

2024

CBCA - P2

NOVEL Insight

CBCA Notables 2024

PART 2 - Reviews for the Picture Books and New Illustrators Notables List

HOW TO USE THIS E-MAG

This e-magazine is interactive.

You can navigate around the magazine by clicking on the headings in the CONTENTS list above, or by clicking on the book titles in the INDEX on the last page.

To return to the Contents page, just click on the NOVEL INSIGHT LOGO at the top of the page.

BOOK IN A SERIES



This symbol indicates this title belongs to a series. Reviews for the other titles in this series can be found in the review database.

We aim to review as many books as possible. Books that are a part of a series are each reviewed and collated in the review database as they are released. If you see this symbol that means members can find the reviews for the earlier titles in a series in the reviews database.

LITERARY / GOOD READ RATING

The literary value rating measures the quality of a book out of 5. For example, how well written.

The good read rating measures how enjoyable a book is out of 5. Our reviewers choose this rating from the viewpoint of the target audience, rather than as an adult.

CONTENT INSIGHT

This section focuses on any violence or sexual references within the book. Any references to witchcraft, magic, pirates or the supernatural are also likely to be included in this box. Where possible we try to give examples from the book.

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LANGUAGE RATING

This rating measures the extent of offensive language that appears in the book. Our team makes this decision based on the content and the reading age of the book. We will often list specific words that are used and how many times they appear. At times low will be listed without specifics. This might mean they say the character cursed (without actually swearing) or there are implied swearing words for example from a fantasy foreign world.

None	MOD Medium	V-HI Very High
LOW Low	HIGH High	

BOOK DESCRIPTION

This is the publisher's description either as described by their website or marketing or the blurb of the book.

AUTHOR LOCATION

These markers indicate where the author resides.

AU Australia

REPRESENTATIONS

We aim to list a range of diverse representations for your review. This is where you will find out what aspects of diversity are represented or featured in the book.

For example:

- Religions
- Gender, sexual diversity and LGBTQIA+
- Cultural representations
- Third world versus Western society or different socioeconomic situations
- Disabilities or difference
- Family structures (i.e. traditional family, single parents, intergenerational friendships)
- Neurodiversity

ACCESSIBILITY

This heading indicates when a book has been specifically designed for kids who struggle with reading. This comes in the following forms:

High-Low Read: High-Low books are designed to be accessible and engaging for older readers who have a lower reading ability. To do this, the content is still interesting and age-appropriate for older readers but the vocabulary, layout, and design are easier to consume.

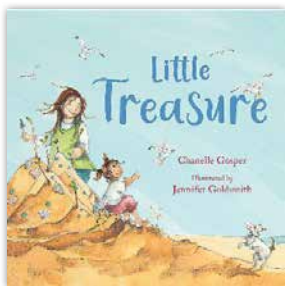
Dyslexia Friendly: The book is likely to have yellower pages, serif fonts, and more white space.

Reluctant Reader: A book designed for a reluctant reader is a book that is specifically created to engage and encourage individuals who may be hesitant or unenthusiastic about reading. It is a rapid read for kids who don't enjoy reading or have reading difficulties (and might have more visuals).

Low Page Density: This book is likely to have more white space and fewer words per page, readers may find it easier to comprehend and retain information.

PICTURE BOOKS

LITTLE TREASURE



AUTHOR: Chanelle Gosper

ILLUSTRATOR:

Jennifer Goldsmith

ISBN: 9780734421494

PUBLISHER:

Lothian Children's Books

RELEASE DATE: 29 Mar 2023

READING AGE: 2 to 5 years

THEMES: mothers, daughters, family, connection, quality time, beach, discovery, ocean, ideas, dreaming

BOOK DESCRIPTION

Inside the small bowl of your hands,
I see your treasure.

A mother and child explore a deserted beach on a windy day. It is an afternoon they will both treasure always.

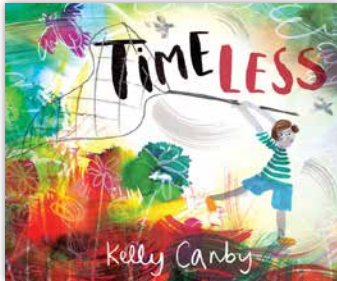
A poetic and tender book about how the small moments spent together are often the most precious.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

A sweet innocent story looking at the treasures on the beach from a child's perspective. The little girl and her mother find treasures on the beach and the lyrical rhyming text describes the possibilities of where they come from such as a treasure ship or expansive sand dunes. They find treasures and build sand castles around them. The greatest treasure kept

is a shell the little girl gives her mum showing the value of these special times between a parent and child. Sweet illustrations throughout with extra detail.

TIMELESS



AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR:

Kelly Canby

ISBN: 9781760992323

PUBLISHER:

Fremantle Press

RELEASE DATE: 31 Jan 2023

READING AGE: 3 to 5 years

THEMES: time, family, quality time, museum, charity shop, clocks

BOOK DESCRIPTION

This vibrant new picture book by award-winning author and illustrator Kelly Canby is all about time - making it, losing it and subverting the whole darn concept. Emit (whose parents turned back time to name him) is surrounded by busyness. Dad is too busy to read stories, Mum is too busy to play games and Emit's brother and sister are simply too busy doing nothing to do anything, at all. Emit tries everything he can think of to get more time, he tries to catch it, wait for it, but it's not until Emit tries to buy some time that he learns the secret which is, if you want time, you have to make it.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

It seems like no-one ever has enough time for Emit—it's always slipping away, running out, or simply passing by. On a quest to find some time, Emit tries standing still, looking in museums for precious things, using a net to catch it (since it flies), and even goes to a charity shop to buy it. But the volunteer there tells him something that he'll remember forever: if you want time, you'll have to make it. Emit goes back to his family and they start making "quality

time"—a clock shop that they all work in together. Full of funny wordplay and aphorisms, this quirky book emphasises the importance of spending time on important things. The rich, rainbow-coloured watercolour illustrations show Emit trying all kinds of things to find some time, and the dry, warm humour of the narration is sure to make readers laugh.

