



THE CHILDREN'S  
BOOK COUNCIL  
OF AUSTRALIA

NSW BRANCH

# KIDS' CORNER

December 2023

Vol. 7 No. 9

ISSN 2652 8320 print

ISSN 2652 8339 online



Illustration by Mick Elliott (c)



## Welcome to KIDS' CORNER for December 2023

with our multi-talented **GUEST ILLUSTRATOR** –



## MICK ELLIOTT

<https://mickelliott.me/>

**as author, illustrator, TV producer, and professional mischief maker...**

**AND creator of the Squidge Dibley series**

**AND the Turners series,**

**AND much more including his latest book:**



***Dads and Dogs - Walker Books***



Hi,

**I'm Mick Elliott, author, illustrator, TV producer and professional mischief maker.**

I have loved to draw ever since I was born. I think that my mum might've swallowed a pencil when she was pregnant. I grew up in a strange, ancient time when there was no YouTube, Tik-Tok, Netflix or iPhones, so I spent a lot of my childhood doodling and reading.

I loved reading Charlie Brown, TinTin and Richard Scarry. I was amazed at how those illustrators could use just a few squiggly lines to create incredible characters and worlds.

When I draw, my goal is to see how few lines I can use. I am not trying to make pictures that look like the real thing. I don't think I

could do that and in fact it explodes my brain when I see people draw pictures that look like photographs.

At school I was always drawing cartoons in the edges of my schoolbooks. The biggest trouble I got into at school was for drawing cartoon characters of all my teachers. I may have accidentally forgotten to draw their clothes. Oops!

Now I feel so lucky that my job is to create drawings and stories that make kids laugh.

My latest book is ***Dads and Dogs***. It's a picture book celebrating all the different types of fathers in the world. It was inspired by being a dad myself and also owning an evil cavoodle named Gypsy. (She has tried to kill me on multiple occasions, but that is a story for another day.)

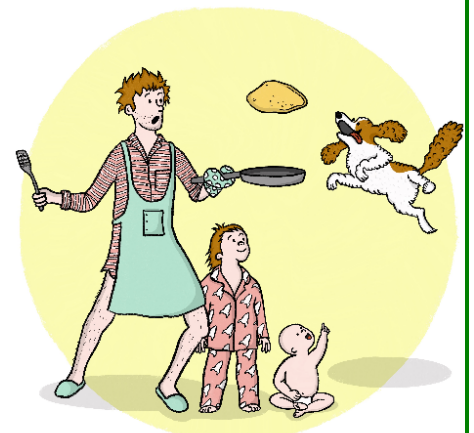
I always get annoyed when I feel like a book is obviously trying to teach the reader a lesson.

I believe that kids are cleverer than that and that complex themes and ideas can be weaved into funny books. Reading should be joyous and fun first, and in my experience, humour is the best way to engage with readers.

With ***DADS AND DOGS*** I wanted to make all the drawings hilarious and full of chaos. But if you scratch just below the surface, you'll find that I am also highlighting that there is no one single type of 'perfect dad.' I really hoped that kids and parents who read the book will see themselves there.



I even used myself as the model for some of the drawings – like the cooking dad. I got my daughter to take some photos of me in the same pose. And then I used them as a reference for the character in the book.



One of my favourite series I have written is ***SQUIDGE DIBLEY DESTROYS THE SCHOOL***, which is about an accidentally naughty year 6 class who have the meanest, strictest teacher in the world. I really wanted to write a series that used cartoon drawings on every page to tell the story – like books such as the ***13 STOREY TREEHOUSE***, ***TOM GATES*** or ***BAD GUYS***.

The book has been popular all over the world. I get fan mail from German kids almost every week. In Germany, the publisher changed Squidge Dibley's name to 'Larry Lauch' which I think is hilarious!



