning author **Will Kostakis** (*The First Third*, *Monuments*, and its recent sequel *Rebel Gods*) for an exploration of why queer characters in fiction tend to be the comic relief – and often at their own expense.

Kostakis discusses how this can impact a young person's confidence and sense of self, and, drawing from his own work, shows how queer characters don't have to be laughed at to be loved.

## About the Author

Will Kostakis is a writer of all things, from celebrity news stories that score cease and desist letters, to tweets for professional wrestlers. That said, he's best known for his award-winning YA novels, including *The First Third*, *The Sidekicks*, and the *Monuments* duology.