BOWERBIRD BLUES



AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR:

Aura Parker

ISBN: 9781761205637

PUBLISHER: Scholastic Australia

RELEASE DATE: 1 Apr 2023

READING AGE: 3 to 6 years

THEMES: looking for love, blue, loneliness, collecting, bowerbirds, CBCA 2024

BOOK DESCRIPTION

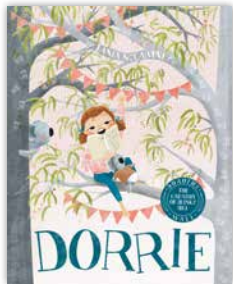
A skerrick. A scrap. A piece of blue. If only I could find the perfect hue. National Simultaneous Storytime (NSS) is an important annual campaign that aims to encourage young children to read and enjoy books as well as teach them the value of literacy. Now celebrating its 24th successful year and coming off the back of our most successful year yet, we have no doubt that the reading of Aura Parker's Bowerbird Blues will continue to build this wonderful campaign. Registration for NSS is free and open to all. Register now to receive regular updates and resources directly to your inbox. Join us as together we read Bowerbird Blues on Wednesday 22nd of May 2024 at 12:00 pm AEST / 2:00 pm NZST.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

Bowerbird searches for things for his nest. He searches far and wide. He collects lots of blue things. The beautiful images take him on a journey of searching. Through grey spaces and city spaces, Bowerbird is searching. But it isn't something blue he

is searching for, instead another bird. A mate to cuddle and love. A sweet story about a journey and collecting things with lyrical language and beautiful pictures.

DORRIE



AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR:

Tania McCartney

ISBN: 9781460760109

PUBLISHER: HarperCollins AU

RELEASE DATE: 2 Jan 2023

READING AGE: 3 to 6 years

THEMES: history, Blinky Bill, Dorothy Wall, biography, koala, growing up, creativity, stories

BOOK DESCRIPTION

From the award-winning author-illustrator of Mamie comes a beautiful and inspiring picture book that celebrates Dorothy Wall, creator of the beloved Australian icon, Blinky Bill.

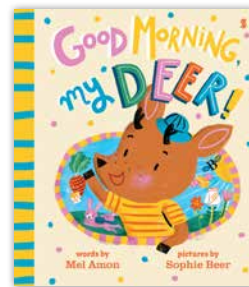
In the land of long, white clouds and snowy peaks, a little girl is born. Her name is Dorothy, but her family calls her Dorrie. When Dorrie moves to a land of flat red deserts and squeaky beaches, a koala appears in a gumtree outside her window. This lovable larrikin brings a bundle of mischief ... and changes Dorrie's life forever. From the award-winning creator of Mamie, Dorrie celebrates the beloved and talented Dorothy Wall, and her treasured Australian icon, Blinky Bill.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

This biographic picture book tells the story of Dorothy Wall, creator of Australian children's classic Blinky Bill. Readers learn that Dorrie was born in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and that when she came to Australia as a child she knew she wanted to become an artist, and spent her days adventuring and exploring. The story goes that she made friends with a cheeky koala who she named Blinky—the basis for Blinky Bill! This colourful picture book is full of illustrations of Australia's native

plants and animals, and of Dorrie's wonderful creations. A short biographic section at the back gives more information for curious young readers.

GOOD MORNING, MY DEER!



AUTHOR: Mel Amon 📍 AU

ILLUSTRATOR:

Sophie Beer 📍 AU

ISBN: 9781761380358

PUBLISHER:

Scribble Kid's Books

RELEASE DATE: 29 Aug 2023

READING AGE: 3 to 6 years

THEMES: wordplay, breakfast, educational, humour, rhyming, family

BOOK DESCRIPTION

Next, I brushed my hare and put on my new pear of shoes.

Mum painted her nails before we set out for the day.

Join Banjo and his mum on what starts as a straightforward day out, only to have it upended by homophones (two words with the same pronunciation but with different meanings), turning the narrative into the delightfully absurd. Kids and adults alike will love this joyful new wordplay extravaganza from debut author Mel Amon with illustrations by international superstar Sophie Beer. The hilarious wordplay combined with delightful illustrations have kids 'in on the joke' from the very beginning.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

One Sunday morning, the sun rose into the sky. Although it seems like a normal day to Banjo and his mum, it is very unexpected for the reader. With humorous wordplay, Banjo and his mum have a fantastical day. Banjo starts with some

plane toast, and Mum has pan cakes. Banjo tries bear-back horse riding, and at the plant nursery, they buy a palm tree and a fur tree. After many unexpected activities, a knight signals bedtime and Banjo goes to sleep after an amazing sundae. A hilarious story with engaging illustrations.

THAT BIRD HAS ARMS



AUTHOR: Kate Temple and Jol Temple

ILLUSTRATOR: Ronojoy Ghosh and Niharika Hukku

ISBN: 9781761210310

PUBLISHER: Little Hare

RELEASE DATE: 19 Jul 2023

READING AGE: 3 to 6 years

THEMES: birds, pigeons, differences, learning, value, arms, helpful, brave, talent show, enjoyment, inclusion, CBCA 2024

CONTENT INSIGHT: The birds think arms are for picking noses and scratching bottoms.

BOOK DESCRIPTION

Roy is an ordinary bird in every way. He is not the biggest, or the smallest. His squawk is not the loudest or the quietest. He even follows the same football team as everyone else. He was very normal except for one thing – he has ARMS. Absolutely nobody knows – and Roy would like to keep it that way...

That Bird Has Arms is a story about difference and identity. It's about learning to see that what sets you apart is what makes you strong, and it's about pride in your own uniqueness.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

Roy was very just like every other bird except for one thing. He had arms! Roy thought every bird had arms. He didn't even think it was weird until he heard other

birds talking about how strange arms were. So Roy decided to never use his arms in front of anyone else. When he was alone, he loved to flex them, stretch them, dance, and click. But one day, a pair of myna birds saw Roy's arms. They share a photo of Roy on their phone, and all the birds have a mean laugh. Because Roy believed his arms were bad, he started doing bad things. He poked people and did graffiti on the posters for "That Bird's Got Talent". People soon lost interest in Roy's arms because Marvin the pigeon revealed big news—he was in the talent show finale! During a dance move, Marvin gets tangled in a wire. Although all the birds try to help, they can't undo the knot. Roy bravely flies to the rescue, and all the birds agree that Roy has the most talent. A comedic story about the value of your differences.