Even though there are some super disgusting drawings in ***SQUIDGE DIBLEY***, in its own way the book is about celebrating difference. I tried to make a really diverse cast of characters who each have their own struggles and quirky personalities. So many readers have reached out to me telling me how they relate to characters in the books. And I LOVE when I get pictures of readers dressed as my characters for book week. Right now, I am working on LOTS of new books.

There are two sequels coming in 2024 to ***DADS AND DOGS***. The first is ***MUMS AND MOGS*** which comes out in April 2024, and is a celebration of all the different types of mums and cats in the world. I had SO much fun drawing that one.





I have never studied art professionally and I am in awe of the incredible illustrators we have here in Australia like Matt Cosgrove, Serena Geddes, Gus Gordon, Charmaine Leddon-Lewis, Jules Faber, Sami Bailey and James Foley. (There are hundreds more I could list here.) It is such a fantastic, supportive, creative tribe to be part of and I still feel like I am learning with every new book I illustrate!

To anyone wanting to be an illustrator I would say draw, draw, draw and draw some more! Draw

things that you love. Draw things that only exist in your imagination.

And practice drawing hands as much as you can.

Hands are REALLY hard to draw!



## BOOKS ARE ALWAYS THE BEST PRESENTS!

MICK ELLIOTT, author and illustrator of *DADS AND DOGS*, plus the *TURNERS* series and the *SQUIDGE DIBLEY* series and more, has the DECEMBER 2023 issue of *KIDS' CORNER* covered!

KC invites you to wrap up the year with the **2023 CBCA NSW BRANCH**

*Authors and Illustrators Members' Books As Gifts –*  
*aka BAGS = Books As Gifts!*

The annual **BAGS** issue features info about recent and upcoming books created by our CBCA NSW Branch Author and Illustrator members. Share the perfect shopping list for your holiday reading. Begin with Books!

Take time to enjoy checking this and earlier copies of *KIDS' CORNER* to share other ideas about READING, WRITING, THINKING, CREATING and IMAGINING. Find out more info on the **AIM = Author, Illustrator and Member** web sites.

Thanks to all who have kindly contributed to *KIDS' CORNER*. Your ideas give us constant reminders to share info and grow our imaginations.

**AIM BAGS! HAPPY READING ALWAYS!**



# **AIM = AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR MEMBERS**

**CBCA NSW BRANCH Author and Illustrator Members - 2023**

**Special thanks to these CBCA NSW Branch members and more for sharing their stories.**



**Deborah ABELA, Sara ACTON, Toni ADAMS, Nat AMOORE, Beverley ANASTASIOU**

**Tristan BANCKS, Bronwyn BANCROFT, Ashleigh BARTON, Dianne BATES, Samantha BAYLY  
Trish BERNARD, Jess BLACK, Jenny BLACKFORD, Wendy BLAXLAND, Lauren BRIGGS, Ruth BUGGY**

**Toni CARY, Christopher CHENG, Marjorie CROSBY FAIRALL, Sarah CUMMINGS, Kristin DARELL  
Ramona DAVEY, Howard DUNCAN, Carolyn ELDRIDGE-Alfonzetti, Mick ELLIOTT, Dianne ELLIS**

**Anne FARRELL, Christine FERNANDEZ, Sandy FUSSELL  
Susanne GERVAY, Lesley GIBBES, Libby GLEESON**

**Paul Michael HALLAM, Maxine HAMILTON, Susan HANCY, Selena HANET-HUTCHINS  
Tannya HARRICKS, Pip HARRY, Jacqueline HARVEY, Libby HATHORN, Carla HOFFENBERG  
Cate JAMES, Lynn JENKINS, Roxanne KIELY, Denise KIRBY, Ashling KWOK**

**Louise LAMBETH, Belinda LANDSBERRY, Abbey LANE (Julie Paine writing as A.L.), Jan LATTA  
Jayne LEADBETTER, Artelle LENTHALL, Trish LEWIS, Amanda LIEBER, Monica LIZAMA  
Kirrili LONERGAN, Yvonne LOW, Nathan LUFF**

