



THE CHILDREN'S
BOOK COUNCIL
OF AUSTRALIA
NSW BRANCH



Kids' Corner



November 2019

November shares news of our favourite books through the KOALA Awards. November also helps to remind us to care about our history through Remembrance Day and to do something about our future with National Recycling Week.



Some books just keep growing and growing!

Authors give us the good word about **SERIES BOOKS**

How and why do readers get hooked to **read on and on**? How do authors keep growing their characters and stories? When is the next book coming out? Happy reading always Morrie



Are you doing the right thing for the environment? Find out where and how to do it.

KOALA
Wednesday
November 13

What is your favourite series of books? Can you name ALL the titles in correct order? How many series have you finished reading? Ask your librarian for another great series.

READ ON AND ON . . . for a series of authors' series secrets

Series books keep us looking for just a bit more of the story. Some of our favourite authors share the secrets behind keeping a story going and growing.

DEB ABELA

<http://www.deborahabela.com>

Grimsdon provides a future where kids live in a flooded city with sea monsters, flying machines and girls who are good with swords and more.



The **Grimsdon** trilogy was never meant to be a series. I became cranky about inaction to climate change fifteen years ago. So I wrote **Grimsdon**, where kids live in flooded city with sea monsters, robots, wild weather, and brilliant inventions that may or may not save them all. When kids harassed me for more, I wrote **New City**. After more kid harassment came **Final Storm**. It includes some of the amazing things that people are doing to combat climate change and help the planet. **DEB ABELA**

TRISTAN BANCKS

www.tristanbancks.com

Tom Weekly is a series of short story

collections



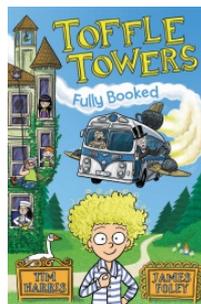
which gives me enormous flexibility in exploring different facets of Tom's life.

A strong central character and voice is the key. A voice the reader responds to and trusts takes them to interesting places with every new book. *Tom Weekly* is a series of short story collections which gives me enormous flexibility in exploring different facets of Tom's life without worrying about an overarching series-wide story arc. The stories follow sitcom rules so the world resets at the end of every story. **TRISTAN BANCKS**

TIM HARRIS

<https://timharrisbooks.com/>

Toffle Towers is about Chegwin Toffle, a ten-year-old daydreamer who inherits a run-down hotel. With the hotel's funds almost drained, Chegwin must brainstorm exciting ideas to get the hotel back on its feet.



Readers may get hooked for a number of reasons. A reader might connect with a character or a storyline. Or they may simply enjoy the author's writing style, whether it is humorous, mysterious or anything in between! **TIM HARRIS**

TAMSIN JANU

<http://www.tamsinjanu.com/>

There are three books in the **Figgy series: Figgy in the World; Figgy and the President; and Figgy Takes the City.**



I think readers get hooked on a series because they love the main character and want to watch them grow up. Figgy is brave, smart and funny, goes on many adventures around her West African country of Ghana, while learning a lot along the way!

TAMSIN JANU

BELINDA MURRELL

<https://belindamurrell.com.au/>

Belinda's series include: **Lulu Bell; Pippa's Island; The Sun Sword trilogy;** and her award-winning **Timeslip** series of historical novels, including **The Ivory Rose, The Forgotten Pearl, and The Lost Sapphire.**

Kids love reading series. Readers fall in love with the characters over several books by really getting to know them and caring about their challenges. I get so many letters from kids begging me to write more



books in a favourite series or more books just like the ones they adore! **BELINDA MURRELL**

OLIVER PHOMMAVANH

<https://www.oliverwriter.com/>

*In **Super Con-nerd**, you see Connor hit high school, which is a huge adventure! I like adding more problems and troubles to Connor's life in each new book.*

Kids can get hooked on series because they are a great way for readers to grow with characters, such as Connor in my Con-nerd books. I think I know when Connor's journey will end - when he tells me to!



OLIVER PHOMMAVANH

RACHEL SPRATT

<https://raspratt.com/>



*I have written three series: **The Peski Kids; Friday Barnes; Girl Detective; and Nanny Piggins.** My books are funny dialogue-driven adventures that explore science, social justice and man's inhumanity to man.*

To write a series you need an interesting team of characters, a good location that will be able to drive lots of plots and an intriguing premise that can snowball into a big adventure.

RACHEL SPRATT

RHIANNON WILLIAMS

***The Narrowway Trilogy** - Otilie cares about her brother more than anything. When she pretends to be a boy she fears being discovered not only because it threatens her safety, but because it would mean being separated from him.*



Great characters always hook me into a series. I think it's important to show the things a character really cares about – then readers will start caring too and become invested in the outcome of every twist and turn. **RHIANNON WILLIAMS**

A BIT MORE FROM TIM HARRIS

-How and why readers get hooked?