THE BLACK COCKATOO WITH ONE FEATHER BLUE



AUTHOR: Jodie McLeod

ILLUSTRATOR: Eloise Short

ISBN: 9780646874708

PUBLISHER: Wollemi Press

RELEASE DATE: 22 Jul 2023

READING AGE: 3 to 6 years

THEMES: animals, birds, Australiana, Australian animals, journey, acceptance, self-love, confidence, identity, friendship

BOOK DESCRIPTION

The Black Cockatoo With One Feather Blue tells the story of one very clever black cockatoo, known across the land for her striking feathery feature.

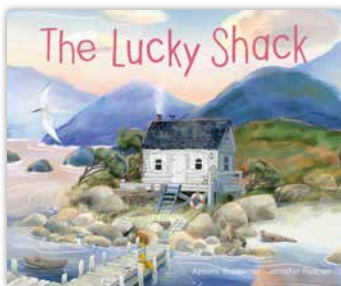
When her feather goes missing, she embarks on a quest through the Australian bush to find it, meeting a collection of characters along the way. But what begins as a search for a feather turns into the discovery of something unexpected...

Filled with fun rhymes, catchy repetition and mysterious twists, this book highlights the value of friendship and kindness over materialism, carried along by Eloise's stunning illustrations all the way to its uplifting ending.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

A black cockatoo is proud of her one blue feather, believing it makes her special. One morning, the black cockatoo wakes to find her blue feather missing. Without it, she feels lonely and scared. She flies out to find it, and is joined by a brave kangaroo, a wise emu and two kind quolls. Their search leads them to a bowerbird's nest of blue treasures, but the mischievous bowerbird refuses to return it. Suddenly, a gust of wind destroys the bowerbird's nest until only the feather remains. Devastated, the bowerbird returns the feather but the black cockatoo looks to her friends, realising that she doesn't need it to be special. She offers the feather to the grateful bowerbird, and the animals return home through the bush. A sublimely illustrated modern-day fable with a valuable message about confidence, identity and friendship.

THE LUCKY SHACK

**AUTHOR:**

Apsara Baldovino

ILLUSTRATOR:

Jennifer Falkner

ISBN: 9781922033154**PUBLISHER:** Working Title Press**RELEASE DATE:** 15 Jul 2023**READING AGE:** 3 to 6 years

THEMES: nature, home, family, hope, love, seaside, ocean, fisherman, family, restoration, landscape, useful

REPRESENTATIONS: Changing seasons of life through the perspective of a shack.

BOOK DESCRIPTION

A timeless message of hope - of love lost and found again - this story is a stunning debut that will warm your heart.

I am a lucky shack.

I spend my days watching boats bob gently under puffy clouds, on a sparkling sea.

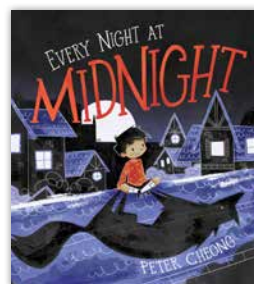
Surrounded by natural beauty, a seaside shack is lovingly cared for by a fisherman, until one day everything changes.

The Lucky Shack is a heartfelt and uplifting journey through the seasons, the cycle of life, and the beauty and power of nature. If you are brave enough to let the light in, love and gratitude will triumph.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

A beach shack is cared for and lived in by a fisherman until it is destroyed in a storm. The lucky shack feels lonely as it falls apart and tries to encourage someone to notice it, even letting go of a window pane. One day, a fisherwoman comes and restores it. The shack is happy to have someone walking on its floors and enjoying it. She carefully restores the shack into a beautiful home, and the shack is even happier when the woman brings children. The shack considers itself a lucky shack. A beautiful picture book about being useful, seeking love, and new beginnings. Told from the perspective of the shack.

EVERY NIGHT AT MIDNIGHT

**AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR:**

Peter Cheong 📍 AU

ISBN: 9781922992383**PUBLISHER:** Affirm Press**RELEASE DATE:** 29 Aug 2023**READING AGE:** 3 to 6 years

THEMES: wolf, uniqueness, finding your pack, community, friendship, loneliness, CBCA 2024

REPRESENTATIONS: Different cultures are shown in the illustrations.

BOOK DESCRIPTION

Every night at midnight, Felix turns into a wolf. His hands and feet become velvety paws and he grows a long, bushy tail. Felix has the night-time world to himself. There's no one else like him.

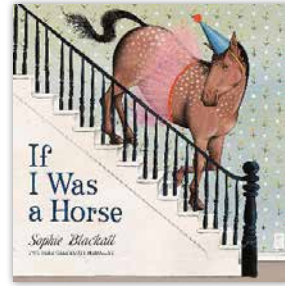
Felix isn't a wolf during the day, but it still feels like there's no one else like him. That's okay. Felix is just fine on his own. But after a chance encounter, this little lone wolf starts to wonder whether he might find his pack after all...

A tender and whimsical picture book about finding friendship in unexpected places.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

Every night at midnight, a young boy turns into a wolf. There is no one else like him. He can't go to sleepovers anymore and figured it would be easier to be on his own. As he turns down invitations, his school friends leave him alone. If only he didn't turn into a wolf every night... When a new girl arrives at school, she fits in straight away. But he doesn't need anyone. At least he is the fastest in school! Although not anymore with the new girl around. As he goes out at midnight, his lone howl echoes into the night. He hears another wolf and they have the best night ever running over rooftops. But then the new wolf falls and hurts their arm, leaving behind a necklace on the ground. The next day, the young boy doesn't want to be at school, he wants to find his new friend. It turns out that the new girl is the wolf that he was with last night. As he is accepted back into the friend group, maybe today is actually the best day ever! A heartwarming story about the value of friendship. The story ends with the friend group all hanging out at midnight. There are two wolves, a racoon, a bear, a tiger, and a badger.