**Damon McDONALD, Marian McGUINNESS, Katrina McKELVEY, Jodie McLEOD  
Betty MAGGIO, Belinda MALONE, Suzanne MANSON, Claudia MARQUES CASELLATO  
Jenny MARSHALL, Isolde MARTIN, Sophie MASSON, Alexa MOSES, Belinda MURRELL**

**Lisa NICOL, Amanda NILAND  
Louise PARK, Aura PARKER, Oliver PHOMMAVANH, Belinda PRING, Felicity PULMAN**

**Emma QUAY, Sylvia RANSOM, Josh REID, Billie ROONEY, Ellie ROYCE, Paul RUSSELL, Helen RYAN  
Karyn SAVAGE, Jean SAXBY, Jemima SHAFEI-ONGU, Pat SIMMONS, Pam SLATTERY  
Ruth-Mary SMITH, Fiona SMYTH, Maria SPEYER, Paula STEVENSON**

**Allison TAIT, Binny TALIB, Julie THORNDYKE, Debra TIDBALL, Bryoni TREZISE, Robert VESCIO  
Michelle WANASUNDERA, Karen WEST, Cris WHITE, Sue WHITING, Sandi WOOTEN**





## WELCOME to BAGS = BOOKS AS GIFTS

*This is a special contribution of info about some of the best recent books for the holidays and a heads-up to watch for new titles coming soon from our CBCA NSW Branch author and illustrator members.*

*Books are always the BEST gift for anytime!*



### NAT AMOORE

Website: [natamoore.com](http://natamoore.com)

Instagram: @nat\_amooore

Twitter: @nat\_amooore

Facebook: @NatAmoooreWriter

YouTube: [youtube.com/c/NatAmoooreWriter](https://youtube.com/c/NatAmoooreWriter)

***We Run Tomorrow* (Penguin Random House)**

**NAT AMOORE with MIKE BARRY, Illustrator**



#### Summary:

Sticks, Maki, Jed and Tommy live on the same street. But the adults around them are making decisions that could tear the four friends apart. When they discover their favourite comic book series is being made into a blockbuster movie, they know what they have to do. Get to the audition. Get the parts. Stay together.

**QUOTE:** *Every kid can find joy in books. Believe that. Sometimes we need to give them more freedom to discover it. Maybe it's audiobooks, non-fiction, re-reading or just finding the right book. The key is to nurture the joy. We lose them the moment it feels like work.*

~ **NAT AMOORE**

#### Additional Information related to your special projects or interests?

As well as writing, Nat loves connecting with kids and fills most of her year with travelling to visit schools and present at festivals. She is also SUPER excited about the release of her new series, ***Showerland***, out in Feb 2024 about kid who gets zapped to another world every time he has a shower. <https://booktopia.kh4ffx.net/kOP0jv>



**ASHLEIGH BARTON** Photo: Syl Photography

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

***Solomon Macaroni and The Vampire Vacation***  
**UQP**

**Summary** - The world's friendliest vegetarian vampire and his six mischievous cousins are going to Paris with Uncle Dracula. They can't wait for the fine food, fabulous fashion and fang-dangled art. But Uncle Dracula is not himself. When the kids see the *Mona Lisa*, they get an idea to cheer him up... and it's their naughtiest one yet.







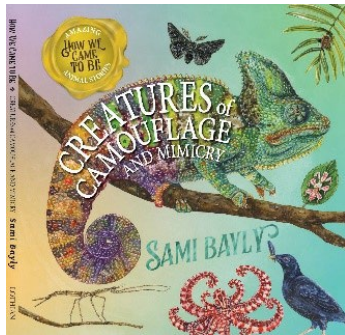
**ASHLEIGH BARTON with Martina HEIDUCZEK**

*How Do You Say Hello?* HarperCollins

**SUMMARY:**

From bestselling duo Ashleigh Barton and Martina Heiduczek comes a delightful and fun-filled book that celebrates the many different ways we say hello.

