



THE CHILDREN'S
BOOK COUNCIL
OF AUSTRALIA
NSW BRANCH

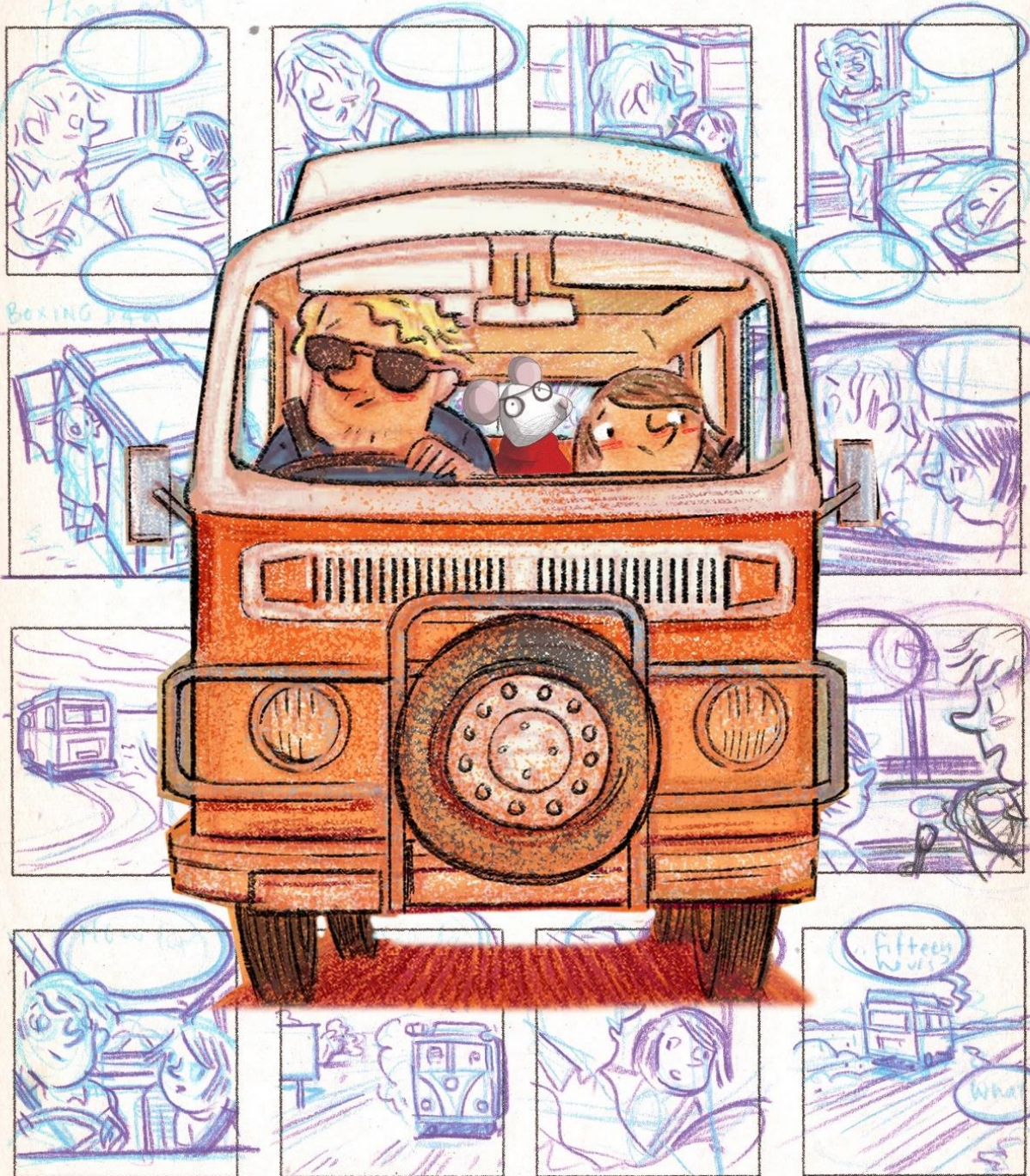
KIDS' CORNER

April 2023

Volume 7 No.3

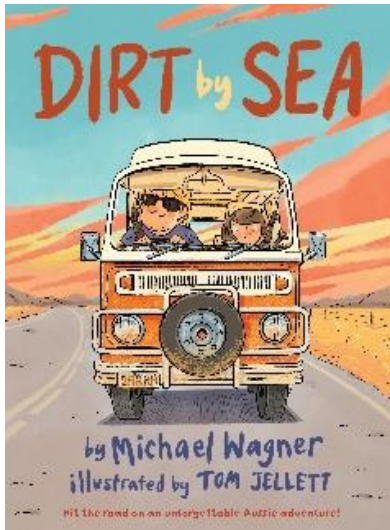
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Dirt by Sea · Power of Poetry · More Bits of CBCA Book Week

CBCA NSW Branch Inc. – KIDS' CORNER~ APRIL 2023 – CBCA Book Week the journey continues ...