IF I WAS A HORSE



AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR:

Sophie Blackall 📍 AU

ISBN: 9780734422712

PUBLISHER:

Lothian Children's Books

RELEASE DATE: 27 Nov 2023

READING AGE: 3 to 6 years

THEMES: horse, imagination, play, family, siblings, home, CBCA 2024

REPRESENTATIONS: Different cultures are shown in the illustrations.

BOOK DESCRIPTION

If I was a horse, I would gallop all day.

I could go anywhere I want ...

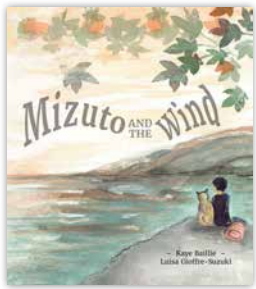
If you were a horse, what would you do? Could you fit in your clothes? Would you give your little sister a ride? Would your brother even notice?

Gallop along with two-time Caldecott Medallist Sophie Blackall through this riotous day in the life of a child who imagines their life as a horse. Sophie's delightful text and resonant illustrations that feature a giant horse in familiar settings offer a visual feast, a grand dose of joy and a celebration of the real power of imagination to help us navigate the world.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

If you were a horse, things would be very different. In this imaginative picture book, you can explore what life would be like as a horse. You could gallop anywhere you want, give your sister a ride to school, roll in the mud without care, and everyone would want you for their team. You wouldn't have to bathe, wear clothes, or go to bed early. A playful story about childhood imagination with engaging illustrations.

MIZUTO AND THE WIND



AUTHOR: Kaye Baillie

ILLUSTRATOR:

Luisa Gioffre-Suzuki

ISBN: 9781922858023

PUBLISHER:

MidnightSun Publishing

RELEASE DATE: 1 Jun 2024

READING AGE: 4 to 10 years

THEMES: family, grief, Japan, search, hope, nature, tsunami, loss, death

CONTENT INSIGHT: Contains a tsunami.
The phone is a way to "speak" to the dead.

REPRESENTATIONS: The story is set in Japan and features Japanese characters.

BOOK DESCRIPTION

Mizuto is a young boy living an ordinary life in Japan until one day, something extraordinary happens.

Following a deadly tsunami, Mizuto's father is missing.

Could a mysterious telephone connected only to the wind help him find his father?

Based on real events, Mizuto and the Wind is a story about the forces of nature, grief, family, and the importance of hope.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

One morning, a young boy named Mizuto says goodbye to his father as he leaves for work. But on his route, his father is lost to the waves of a tsunami. Mizuto misses his father dearly and is overcome by a great sadness. He no longer finds cheer in his father's garden, and his once-happy mother is sad as well. His thoughts and emotions are trapped in a great big tangle. One day, Mizuto overhears talk about a phone connected to the wind which allows you to talk to

loved ones who are gone. He tells his mother about the phone, but she doesn't believe it is real. Mizuto goes on his own to find the phone and speaks the words he wants his father to hear into its receiver. The wind carries his words across the sky and Mizuto feels far better. He tells his mother about the phone on the top of the hill and they go together, finding happiness in letting go. A heartwarming story about processing grief and unexpected loss. Contains a beautiful collection of both black and white, and coloured illustrations that coincide with Mizuto's emotions.

LEAF-LIGHT



AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR:

Trace Balla

ISBN: 9781760526207

PUBLISHER:

A&U Children's

RELEASE DATE: 8 Jan 2023

READING AGE: 4 to 12 years

THEMES: friendship, community, wildlife, emu, overcoming barriers, finding your own path, First Nations, wildlife, wetlands, habitat, environment, community, connecting with country, nature, Aboriginal

REPRESENTATIONS: Miri and her neighbours are of Indigenous heritage and speak some words in Djaara. Brief mention of neo-pronouns: "So is Barramal a she, a he, a ze, a xe, a ki, an ey, a they, a yo...?"

BOOK DESCRIPTION

Join Miri in her special spot, high up among the dappled leaf-light, and below with her neighbour Wingo, two joeys, a wombat and a baby emu!

A story about friendship, taking down barriers and creating community, finding your own path in the

world and inspiring others along the way - from one of Australia's most unique creative talents.

PRAISE FOR LANDING WITH WINGS

'Another lovely adventure from Trace Balla. Rich in country and family, deep in care for the future.' BRUCE PASCOE

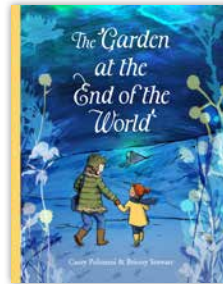
'A beautiful book about being connected to the world at ground level. I feel like I've made a new friend through Trace's exquisitely accessible drawings and gentle prose.' ALISON LESTER

'Reminiscent of Alison Lester and Roland Harvey, Landing with Wings is a story about moving slowly, looking carefully and remaining curious, and it is a book that leads by example. In her loving portrait of community life in Dja Dja Wurrung Country, Balla achieves something like contemporary visual bush poetry. It is spellbinding.' BOOKS+PUBLISHING

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

Miri builds a treehouse in the big tree behind her house and she names the spot 'Leaf-light'. Her friends and family venture up too. Miri likes to observe the wildlife from up high. One day, her friend Wingo's father brings finds an emu egg and Miri happily volunteers to help care for it. Once it hatches, they name the emu Barramal, which is Djaara for 'emu'. Barramal loves spending time with Miri and Wingo. One day, in the rain, Miri goes on her milk delivery, only to find that Barramal has snuck onto her bike too! Things go awry when Miri falls off the bike and Barramal is nearly run over. Miri's family tell her that Barramal will only get bigger and bigger and that he should be with his own kind. Later, they release Barramal into the wild and Miri is content knowing that he's out there running free with the other emus.