*How Do You Say Hello?* is an illuminating look at how we welcome each other, in languages the world over.



**SAMI BAYLY – Author and Illustrator**

Website: <https://www.samibayly.com/>

Instagram:  
<https://www.instagram.com/samibayly>



Facebook: <https://m.facebook.com/samibaylyauthorillustrator/>

Twitter: <https://mobile.twitter.com/samibayly>

*How We Came To Be: Creatures of Camouflage and Mimicry* Lothian/Hachette Australia

**SUMMARY:**

Discover the secrets behind some of the natural world's most unusual creatures of camouflage and mimicry. You will be amazed by how these clever creatures use disguise and imitation to find food, send out warning signals and, most of all, avoid predators!

**QUOTE:**

*With our world quickly changing, we need to act to save so many precious species. By illustrating and creating content for kids, I feel that it is a wonderful way to inspire upcoming generations to create the changes we need in the world. ~ **SAMI BAYLY***

Do something  
for yourself  
that you really  
love



Use  
your  
manners  
more

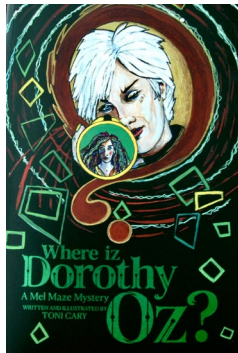


Do  
some one  
a favour

Say "thank  
you"  
and explain  
why you said  
it



## TONI CARY



TONI CARY - <http://www.alcheringaartist.com.au/>

***Where Iz Dorothy Oz?*** Published December 2023. Book 1 of the ***Mel Maze Trilogy***

Big Foot Publishing [www.bigfootpublishing.com.au](http://www.bigfootpublishing.com.au)

**Upcoming Title** for publication November 2024: Graphic Novel Trilogy: **BOOK 2:**

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/tonicary.007/>

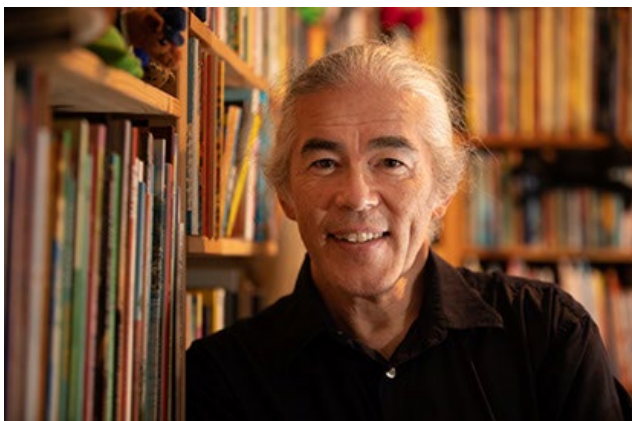
### SUMMARY:

The first book of the graphic novel trilogy takes place in an Australian-like dimension, called Eon, in approximately 2102. Eon is ruled by Mother Nature, and it is the place where Dorothy Oz is electronically transported to by the malevolent Scott Malware. This is part of his scheme to "beam up" teenagers, drug them, and make them part of his "scamopoly". But Dot's elder brother Olli seeks the aid of Special Agent Mel Maze to find Dot, and they too are transported, but to somewhere else on Eon. Then the quest begins, aided by their Eon-based feathered friends, to find and release Dorothy and bring Malware to book.

***Comment on reading and writing:*** A recent report in the Sydney Morning Herald, 5 December, 2023, indicates that current academic results are now almost two years behind the results of our students 25 years ago. Reading results have slipped in comparison to other countries. This tells all of us - students, teachers, authors & illustrators, general educators, support groups like the CBCA, and our government, that all is not well in the era of streaming, graphic novels, social media etc. We can all review how we can achieve much better results and better facilitate a highly literate nation.