WELCOME TO KC for APRIL 2023.

The April 2023 *KC* invites us to focus further on the 2023 CBCA Shortlist and Notable titles, plus other great new books that are appearing this year. Authors and illustrators from all around Australia keep us full of info and imagination.

The cover sets the scene for even more ideas about CBCA Book Week, with input from **Michael Wagner** and **Tom Jellett**, based on their CBCA Notable and Shortlisted book, *Dirt by Sea* (Puffin Books/ Penguin Random House Australia).

Their book (and all other Australian books) takes us on a journey of stories through places and with characters from all over Australia – just like CBCA Book Week does.

April KC includes info about books and bilbies, more **POWER of Poetry** with **Libby Hathorn**, and starts of stories based on the 2023 CBCA BOOK WEEK theme- **READ, GROW, INSPIRE.**



The 2023 CBCA Shortlist titles give plenty of suggestions to keep us reading.

We always look forward to more comments about “the inside story” from all the creatives.

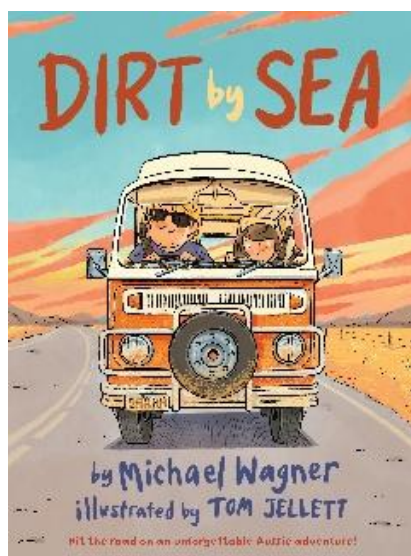
We would also love to add more **KC4KC = Kids Comments for KIDS' CORNER.**

What keeps you:
Reading? Writing? Thinking? and Creating?

*Happy reading always.
Cheers - Morrie and Jackie*



Congratulations and thank you to



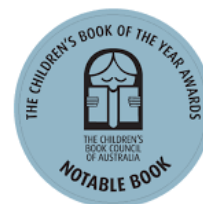
MICHAEL WAGNER

wagstheauthor@gmail.com

and

TOM JELLETT, ILLUSTRATOR

www.tomjellett.com



for creating and sharing their

CBCA 2023 Notable Book and

CBCA 2023 Shortlist Picture Book

DIRT by SEA (Puffin Books)

*and sharing it with **KIDS' CORNER***

for April 2023.



Dirt by Sea - The Journey - With Feeling
by Michael Wagner - <https://michaelwagner.com.au/>

Dirt by Sea is really our love letter to Australia – and particularly Australia's beautiful beaches.

It all begins when a girl called Daisy, who lives with her dad and grandparents in outback Australia, thinks the words to the national anthem are 'wrong'. Instead of saying, 'Our home is girt by sea', she thinks they say 'Our home is DIRT by sea.' And she doesn't like that at all. [see Tom's draft page]

DIRT *by* SEA



After she complains to Dad about it, he realizes he's never taken his daughter to the beach. Not once. And, so begins a giant summer-long adventure to visit beaches all around Australia in Mum's old Kombi van.

I loved writing this book because it made me feel a whole range of emotions, all the way from joy to sadness. I laughed and cried while coming up with various bits of the adventure, and for some strange reason, that felt great – especially the crying. And people tell me they have the same reactions when they read it, which, as an author, makes me so happy.

I think the reason I was so keen to celebrate Australia's beaches was because I'm a first-generation Australian which means my parents were born overseas. It also means we, as a family, weren't very familiar with beach life.

We had to learn how to spend a whole day at the beach without getting sunburnt, or sandy and sulky. None of that came naturally to us, but we learned quickly and now I take my family for beach holidays every year. And we love it. So, I think I wrote this book, in part, to say thank you to Australia, for letting us join in the beachy fun.

But while **Dirt by Sea** is largely about visiting beaches, it's also about something more. It's about how different people cope with sadness and loss. A few years before the story even begins Daisy's Mum passed away. And Daisy and her dad have coped with that tragic loss in two very different ways: one in a healthy way and the other not so. So, while Dad teaches Daisy to have fun at the beach and become quite a little adventurer, Daisy teaches Dad something very important – she teaches him about coping with loss.

I hope you get the chance to read **Dirt by Sea** and I hope it inspires you to head off into the world as an adventurer yourself. I also hope it helps you to appreciate even more the beauty, wonder and sheer fun of a great day at one of our spectacular beaches.