THE GARDEN AT THE END OF THE WORLD


AUTHOR:

Briony Stewart, Cassy Polimeni

ISBN: 9780702265693

PUBLISHER:

University of Queensland Press

RELEASE DATE: 4 Apr 2023

READING AGE: 4 to 6 years

THEMES: seeds, exploration, Global Seed Bank, gardens, conservation, travel

BOOK DESCRIPTION

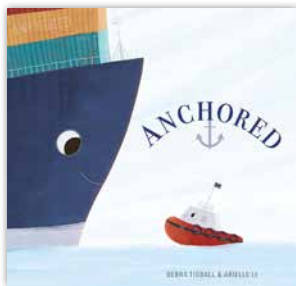
Isla and her mother go on an enchanting journey to the Global Seed Vault in Norway to discover a garden waiting at the end of the world. At the end of the world is an island covered in ice. On the island is a mountain. Inside the mountain is a vault. And inside the vault are millions of seeds. When Isla makes a special discovery, she and her botanist mother adventure to the Global Seed Vault in Norway. Isla is going to leave her precious package there, so children who haven't even been born yet can grow and eat the food we all enjoy. What else will they encounter along the way? The Garden at the End of the World is a hopeful story about protecting nature's treasures for the future.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

When Isla discovers a strange and beautiful seed while exploring with her mum one day, she wants to keep it forever—but her mum has a better idea! Mum tells Isla about a magical place between Norway and the North Pole, where millions of seeds are being kept in the Global Seed Bank, carefully stored away for future generations. Amazed by the idea of a 'garden at the end of the world', Isla and her mum decide to travel to the Seed Bank and deposit Isla's special seed. They fly across the world to the icy island where the Seed Bank stands, admiring

the frozen landscape in the long polar night, even getting to see the Northern Lights! Isla learns that the island of Svalbard wasn't always freezing—why, hundreds of millions of years ago, it was a tropical swampland! Despite a close call, Isla successfully deposits her seed in the Bank...the perfect conclusion to a breathtakingly wonderful journey to the garden at the end of the world. Filled with stunning illustrations, this gorgeous picture book holds a heart-warming message about conservation and the simple beauty of nature for younger readers. With interesting information about the Global Seed Bank and a simple story, this is a must-read for readers young and old.

ANCHORED



AUTHOR: Debra Tidball
ILLUSTRATOR: Arielle Li
ISBN: 9781922539496
PUBLISHER: EK Books
RELEASE DATE: 4 May 2023
READING AGE: 4 to 7 years

THEMES: ships, ocean, distance, friendship, travel, loneliness, long-distance friendship, sadness

BOOK DESCRIPTION

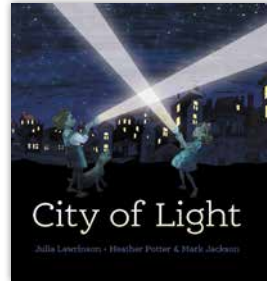
In this sensitive tale, Tug and Ship are connected by bonds of love despite being oceans apart. Anchored honors the intrinsic value and worth of a child, the parent-child bond, attachment and the sustaining power of love. It's an empowering story that will give children a sense of pride and strength to get through the 'missing you' days.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

Each time Ship leaves the port, Tug is left behind. While Ship sails the sea, Tug keeps working hard at port, missing Ship more and more each day. But when Ship returns, Tug's world is bright again as Ship relays all the adventures it went on. Thanks to Ship's reassurance, Tug doesn't feel so sad when

it's left behind again and knows that their friendship cannot be broken by the distance between them.

CITY OF LIGHT



AUTHOR: Julia Lawrinson
ILLUSTRATOR: Mark & Heather Jackson
ISBN: 9781742036304
PUBLISHER: Wild Dog Books
RELEASE DATE: 1 Feb 2023

READING AGE: 4 to 7 years

THEMES: Perth, astronauts, John Glenn, family, outer space, community, connection

REPRESENTATIONS: Astronaut

BOOK DESCRIPTION

On Monday 20 February 1962, the people of Perth lit up their city overnight to acknowledge the special mission of American astronaut John Glenn – the first American to orbit the Earth. Glenn, in turn, observed that the city was clearly visible from space, and Perth became known worldwide as 'The City of Light'

This true story is a snapshot in time that captures the excitement of human's first forays into outer space. It is a time of Hills Hoists, friendly neighbours, and small TVs in the family lounge room. It's a time when we received our news through newspapers, radio and television... or shared it with a neighbour over a cuppa or the back fence.

This is a story of two small children with one big idea: an idea that captured the imagination of a city. It is also a story about connection – the connection of a community that came together to achieve a goal, and their connection with John Glenn who was travelling far from home.

City of Light is written by award-winning WA author Julia Lawrinson and brought to life by the evocative

illustrations of Mark Jackson and Heather Potter.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

In Perth, Australia, on February 20th, 1962, two children wonder if the American astronaut John Glenn, currently orbiting Earth, can see them from his rocket ship. They ask their parents if he can see them from space, and are told that he can only see large landmarks like the Pyramids, Amazon River and the Grand Canyon. The children devise a plan for their entire city to turn on their lights so the astronaut can see them. That night many lights are turned on and the astronaut, seeing the brightness from space, transmits a message thanking them for turning on their lights.

PAPER-FLOWER GIRL



AUTHOR: Margrete Lamond

ILLUSTRATOR: Mateja Jager

ISBN: 9780645352399

PUBLISHER: Dirt Lane Press

RELEASE DATE: 1 Oct 2023

READING AGE: 4 to 7 years

THEMES: origami, flowers, hard work, success, folk tales, CBCA 2024

REPRESENTATIONS: The main character has an Asian background.

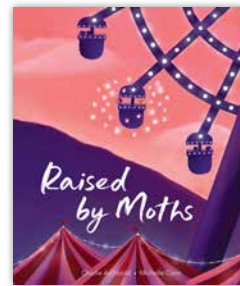
BOOK DESCRIPTION

The Paper-flower Girl creates elaborate flowers out of paper, but she has few customers. When the Giant from the Hill brings her to work for him, they soon discover they want very different things. Before long, the Paper-flower Girl is forced to create things she no longer recognises as flowers. When the exasperated Giant throws her from the Hill, the Paper-flower Girl takes with her something belonging to the Giant, incorporates it into her elaborate flowers, and attains greater success than the Giant.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

A young artistic girl is struggling to sell her elaborate paper flowers. She wants to make art for all, but she can't find anyone who wants to buy it. The Giant from the Hill brings her to work for him, but they have very different goals for their business. While she wants to make art for all, the Giant wants his creations to be exclusive. Soon enough, the young girl cannot recognise her lovely paper flowers. The Giant throws her from the Hill in frustration, but she takes something that belongs to him. The young girl uses it in her designs and becomes more successful than the Giant! A gorgeous rhyming picture book about the value of art and staying true to your beliefs. The illustrations use colour to reflect the changing mood, emotions and dialogue.