~ **TONI CARY**

**CHRISTOPHER CHENG** <https://www.chrischeng.com/>



Chris has written more than 40 books. Chris's recent releases include: ***Wombat, Bear and Rat, The Imagineer, Old Fellow, Pollination, and Moon Festival.***

### QUOTES:

*"Have you written today? ... Have you read today?"*

*"There are books just right for you – Ask a librarian"*

~ **CHRISTOPHER CHENG**





**KRISTIN DARELL** <https://www.kristindarell.com.au/>  
**Football Fever Series** Penguin

**SUMMARY** - *Football Fever* is an action-packed junior fiction *series* about six girls, six boys and a crazy dog who are all passionate about football.

### QUOTE:

*- The gift of stories is the most precious gift we can give. It's why I love being an author. I hope with all my heart these stories give lots of children joy and perhaps even inspire more kids to pick up and read this Christmas.*

~ **KRISTIN DARELL**



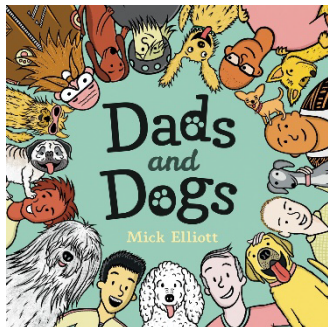
**MICK ELLIOTT** - I am an author, illustrator, TV producer, literacy ambassador and professional mischief maker.

[www.mickelliott.me](http://www.mickelliott.me)

Instagram @whatmicksaw

*Dads & Dogs* (Walker Books)

*Mums & Mogs* (Walker Books - Coming April 2024)



**SUMMARY:** Exploring themes of family and togetherness, *Dads and Dogs* is a lovely read aloud and a great gift for dads, to remind them of the important role they play in nurturing young children, even if they don't know what they are doing! It's the first in a trilogy of picture books celebrating parenthood and pets.

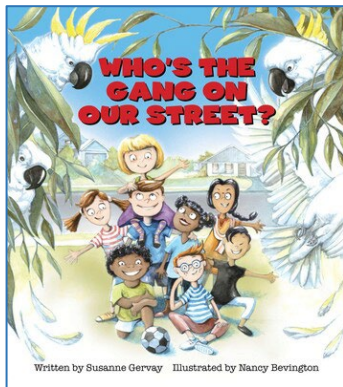
**QUOTE:** *I am passionate about storytelling, creativity and literacy, especially amongst reluctant readers.* ~ **Mick ELLIOTT**

### - Additional Information related to special projects or interests?

I juggle my work as an author, illustrator and presenter with my career as a children's TV producer. I have been incredibly lucky to collaborate with Nickelodeon, The Sesame Workshop, the ABC and Network 10 for over two decades as a screenwriter and producer. Presently I am an executive producer on the live action comedy-adventure series, ROCK ISLAND MYSTERIES, which is filmed here in Australia and loved by audiences around the globe.

### - What do you like about KC?

Authors and illustrators spend years crafting books which often have a very limited time to connect with readers, so it is fantastic that KC provides a platform for showcasing Australian children's literature.



**SUSANNE GERVAY and NANCY BEVINGTON, Illustrator**

[sgervay.com](http://sgervay.com)

### ***Who's The Gang On Our Street?***

Big Sky Publishing

#### **SUMMARY:**

Who has funky-punky hair? Who speeds down a hill in a billy-cart? Who bops and bounces? Who loves squishy bananas? Who looks out for each other? Are you the gang on our street, or who is? Discover the tricks and games of sulphur crested cockatoos in this fun-filled picture book.