A reader might connect with a character who is in somehow similar to them, link into to a storyline, or simply enjoy the author's writing style – humorous, mysterious or anything in between! A favourite illustrator or genre may combine with other factors to draw a reader in.

-How do authors keep growing their characters and stories?

This depends on who you talk to. I like to be consistent with my characters and their actions. They may have certain habits (such as tucking loose hair behind their ear) or phrases, that repeats and builds the reader's expectations of how they behave. When a character does something unexpected, this can have a powerful impact. 'What caused the character to react this way?' As a character develops in the story, you can begin to add depth through backstory that explains why the character got to be the way they are.

-How do you set up the initial story? And how do you decide a series is ready to finish?

I like to begin with a short focus on the main character. **Mr Bambuckle's Remarkables** and **Toffle Towers** both start this way. The protagonist is introduced in a quirky and intriguing way. Then, they are thrust into an interesting situation. Ending a series can be a sentimental affair. If the characters have grown and learnt something, that's a good sign that the story has run its course. It can be tricky for authors to keep thinking of new ways to stretch and grow their characters as the number of books increases. **TIM HARRIS**



AND SOMETHING EXTRA FROM RACHEL SPRATT

Writing series has unique challenges. It is vital to set up a cast of characters, a location and a premise that will be able to drive multiple plots. You need to think about the volume of plot points you need for the second act of one novel, then be sure you will be able to come up with the same quantity again and again by introducing variables (a visitor who creates a problem, or taking the characters to another location where there is a problem, or the problem from the previous book snowballs into a different problem).

A huge advantage in writing series is that you can end each book with a cliff-hanger to encourage your readers to get the next book. It also makes it easier to write the next one if you've got your first page already, because it was the last page of the previous book. **RACHEL SPRATT**

SERIES FROM OUR AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S LAUREATES

<http://www.childrenslaureate.org.au/laureates/>

MORRIS GLEITZMANN www.morrisgleitzman.com is the current Australian Children's Laureate 2018 – 2019. His series include: **Misery Guts: Blabber Mouth; Wicked!; Toad; Deadly!;** and **Felix and Zelda**.

And what's new? **Funny Stories and More Funny Stories**.

LEIGH HOBBS leighhobbs.com was Australian Children's Laureate during 2016 – 2017. He has created: **Old Tom; Horrible Harriet; Fiona the Pig; the Freaks** and **Mr Chicken**.

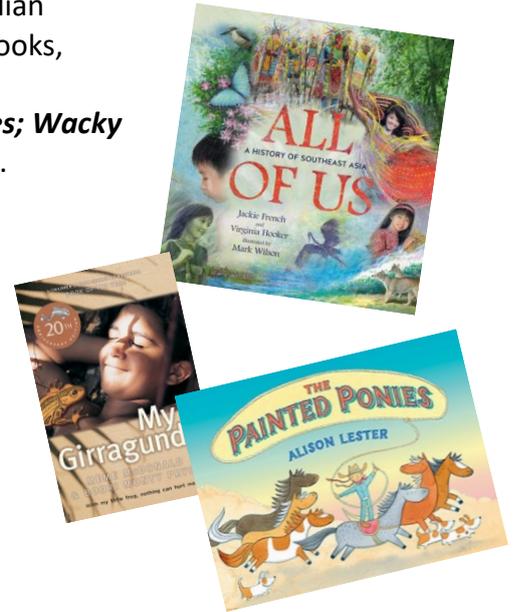
And what's new? **Mr Chicken All Over Australia**



JACKIE FRENCH <http://www.jackiefrench.com/> was Australian Children's Laureate during 2014-15. She has written over 200 books, including these series: *The Hitler Trilogy*; *The Matilda Saga*; *Shakespeare Series*; *The Secret History series*; *School for Heroes*; *Wacky Family*; *Dinkum History*; *Diary of a Wombat*; *Natural Disasters*. And what's new? *All of Us*

ALISON LESTER and **BOORI MONTY PRYOR** were Australia's first Children's Laureates during 2012 – 2013.

Boori has co-written many books with Meme McDonald. And what's new? *My Girragundji 20th Anniversary Edition*
Alison has created nearly 40 books.
And what's new? Combinations of *The Alison Lester Album* materials and *The Painted Ponies*



WHAT'S NEW? A SPECIAL LIBRARY



The **CHILDREN'S LIBRARY** in the State Library of NSW is an exciting innovation space and part of a new wave of growth for libraries. With fake books hanging from the ceiling, an amazing maze of shelving, and no screens, it houses 20,000 books. It is designed to “remind children of the value of physical books”. It provides a dedicated space for the best collection of books for children and young adults by Australian and overseas authors. It complements the

“hands-on, digitally rich learning environment” of the **John B Fairfax Learning Centre**

<https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/galleries/john-b-fairfax-learning-centre>.