Dirt by Sea - the Process, the Pictures and the People By TOM JELLETT www.tomjellett.com



***Dirt by Sea** started off as a possible idea that Michael approached me with some years ago. He had in mind an epic road trip told in comic book form. He had the beginnings of his, as yet untitled road trip script and pitched it to me as sort of an Australian Tintin/ Asterix or Raymond Briggs style picture book comic script. I didn't really need to stop and think about it for very long as these were the books I ate, slept and breathed when I was young (and still to this day if I am honest).*

*Between us we set to work on a 10 - 15-page sampler which from memory started in Eromanga and got us as far as Byron Bay. I drew this up in rough form and put together a small dummy version to pitch to Michelle Madden at Penguin Books. We were then given a green light to develop **Dirt by Sea** into a 40-page comic picture book.*

Michael's final manuscript read more like a film script, with dialogue assigned to panels, as well as a host of picture references for various locations throughout the story. Michael has a background in scriptwriting, so this was a very natural flex for him. Along with Michelle, the editor, a final paste up of original sketches and Michael's new script became the new framework to work around. Michael is very generous and receptive to hearing suggestions of anything we thought might work better and serve the story, or work in terms of layout, so it was a real team effort.



Some parts of the story really had to be dialogue heavy, while there were times where we could say things that were in the script just with pictures or a sequence of panels. At this stage we were also working with Tony Palmer, the designer at Penguin and spent some time working on file formatting, i.e., how the final Photoshop pages would be delivered to Tony to incorporate into his page layout.

It was the first full colour comic strip picture book I think most of us had worked on, so we were really finding our way in terms of establishing the grid to base the layout on and making use of the format allowed for editing the text, moving speech bubbles if required. All of these things had to be established before the final drawing and rendering of comic panels.

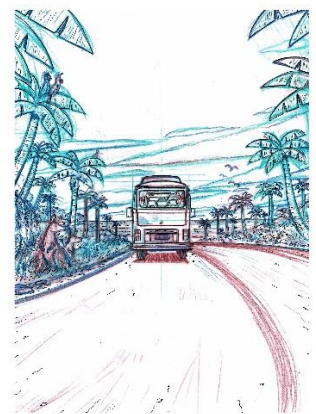


All pages were sketched up with pencil on tracing paper and these pages were scanned in the inked and coloured on the iPad in Procreate. Next they were exported to Photoshop for collating the layered artwork and combing with the speech bubble layers and final text layers. This was the long bit! To keep things moving, Michelle would set deadlines every few weeks for a certain number of pages from me. Tony, the designer, could then assemble these in his layout while Michelle and Michael double and triple checked the text to make sure everything worked!

It is certainly the biggest project I've worked on, but certainly the most rewarding. As a big fan of comic books, it was great to be able to work on one of my own.

*I am also a big fan of long road trips, so was just as excited as Dad and Daisy to explore our coastline. I think over the course of my life I have only covered about one third of the drive that Dad and Daisy's Kombi manages, so I am looking forward to someday doing some of those other two thirds! Working on **Dirt by Sea** has been the next best thing to that.*

Interestingly, I worked on this book throughout the last two years of COVID lockdowns and border closures. So maybe there is an aspect of really wanting to get out there, hit the road and see the country in there somewhere too.