**QUOTE:** *Reading is a safe place to escape, imagine, explore and dream. ~*

**SUSANNE GERVAY**

**Additional Information related to your special projects or interests?**

**Project:** Promotion of Aussie-Indians and a celebration of LIGHT against Darkness with Diwali celebrations.

- **What do you like about KC?** Exciting Reading News

- **What would make KC better?** If it could be distributed to the full CBCA membership



**LESLEY GIBBES - [lesleygibbes.com](http://lesleygibbes.com)**

***Dinosaur Dads To The Rescue*** Scholastic

**SUMMARY:** Three dino eggs are all ready to hatch as their dino dads watch over the batch.

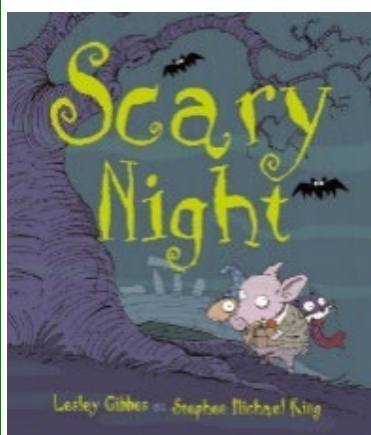
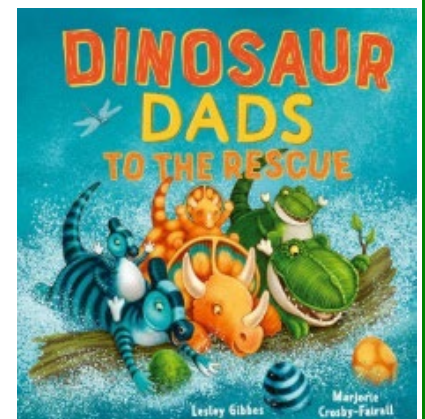
Out of the blue, a volcano rumbles. As the earth shakes, away the eggs tumble!

Off they go! Off they go! Off the go! RUN!

Quick! Come along for *the Egg Rescue* fun!

AND...

Look out for my upcoming picture books in 2024. I'll be continuing my dinosaur themed books with ***Demolition Dinosaurs*** illustrated by **MARJORIE CROSBY-FAIRALL** published by Scholastic as well a Christmas themed book published by Harper Collins, ***On the Hunt for Santa*** illustrated by **STEPHEN MICHAEL KING** where Hare with a hat, Cat with a cake and Pig with a parcel from the award-winning picture book ***Scary Night*** set out on another epic adventure. I can't wait!



**QUOTE:** *Writing is great fun! I love the moment when your characters get into trouble and you have to rescue them in some creative, magical, imaginative way. ~* **LESLEY GIBBES**



## PAUL MICHAEL HALLAM - Author and Illustrator

Website- <https://www.paulhallamcreates.com>

Instagram- @paulhallamcreates



### *Diary Of a Roblox Pro, Book 8: Survive The Island*

And of course, books 1 to 7 (Scholastic Australia)



**SUMMARY:** This book was a lot of fun to draw. Ari Avatar and his friends are stranded on a deserted island. But there is more to this island than it seems.

#### **QUOTE:**

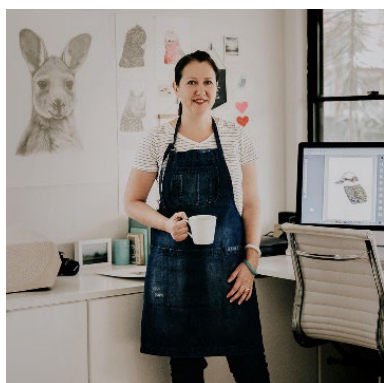
*You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view...*

*Until you climb into his skin and walk around in it. From "To Kill a Mockingbird". For me, this is the power of reading- to see the world from a character's point of view. ~ PAUL HALLAM*

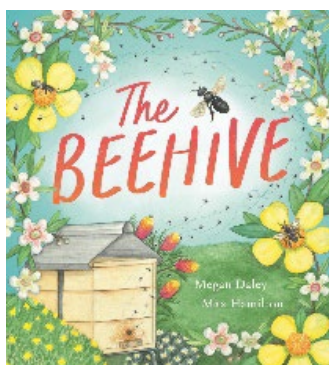
## MAX HAMILTON – Author and Illustrator

Website: [www.maxhamiltonillustration.com.au](http://www.maxhamiltonillustration.com.au)