Aspects of the State Library date back to 1826. It now has the latest in technology as well as special collections of manuscripts and illustrations of original Australian classics from authors like May Gibbs, Pixie O'Harris, Norman Lindsay, Ethel Turner, Ruth Park, C.J. Dennis, Alison Lester, Bronwyn Bancroft and others.



Stay tuned for the launch of unique developments including the introduction of automated individual reading suggestions based on your interests and abilities. Membership to the State Library, all public libraries and of course your own school library is free. Join the excitement of endless possibilities through your libraries as they continue to adapt and grow.

See more through the State Library of NSW website. <https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/the-childrens-library>



graphic https://t4.ftcdn.net/jpg/02/87/59/67/240_F_287596718_0Y53hkbfo5wTYUg31Ogdqs93YRA1QDpG.jpg

WRITE NOW - stimulus triggers for free writing

*Create a character who has a secret. Develop a timeline of what happens as they meet other characters, travel to another land, discover more about their secret, find a friend and win a small battle (not a combative war). How could this grow into a series?

*Develop a plan for your family or class to become kinder to the environment. What will you do with this plan?

*Write a letter to an author or an illustrator whose series books you really enjoy. Most will have websites that give you access to more of their ideas through other social media.

*What three things would your perfect library contain?

AND THE WINNERS ARE . . .

The **KOALA AWARDS** (Kids' Own Australian Literature Awards) encourage all kids to vote on their favourite books. Join the celebrations of winners on Wednesday November 13.

What most inspired, amused, terrified, enlightened and engaged you?

<https://www.koalansw.org.au/about-koala>



Image from <https://www.koalansw.org.au/>

ACL = AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S LAUREATE



Revisit the ACL calendar for all the different ideas about how reading helps us celebrate who we are and who we can become. Morris Gleitzman reminds us that through reading, *“we discover that in our imaginations anything is possible. We get to see what individuals like us are capable of.”* <http://www.childrenslaureate.org.au/now-and-forever-november-stories-make-us-celebrate/>

Share enthusiasm about your school library everywhere. Libraries and people and *stories help make us celebrate - now and forever.*

WHAT'S ON? NATIONAL RECYCLING WEEK - November 11- 17

About 90% of Australians are willing recyclers. Imagine a world with no junk! Many products are created by recycling. <https://recyclingnearyou.com.au/education/recycledproducts>

Common sense tells us that if we:



REDUCE the amount of anything we use, there is less to have to get rid of later You probably don't really need a straw, another poorly made plastic toy or decoration, or extra food stuff that no one will eat .

REUSE whatever we can so materials are being used more than once thus saving manufacturing processes that damage the environment. Many objects can be repaired. Real dishes can be used again and again. Containers can be cleaned and reused for other storage needs.

RECYCLE as much as possible to cut down waste. Find out what materials can be recycled and where in a place near you <https://recyclingnearyou.com.au/councils/>

Follow the **six golden rules** for recycling <https://recyclingnearyou.com.au/documents/doc-1759-7-golden-rules-2019-update.pdf>

WAYS WITH WORDS - REMEMBRANCE DAY - November 11

REMEMBRANCE DAY was originally called **ARMISTICE DAY** to formalise the temporary agreement to stop fighting that led to the end of the First World War This was in 1918 - on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month after four years of continuous warfare. An **ARMISTICE** is a formal agreement to stop fighting and may lay the groundwork to negotiate a lasting peace. The **LAST POST** is the bugle call and is sounded at military funerals to indicate that the soldier has gone to his final rest. **COMMEMORATIVE** services such as **ANZAC DAY** and **REMEMBRANCE DAY** include **ONE MINUTE OF SILENCE** to show respect for soldiers who have died fighting to protect the nation. These traditions have been part of Australia's stories since the end of World War One.

<https://www.awm.gov.au/commemoration/customs-and-ceremony/last-post>

IMAGE <https://www.diggersservicesclub.com.au/whatson/remembrance-day/>



COMING SOON – What's new? The December issue of KC will feature **BAGS = BOOKS AS GIFTS**, a listing of the latest books by our CBCA NSW Branch authors and illustrators. It's not too early to start building your own holiday reading list NOW and then top it up with **BAGS** titles later.

HAPPY READING ALWAYS - Morrie and team.

KC for November was compiled by Jackie Hawkes jackie.hawkes7@gmail.com with our authors and illustrators and other people with great ideas about reading, writing and thinking. Your feedback will help us with planning for upcoming issues of **CBCA NSW Branch KIDS' CORNER**.