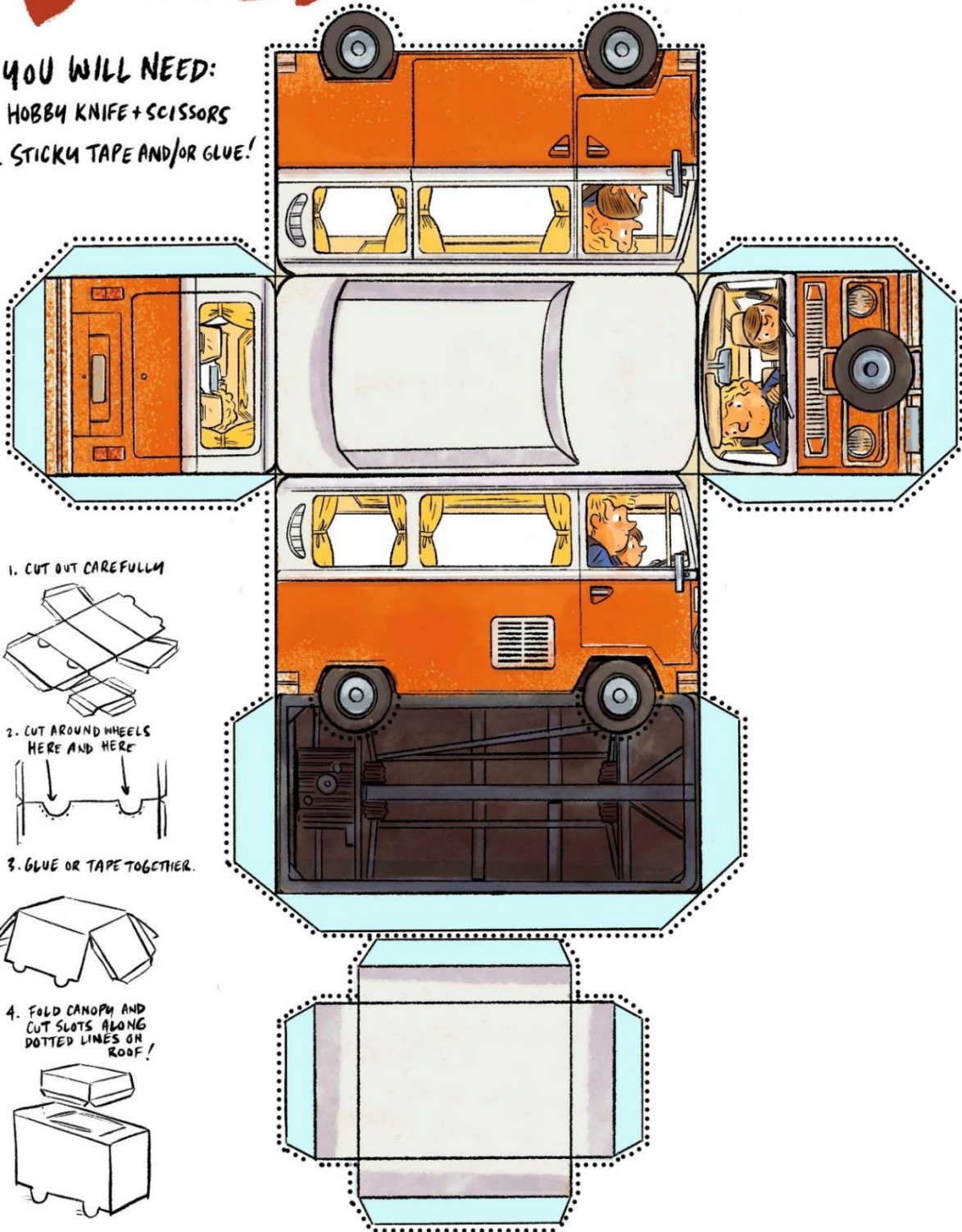


With thanks to Tom for the extra illustrations

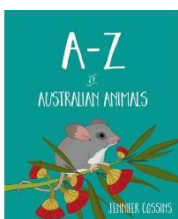
BUILD A KOMBI!

YOU WILL NEED:

1. HOBBY KNIFE + SCISSORS
2. STICKY TAPE AND/OR GLUE!



© Build a KOMBI designed by Tom Jellett



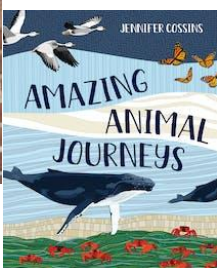
B is for Bilbies and bunnies – with thanks to Jennifer Cossins

(This information is found in her book:

A-Z of Australian Animals by Jennifer Cossins (Lothian Children's Books).

INTERESTING FACT: The bilby's iconic big ears have made it a popular Australian alternative to the Easter bunny". But wait, there's more ...

- *Size: 29 – 55 centimetres long.
- *Bilbies are ground dwelling **marsupials** that are part of the Bandicoot family. Unlike other bandicoot, bilbies have large, rabbit-like ears.
- *Bilbies like to burrow, and one bilby may make up to 12 different burrows within its territory. They are **nocturnal** animals that **forage** at night for seeds, fruit, insects and fungi.
- *There were once two species of bilby in Australia: the lesser bilby and the greater bilby.
- *Both **habitat** loss and competition from **introduced species** have led to the extinction of the lesser bilby.
- *The greater bilby survives but is endangered due to the same threats and their numbers continue to fall.
- * An "unfact" about the famous foil - wrapped Bilby is that even though it becomes nearly extinct around Easter time each year, it does generally reappear again the following year from it's temporary "extinction."



Jennifer has written a number of books about all kinds of animals. Each one has her remarkable artwork that makes you want to read them and remember every single fact she includes! Her latest book, **Amazing Animal Journeys** (Hachette) has been shortlisted for the 2023 Eve Pownall Award.

What "facts" do you know about the Easter Bunny?



CHILDREN'S BOOK WEEK
#CBCA2023
19 - 25 August 2023

THE CHILDREN'S BOOK OF THE YEAR AWARDS
SHORTLISTED BOOK
THE CHILDREN'S BOOK COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

READ
GROW
Inspire

Congratulations
Book of the Year
2023 Shortlist

Click here to order NOW!