RAISED BY MOTHS



AUTHOR: Charlie Archbold

ILLUSTRATOR: Michelle Conn

ISBN: 9781922858184

PUBLISHER: MidnightSun Publishing

RELEASE DATE: 1 Oct 2023

READING AGE: 4 to 7 years

THEMES: moths, feriswheel, carnival,

CONTENT INSIGHT: This book has representations of adoption and hints of magic, with children being raised by animals

REPRESENTATIONS: Contains non-traditional families, adoptive families, and characters with different skin tones.

ACCESSIBILITY: Low page density, reluctant reader

BOOK DESCRIPTION

Willow jumps on the Ferris Wheel and is intrigued to see a boy surrounded by moths.

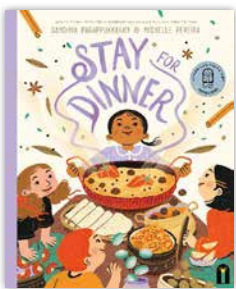
As they travel high above the fairground he tells her the reason why the moths love him so much: he was raised by moths.

Wonderfully fantastical and thought-provoking with stunning illustrations, Raised by Moths is quite unlike anything you've read before.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

When a young girl goes to ride the Ferris wheel with her mother, she joins another young boy who is sitting alone in the carriage. Together they ride to the top of the wheel, but it gets stuck! The girl is scared but the boy tells her not to be, because there is something he wants to show her. He claps his hands together and a huge silver moth lands next to him. Soon, more and more fly over to see him. The boy says that he was raised by moths and that they looked after him until he was three. He says that some children are raised by animals, but that most of them won't remember. Suddenly the Ferris wheel works again and the two return to the ground with their family. As they leave the boy points to the big field near the fairground. The little girl goes to the field and finds a tiny horseshoe in her pocket. The horses in the paddock wander over and she remembers that she was raised by horses. A sweet story about the connection between humans and animals.

STAY FOR DINNER

**AUTHOR:**

Sandhya Parappukkaran

ILLUSTRATOR: Michelle Pereira

ISBN: 9781761211966

PUBLISHER: Bright Light

RELEASE DATE: 17 May 2023

READING AGE: 4 to 7 years

THEMES: family, eating, friends, different cultures

REPRESENTATIONS: Different cultures way of eating. Using cutlery, using chopsticks and using fingers. The specific cultures are not listed in the book which makes it open for cultures to see different ways of doing things.

BOOK DESCRIPTION

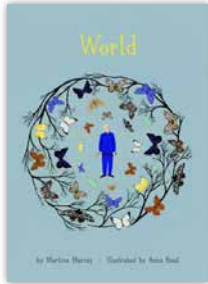
Stay for Dinner is a powerful story that celebrates culture and connection through food, from the creators of The Boy Who Tried to Shrink His Name, winner of the 2022 Children's Book Council of Australia's Award for New Illustrator.

Reshma loves dinnertime with her family. Her family eat with their hands – not just finger food type-eating, but hands-on squishy eating. When she's invited to stay for dinner at her friends' places, she finds out that they all eat in different ways. Some go ting ting with their cutlery, and others go click clack with their chopsticks. So what will her friends say when they see her family eat with their hands?

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

A beautiful celebration of friends who have different "at home" rules. With some children specifically using cutlery, others using chopsticks and the main character's family eat with their hands. When Reshma is invited to Stay for Dinner she has to work out how to use cutlery at her first friend's house. And then at the next invite she has to work out chopsticks. When her friends are invited to her ouse she is worried they will judge her family as they use no implements. But her friends embrace her culture as they did hers and everyone ends with a healthy burp - which means they liked the meal!

WORLD



AUTHOR: Martine Murray
ILLUSTRATOR: Anna Read
ISBN: 9780645039528
PUBLISHER: Parachute Press
RELEASE DATE: 5 Sep 2023
READING AGE: 4 to 7 years

THEMES: materialism, nature, conservation, peacefulness, city life, tree, appreciating nature, animals

BOOK DESCRIPTION

A children's picture book with ecological themes in which a man is persuaded not to cut a tree down, by the tree's quiet revelation of the beauty of the world housed by the tree.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

When a man talks to a tree, he compares its world to the fast-paced city life around it. The man is looking for a home and wants the fast-paced city life with televisions in every room. However, the tree demonstrates the beauty of nature. It describes the world that exists within its leaves and space. There are many animals and plants to uncover. Soon, the man begins to see the world from the tree's perspective. A beautiful story about appreciating the natural world. Contains fold-out pages with animals and full spreads of nature.

YOUR HEAD'S NOT THE PLACE TO STORE PROBLEMS



AUTHOR: Josh Pyke
ILLUSTRATOR: Stephen Michael King
ISBN: 9781761293023
PUBLISHER: Scholastic Australia
RELEASE DATE: 1 Sep 2023

READING AGE: 4 to 7 years

THEMES: mood, emotions, emotional regulation, understanding problems, sharing, friendship, anxiety

REPRESENTATIONS: The dog and dragon characters have no names. The pronoun for all characters is they/their/them.

BOOK DESCRIPTION

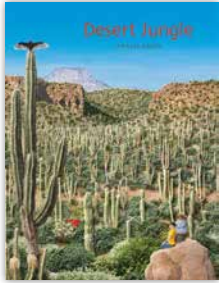
Some problems seem heavy, they can weigh you down. Your mind feels too cluttered, the world seems too loud! Sometimes your brain feels full up and crowded. Your mood swings from sunny to suddenly cloudy. We're full to the brim with unknowable things, but your head's not the place to store problems in. A whimsical and wise picture book on navigating life's ups and downs, from two multi-award-winning creators.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

Everyone has thoughts. Some are big, some are enormous, and some are smaller. This picture book demonstrates that instead of storing your problems or worries in your head they are best off shared. Through some unusual rhyme and even more unusual illustrations with the heads being opened to show the ideas going out (not graphic) the story explores the value of sharing worries with a friend. The characters are all animals including dogs and dragons. A clever way to demonstrate the thought of overcoming anxiety and worries in your head for children. Children are

encouraged to free up space for kind thoughts.