2023 CBCA Shortlist: Older Readers

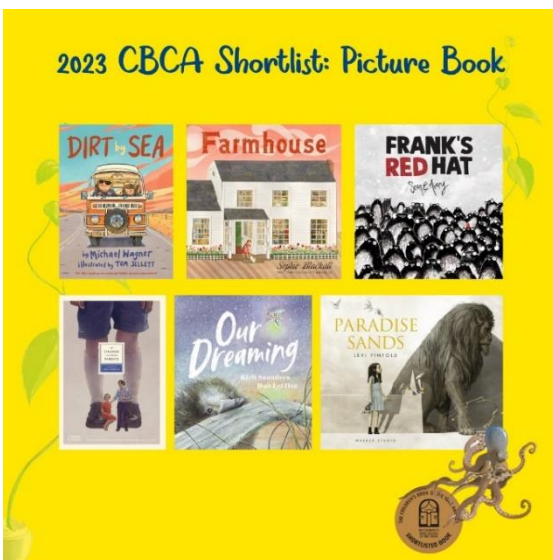


2023 CBCA SHORTLIST ~ OLDER READERS

- **Ask No Questions** - Eva Collins (P&W)
- **Completely Normal (and Other Lies)** – Biffy James (Hardie Grant Children’s Publishing)
- **The Greatest Thing** - Sarah Winifred Searle (A&U)
- **Neverlanders** - Tom Taylor, illustrated by Jon Sommariva, (PRH)
- **The Other Side of Tomorrow** - Hayley Lawrence (Scholastic)
- **What We All Saw** - Mike Lucas (PRH)

2023 CBCA SHORTLIST ~ YOUNGER READERS

- **August & Jones** - Pip Harry (Hachette)
- **Evie and Rhino** - Neridah McMullin, illustrated by Astred Hicks (Walker Books)
- **The Raven’s Song** - Zana Fraillon & Bren MacDibble (A&U)
- **Runt** - Craig Silvey, (A&U)
- **The Way of Dog** - Zana Fraillon, illustrated by Sean Buckingham, (UQP)
- **Xavier in the Meantime** - Kate Gordon (Riveted Press)



2023 CBCA SHORTLIST ~ PICTURE BOOK

- **Dirt by Sea** - illustrated by Tom Jellett, written by Michael Wagner (Penguin Random House Australia)
- **Farmhouse** - by Sophie Blackall (Hachette Australia)
- **Frank's Red Hat** - by Sean E Avery (Walker Books Australia)
- **My Strange Shrinking Parents** - by Zeno Sworder (Thames & Hudson Australia)
- **Our Dreaming** - illustrated by Dub Leffler, written by Kirli Saunders (Scholastic Australia)
- **Paradise Sands: A Story of Enchantment** - by Levi Pinfold (Walker Books Australia)

2023 CBCA SHORTLIST ~ EVE POWNALL AWARD

- ***A Is for Australian Reefs*** - Frané Lessac (Walker Books)
- ***Amazing Animal Journeys*** - Jennifer Cossins (Hachette Australia)
- ***Come Together: Things Every Aussie Kid Should Know About the First Peoples*** - Isaiah Firebrace, illustrated by Jaelyn Biunaiwai, (HG Explore)
- ***DEEP: Delve into hidden worlds*** - Jess McGeachin (Welbeck Publishing)
- ***Opal and Dart*** - Vianne Brain, illustrated by Clare Bradley, (Forty South)
- ***Wild Australian Life*** - Leonard Cronin, illustrated by Chris Nixon, (A&U)



2023 CBCA SHORTLIST ~ EARLY CHILDHOOD

- ***Bev and Kev*** - Katrina Germein, illustrated by Mandy Foot, (Little Book)
- ***Jigsaw: A Puzzle in the Post*** - Bob Graham (Walker Books)
- ***Lionel and Me*** - Corinne Fenton, illustrated by Tracie Grimwood (New Frontier)
- ***Market Day*** - Carrie Gallasch, illustrated by Hannah Sommerville (Hardie Grant Children's Publishing)
- ***Snap!*** - Anna Walker (Scribble Kids' Books)
- ***Where the Lyrebird Lives*** - Vikki Conley, illustrated by Max Hamilton (Windy Hollow)

2023 CBCA SHORTLIST ~ AWARD FOR NEW ILLUSTRATOR

- ***Australia: From Dawn to Dusk*** - Brentos (Affirm)
- ***The Best Hiding Place*** - Jane Godwin, illustrated by Sylvia Morris (Affirm)
- ***Naturopolis*** - Deborah Frenkel, illustrated by Ingrid Bartkowiak (Storytorch Press)
- ***There's No Such Book*** - Jessica Dettmann, illustrated by Jake A Minton (Hardie Grant Children's Publishing)
- ***Tiny Wonders*** - Sally Soweol Han (UQP)
- ***We Are Australians*** - Duncan Smith & Nicole Godwin, illustrated by Jandamarra Cadd (Wild Dog)





STORY STARTERS – Write now!

In the lead up to the announcement of the 2023 CBCA NOTABLES, CBCA Author and Illustrator members were asked to send through a picture of themselves related to the 2023 Book Week theme - ***READ**GROW**INSPIRE***

These were collaged together into a series of videos:

A - C authors / illustrators <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmdFCID31rk>

D - M authors / illustrators <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ePrFWme5gew&t=24s>

N - Z authors / illustrators <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VpM2rLlFlig>

Morrie thinks each photo has the potential to start a great story. Check the videos and tell us what the *story starter* could be for your favourite story creator.



READ GROW INSPIRE READ GROW INSPIRE READ GROW INSPIRE



With bookends of stories on either side of Janeen, the stories began...



And the child shared the magic word – READ.



As ideas poured forth, the story began to grow...



Suddenly, they were surrounded by characters everywhere, all wanting to be in the book.



and as she read, each sparkle joined the story until...



And from high in the sky, she could see patches of imagination growing even more ideas ...



When she whispered the secret to the tree, it began to move...



The hand movements opened up a whole new world...



And when she turned the page, a goose playing a golden harp appeared.

READ GROW INSPIRE READ GROW INSPIRE READ GROW INSPIRE

READ GROW INSPIRE

READ* READ*READ GROW*GROW*GROW INSPIRE*INSPIRE*INSPIRE



Wendy Blaxland

The story was passed from generation to generation.



Emma Bowd

And the trees became part of a forest of wonders...



Craig Cormick

They read mountains of books and then wrote some more...



Meredith Cestain

Reading is the real treat!



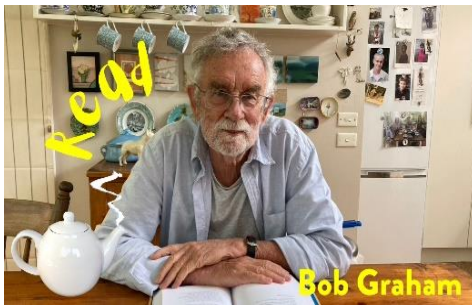
Dianne Ellis

The tiny house was filled with the stories of everyone who had ever lived there.



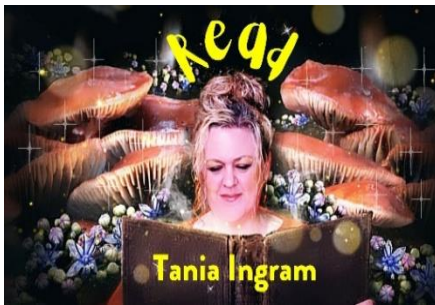
Corinne Fenton

And the butterfly read adventure stories of famous flights to magic places.



Bob Graham

He decided to read a book instead of the tea leaves...



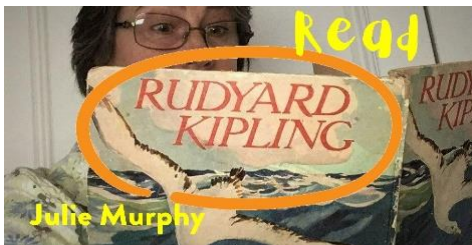
Tania Ingram

The more she read, the stranger the surroundings became.



Sophie Masson

She knew that somewhere in her library, there would be the story of the real frog prince.



Julie Murphy

And as the animals gathered around, she began to read the next chapter



Annie White

The words and the breeze carried her thoughts to faraway places.

READGROWINSPIRE
INSPIRE READGROW
GROWINSPIRE READ
READGROWINSPIRE

READ

READ* READ*READ GROW*GROW*GROW INSPIRE*INSPIRE*INSPIRE

Share the POWER of poetry ...

MOTHER EARTH

by

Libby Hathorn

[this poem is scheduled to be published in *Mother Earth* (Hachette Publisher) in June 2023.



Image created by Christine Booth

MOTHER EARTH

*Mother Earth who are you
so bountiful and various?*

*Planet Earth what are you
rich in things so curious?
Lovely, wild, bewitching, flaming,
brutal, fierce, not for taming?*

*We see you in a cracking storm
or loitering in a gentle dawn,
in earthquake or volcano fuming,
in sun and moon and water spuming.*

*We feel you in our earth and soul.
We feel you in our earth and soul.*

*You are rivers, deserts, seas,
you are grain and mighty trees,
weather forces, landscapes all,
ecosystems vast or small.*

*Things of beauty, things of shame
through the cities, in the flame,
let's dream of what we can become.*

*Mother Earth, I am your son.
Food and shelter, climate, water,
Mother Earth, I am your daughter.*

*We know you in our earth and soul.
We know you in your earth and soul.*

By Libby Hathorn



The **POWER** of **POETRY** with **Libby HATHORN**



Why do you like poetry?

Poetry has been my friend all my life, and it still is. As a small child, I always listened to parents and grandparents reading aloud at random times during the day and especially at bedtime. Then, I began to write my own little rhymes. Next came poetry recitations in school and discovering poets round the world in high school. And even now, I am reading at least one poem a day and writing poetry too.

-Brief comment about the poem – background/summary of the poem?