DESERT JUNGLE



AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR:

Jeannie Baker 📍 AU

ISBN: 9781406387872

PUBLISHER:

Walker Books Australia

RELEASE DATE: 3 May 2023

READING AGE: 4 to 8 years

THEMES: outback, desert, jungle, lost, found, technology, wild, family, growth, wildlife, animals

REPRESENTATIONS: Chico and his Grandpa are Black. Shows desert country.

BOOK DESCRIPTION

In spectacular and astonishing collage detail, Jeannie Baker captures the deep beauty, mystery, and hidden vitality of the desert landscape – and why it needs our protection.

Chico's grandpa has taken him on holiday where he grew up as a child, out in the desert. Chico has no interest in exploring the land – the desert jungle frightens him, and he'd much rather play on his his tablet. Grandpa decides that it is time to show Chico the secrets and the wonders that the desert has to offer so that he will not fear it but, instead, welcome it, embrace it and help protect it. Grandpa shows Chico paths through the cactus and the scrub, teaches Chico the plants' names – ocotillo, cholla, cirios, pin cushion, fishhook – and, soon, Chico begins to understand the wonders of the wild. He learns the value of watching, waiting and listening for all the life that hums within his desert home.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

When Chico goes to stay with his grandpa in the desert valley surrounding his home, he only wants to play on his tablet. When Chico leaves his bag outside the range,

it is stolen by a coyote. Miserable, Chico searches for his bag. He gets lost and panics, but thankfully, finds his way home. Grandpa is impressed. Grandpa tells Chico he does not have to be afraid and takes him exploring. Chico finds lots of incredible plants in the desert jungle. Even scary animals can be beautiful. When Chico starts exploring on his own, he finds that there are lots of treasures to be found. During a storm, Chico runs into a cave for shelter, but Chico is not alone. He is confronted by a dangerous coyote. Thankfully, when Chico turns away, the coyote disappears. Making it safely home, Chico tells his worried grandpa about the coyote. When Chico returns to his village, he has a newfound love for his desert home. His fear is gone, and he is gifted to see the wonder of the wild. An engaging story about the beauty of the desert environment and overcoming your fears. Contains mixed-media collages for the illustrations.

PLAGUE



AUTHOR: Jackie French

ILLUSTRATOR: Bruce Whatley

ISBN: 9781743834824

PUBLISHER:

Scholastic Australia

RELEASE DATE: 1 Mar 2023

READING AGE: 4 to 8 years

THEMES: farming, farmers, plague, locusts, grasslands, poison, control, population control, problem solving, ibis, food chain, ecosystem

CONTENT INSIGHT: Illustrations show some dead birds, who were killed by the poison. There is no blood, but they are clearly dead.

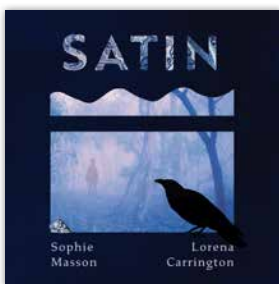
REPRESENTATIONS: Representation of farmers and farming practices to control locusts. Show Aboriginals hunting kangaroos in history.

BOOK DESCRIPTION

From the award-winning creators of Flood, Fire, Cyclone, Drought, Pandemic and Earthquake ... Grass and wheat-lands spread to the horizon, and so did we, with too few ibis to control us. We could rage across the land. We ate the grass, the leaves, the wheat ...

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

In the past, Aboriginal people hunted the kangaroos and white ibis. There was a balanced ibis and locust population. When the farmers arrived, they burned trees and drained the swamps to expand the crop fields. The ibis went into urban areas to become 'bin chicken' scavengers. Without ibis to control the locust population, numbers increased, and locusts began feeding on crops, hoses and washing. In the current day, pesticides drop from planes to control the population, killing the locusts and the bush birds that feed on them. However, the pesticides are not always effective, and the locusts continue to grow. The locusts lament the pesticides and note that, in the past, people cared for Country. The perspective of the locusts combined with effective imagery creates an evocative, educational story suitable for classrooms. Contains an author's note at the back of the book, which explains the history of locust plagues.

SATIN**AUTHOR:** Sophie Masson**ILLUSTRATOR:**

Lorena Carrington

ISBN: 9781922858016**PUBLISHER:**

MidnightSun Publishing

RELEASE DATE: 1 Mar 2023**READING AGE:** 4 to 8 years**REPRESENTATIONS:** Representation of depression.**BOOK DESCRIPTION**

Every morning early, when no-one's about, Satin slips out of the forest and walks along the sleepy sunrise streets, looking for blue...

He's collected all kinds of blues, from all kinds of places. He's making something beautiful, with all those blues. But something's missing, and he doesn't know what it is. And then, one day, he comes to a street he's never been in before. And what he finds there will change his lonely life forever.

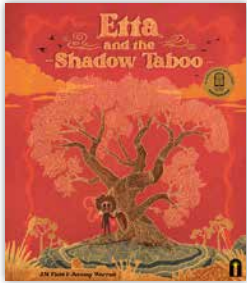
A beautiful, haunting fable by award-winning writer Sophie Masson and acclaimed illustrator Lorena Carrington.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

During every sleepy sunrise, Satin slips out of his forest and walks along the streets. He is looking for blue. Blue is everywhere. He fills his cloak pockets with blue, takes it home, and adds it to his growing collection. Even though Satin is happy, he feels like something is missing. One morning, Satin has to walk further than usual to find blue. He finds a remote house but hopes to avoid the people inside. As he turns to leave, Satin hears the word blue. A child is talking to a teddy about her mother. Satin understands why her mother is feeling blue. She needs blue. When the child is called away, Satin leaves a piece of blue on the windowsill. He returns home, suddenly realising what has been missing. He takes his collection of blue around the houses and leaves pieces for others. At the final house, Satin meets a woman who has blue in her hair and her throat. She invites Satin inside, filling his heart with the gladness of blue. Satin still looks for blue, but he no longer does it alone. A beautiful extended metaphor about sadness in a fable-like story.