Mother Earth is a response to climate change and the beauty and fragility of our environment. I do see *Her* in everything from volcanoes to the sea. This is the signature poem for my collection. **Mother Earth**, the book will be published by Hachette in June 2023. The poem came to me along with a rush of others during pandemic and lockdown as part of my observing small and wondrous things.

- What is this poem about?

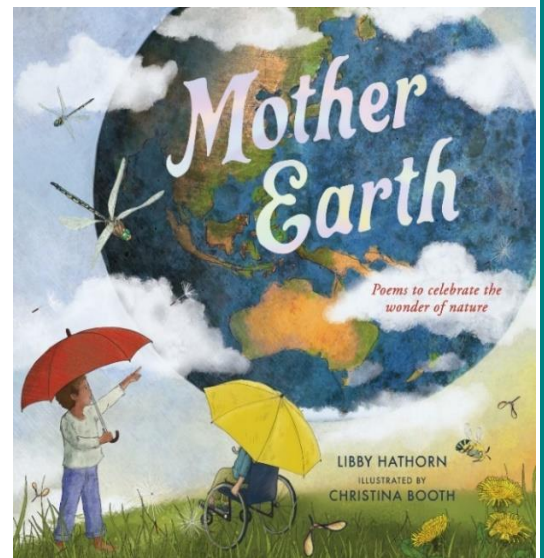
It's a poem about being in awe at the wonder of nature with its many delights, and yet deep concern about the way humans have despoiled parts of our environment. But it's also about the hope that we can help nature regenerate and learn the utmost respect for it. *'let's dream of what we can become.'*

-Why did you decide this topic would make a good poem?

The effects of climate change, global warming, and extreme weather are everywhere. But not only that. There is the hope and belief that as *sons and daughters* of Mother Earth, we can redress some of the damage.

-Are there any techniques you like to use in your poems?

I never think about techniques. I just write what I feel to capture the motion of it first and foremost. This poem wanted to rhyme so I went with rhyme. And then it seemed just right to repeat the lines as a refrain. Including *We feel you in our earth and soul* and *We know you in our Earth and soul* as repetition is a good technique to stress what you mean, as long as it's not overused.



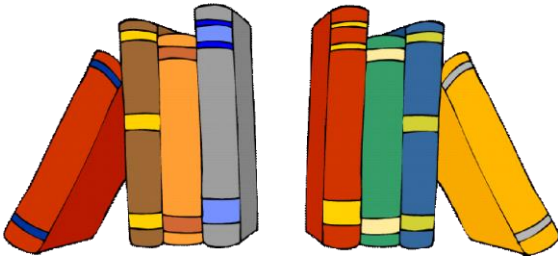
Share Libby's concern for the environment. Everyone can make a difference.

Find lots of great hints and ideas about poetry on Libby's website in the section:

Poetry and You - Get started <https://libbyhathorn.com/poetry/poetry-get-started/>

And find more ideas to share about **Mother Earth** in the *Teachers' notes* available soon through the Hachette Australia website:

<https://www.hachette.com.au/libby-hathorn-christina-booth/mother-earth-poems-to-celebrate-the-wonder-of-nature>



WHAT'S NEW? READ ON AND ON...



ANCHORED

By **DEB TIDBALL** <https://www.debratidball.com/>
(EK Books)

Ship heads out to sea leaving Tug behind. Despite being oceans apart, they remain connected by love. This warm hug of a story will offer comfort to anyone who's ever felt lonely or left behind, because even if we can't see the ones we love, they're always in our hearts. A special book for anyone who has spent time away from someone they love.

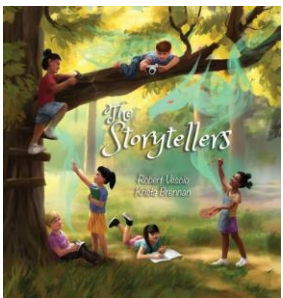
WHAT'S NEW? READ ON AND ON...



THE STORYTELLERS

by **Robert Vescio** <http://www.robertvescio.com/>
with **Krista Brennan, Illustrator**
<https://kristabrennan.com.au/books>
(IPKidz)

Henry is a little boy who loved words. As an adult, his journey to publication starts a chain reaction by touching the lives of many.



The storytellers come from all walks of life. As children, they did what they liked best and continued to pursue their dreams. As adults their lives weave together as part of Henry actually writing and publishing his book. Each one brings something special to the same story.

The book editor, who has always loved books, is stirred by Henry's story and accepts his work for publication.

The illustrator, who loved to draw and colour, brings Henry's story to life.

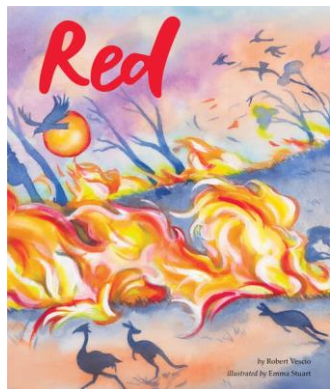
The bookseller, who, as a child learned to read, shares Henry's story to spark the imagination of young and old.

The film director, who as a child filmed just about anything, turns Henry's story into a movie for the world to enjoy.

And the engineer, who loved to tinker, creates a theme park based on his book for the world to bask in Henry's dream.

All six storytellers have followed their dreams and are connected by one story. They will inspire children to believe in themselves and to follow their dreams. After all, we are all part of someone else's story.

WHAT'S NEW? READ ON AND ON ...



RED

by **Robert Vescio** <http://www.robertvescio.com/>

with **Emma Stuart, Illustrator**

<https://cargocollective.com/emma-stuart>

(Brolly Books)

'RED' tore through my country, like a ferocious beast. It consumed the trees. It devoured the land. It destroyed our homes ... and scared our wildlife.

This moving story came about in part as a response to the horrific bushfires that raged in the Australian summer of 2020, and inspired by the heroic fire fighters and animal carers. It is also in honour of the increasingly endangered Australian native animal, the koala.

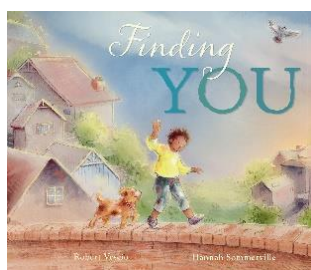
Red celebrates our unsung heroes for their courage and kindness. They are a different kind of hero. They aren't celebrities. They give of themselves for the greater good. They act nobly and inspire. And yet, people forget to acknowledge their sacrifice. These are the ones that go unnoticed. They deserve recognition.

Red is a story to say, 'Thank you'.

The child in the story learns that when disaster strikes, it's not just the firemen who are needed—every single person can make a difference.

Told through the child's eyes, we glimpse into what really happens on the ground during and after a disaster - and what anyone can do to help.

WHAT'S NEW? READ ON AND ON ...



FINDING YOU

by **Robert Vescio** <http://www.robertvescio.com/>

with **Hannah Sommerville, Illustrator.**

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

(New Frontier Publishing).

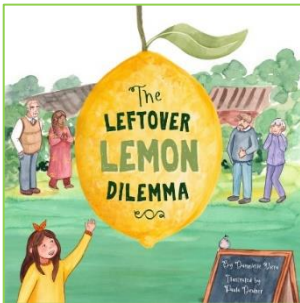
Told through the eyes of a dog, **Finding You** is a touching and heartfelt story about an unbreakable bond between a boy and a dog. Small acts of kindness and life-changing bond between a boy and a dog. It can help start discussions about welcoming newcomers and caring about people in need.

The story shows that good things happen around us every day. Anyone can help make the world a better place through their thoughtful actions.

Homelessness does exist in Australia. With the increasing numbers of homeless in our cities, it's no wonder that we are all asking questions. People of all ages try to understand and make sense of our world, especially as they grow and mature.

Finding You helps us make a difference and connect with a kinder world.

WHAT'S NEW? READ ON AND ON ...



THE LEFTOVER LEMON DILEMMA

by **Danielle Viera** www.danielleviera.com

with **Paula Deuber, Illustrator**

<https://www.they-draw.com/artists/paula-deuber>

{Loose Parts Press}

The Leftover Lemon Dilemma is a multicultural celebration of food and community. When Mandy finds herself with an abundance of sour lemons, she discovers a way to turn them into something sweet – with a little help from her neighbours. The diverse neighbourhood is brought together through the sustainable practice of crop-swapping.



After working on several books for adults, with a sustainability theme, Danielle wanted to write something that would make this important topic relevant for children. She combined a memory of her mother's overloaded lemon tree with the idea of avoiding food wastage through sharing produce to create a story about crop-swapping – a simple act that children

can undertake. The minor characters in the book come from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Paula did a lot of research to illustrate their homes, clothing and food with sensitivity and authenticity. Young readers have responded eagerly to these dynamic images and their intriguing details.



No matter where in Australia the current book you are reading has come from, we hope you have had a good holiday full of great books – from the CBCA NOTABLES, the CBCA SHORTLISTED titles, some of the brand-new books or some favourites. Remember that our imagination is never GIRT or limited by anything. What are your Story Starters?



Read, write, imagine, create and share STACKS of great stories and ideas. Have fun with **National Simultaneous Storytime** on **May 24**, and enjoy watching and planning your own book trailers to fit in with the **COLLIDE** competition and the 2023 Notable books. Each author and illustrator will have ideas on their websites that you could adapt. Watch for updates about how you can become involved as a Shadow Judge for the Short-Listed books.

Happy Reading always. Cheers- Morrie and Jackie



This issue of KC was compiled by Jackie.hawkes7@gmail.com with the help of LOTS of people who love to read, write, imagine, think, and create. We'd love to share your ideas in **KC**.