THEMES: sadness, depression, community, understanding, emotions, emotional regulation, unity, bond

NEW ILLUSTRATORS

ETTA AND
THE SHADOW TABOO

AUTHOR: Dr. Jared M Field
ILLUSTRATOR: Jeremy Worrall
ISBN: 9781760509798
PUBLISHER: Hardie Grant
 Children's Publishing
RELEASE DATE: 7 Jun 2023

READING AGE: 3 to 6 years

THEMES: Australia, diversity, birthday present, Indigenous Australian stories, social distancing, personal space, Aboriginal art, Gamilaraay, traditional stories, shadow, own voices, First Nations, respect, self-awareness, Folk beliefs, folk stories

CONTENT INSIGHT: Contains a spirit tree that uses magical flowers to temporarily turn Etta into a shadow.

REPRESENTATIONS: Contains Gamilaraay First Nations People and Gamilaraay words, including yaama (hello), Gunii (Mum or Aunt), and Baawaa (older sister). These are defined at the beginning of the story.

BOOK DESCRIPTION

The Shadow Taboo is an old Gamilaraay tradition where one must avoid stepping on the shadows of others. Jared Field shares this traditional custom through the story of Etta – a girl who learns this lesson the hard way when she stands on her baawaa's (sister's) shadow. Etta turns to the spirit tree for guidance and is shown the importance of respecting the personal space of others – and the value of having her own personal space – and after apologising to her baawaa, swears to always ask herself:

The spirit tree knows
 The spirit tree cares
 Where is my shadow?

And where is theirs?

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

When the spirit tree notices that Etta is sad, it asks her what is wrong. Etta's older sister has screamed at her to go away because Etta has stood on her shadow several times. The spirit tree tells Etta that we must not stand on shadows because shadows feel pain too. To help Etta learn the lesson of the Shadow Taboo, the spirit tree temporarily turns Etta into a shadow. Etta goes to her Gunii, but her Gunii cannot hear her. Instead, her Gunii's shadow replies. It tells Etta that stepping on a shadow is a crime and shadows will play mean tricks on people who do! But if Etta's sorry, they won't play mean tricks on her. Etta is very sorry and promises to always look out for other people's shadows. A captivating rhyming story about respecting the personal space of others with beautiful red, orange, and black illustrations.

WHEN YOU'RE A BOY



AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR:
 Blake Nuto
ISBN: 9781922863652
PUBLISHER: Affirm Press
RELEASE DATE:
 25 Jul 2023

READING AGE: 3 to 7 years

THEMES: boy, man, men, gender, stereotype, expectations, picture book, be your own man, toxic masculinity

REPRESENTATIONS: Contains discussions about masculinity. Boys and men are shown to be kind and gentle.

BOOK DESCRIPTION

A powerful and moving exploration of what it means to be a boy from an exciting new author-illustrator talent.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

When you're a boy, people tell you to be tough. In this conversation between a father and a son, the father teaches his son that boys are more than just bravado. They can also be kind and gentle. As a boy, you can also experience sweet moments, kindness and much more. A beautiful story about a father and son with lovely illustrations.

PHONOBET

**AUTHOR:**

Kathy Weeden 📍 AU

ILLUSTRATOR:

Kim Drane 📍 AU

ISBN: 9781922507471**PUBLISHER:** National Library of Australia**RELEASE DATE:** 1 Jun 2023**READING AGE:** 4 to 6 years

THEMES: wordplay, educational, phonemes, rhyming, rhyme, reading, learning to read, language, different sounds

BOOK DESCRIPTION

Come and meet the Phonobet, old Alpha Betty's twin,

The set of all the sounds you use when wagging your chin.

Phonobet is a modern-day, Australian answer to Dr Seuss's ABC. This very clever rhyming text takes an onomatopoeic romp through the 44 phonemes of Australian (and British) English, comparing sounds to trees, bees, trains, robots, monkeys, pirates and more. The text aligns with primary-school phonics programs and could be used by educators in this field, but is equally successful as a fun read-aloud book for parents of 4- to 6-year-olds.

Children will enjoy Kim Drane's bold, colourful and

fun-filled illustrations, which pop on the page.

So, once you know the Phonobet, I'm certain that you'll find

A wacky world of wonder words with sounds of every kind,

The sounds are yours to say and sing and twist and taste and chew.

And then, what should you do with them? Well, that's up to you.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

In the alphabet, there are different letters and sounds split across consonants and vowels. In this informative rhyming picture book, learn the concept of phonemes. There are word examples with each set of sounds, and the phonemes are printed in a bold text. Learn how to make the different sounds, write a sound, and how sounds are reflected by different accents. There is also a Treasure Hunt section which tasks the reader with finding the missing sound in *Waltzing Matilda* by Banjo Paterson. A fun story about language principles for young readers based on Australian Standard English.

HOPE IS THE THING

**AUTHOR:** Johanna Bell 📍 AU**ILLUSTRATOR:**

Erica Wagner 📍 AU

ISBN: 9781761180026**PUBLISHER:** A & U Children**RELEASE DATE:** 31 Jan 2023**READING AGE:** 4 to 8 years

THEMES: hope, birds, poetry, rhyme, wildlife, nature, beauty, CBCA 2024

BOOK DESCRIPTION

Hope is a kookaburra singing the sun

Hope is the emu learning to run ...

Let your imagination soar in this joyful ode to the world of birds and the healing power of nature.

Sparked by the Emily Dickinson poem 'Hope is the thing with feathers', this lyrical text accompanied by glorious mixed media collages reflects and celebrates the diversity, ingenuity and wonder of birds.

NOVEL INSIGHT REVIEW

Explore what hope might mean in this beautiful story filled with birds of all different shapes and colours. From kookaburras and emus, cockies and curlews, to pelicans and ibises, bask in the natural beauty of these Australian birds as they show young readers how hope is akin to something with feathers and wings. Inspired by a classic Emily Dickinson poem, with a unique, collage-esque art style, this creative picture book is wonderful for story time, with bright colours and engaging rhymes to enthrall readers of all ages.

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