Intsa@mhdesignillustration



**Titles of recent books** - Whitley Award winning book – *Tasmanian Devil* by Claire Saxby, illustrated by Max Hamilton (Walker Books) CBCA Early Childhood Book of the Year Award winning book – *Where The Lyrebird Lives* by **VIKKI CONLEY**, illustrated by **MAX HAMILTON** (Windy Hollow Books)



**Upcoming books** – *The Beehive* by **MEGAN DALEY**, illustrated by Max Hamilton (Walker Books) - out 1st Feb 2024

*Our Home* by **CATHERINE MEATHERINGHAM**, illustrated by **MAX HAMILTON** (Windy Hollow Books) - out 1st March 2024. Max is also working on several books as author / illustrator.

**Comment** - Max is a CBCA and Whitley award-winning illustrator, a graphic designer and most enthusiastically a maker of children's books. She enjoys noticing the little details in things and loves to get lost in the world of illustration and stories. Max lives with her family and their cuddly dog in Sydney, Australia.

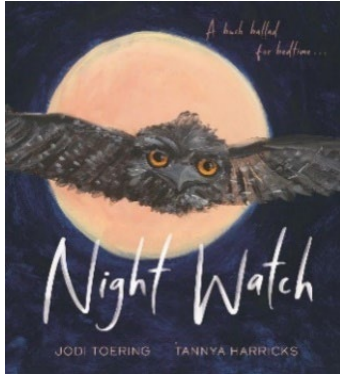
**KC Comment:** It is wonderful that KC promotes Australian Authors and illustrators and also emerging and current creators that librarians and the public may not know about. ~ MH

**TANNYA HARRICKS – Illustrator**  
<https://tanyaharricksillustration.com/>

Instagram : @tanyaharricks @tanyaharricksillustration

## Night Watch

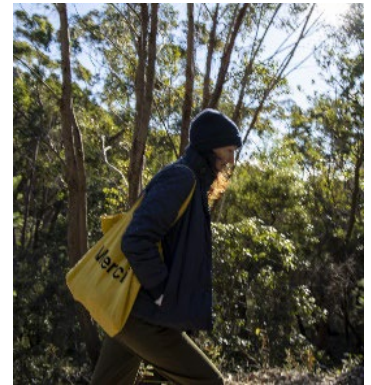
**JODI TOERING with TANNYA HARRICKS, Illustrator** (Walker Books Australia) [Release Date 1st Feb 2024]



**SUMMARY:** *This beautiful bedtime book follows the journey of the Tawny Frogmouths as they soar through the skies and through the night ... keeping watch over native fauna as they settle in for their safe slumber. (From Walker Books website)*

**QUOTE:** *Research is my favourite part of any new illustration project - especially if it involves the outdoors, road trips and new discoveries.*

~ **TANNYA HARRICKS**



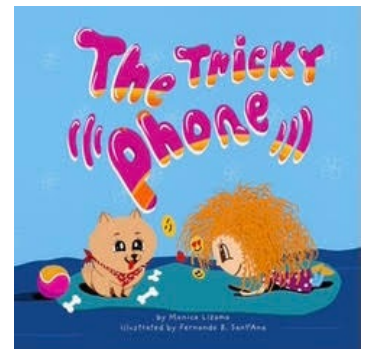
**MONICA LIZAMA**

WEBSITE: [www.monicalizama.net](http://www.monicalizama.net)

**The Empty Dish** (Bumblebee Books)  
[www.olympiapublishers.com](http://www.olympiapublishers.com)

**The Tricky Phone** - Release date. April 2024

**SUMMARY:** Mobile phones are commutators, but ... how good or bad are they really?



## QUOTES:

*"Reading is a voyage to infinite worlds."*

*"Being alive is an amazing gift."*

*I was born to create odd stuff.*

*When I finally grow up, I'll write a serious kid's book."* - **MONICA LIZAMA**

I am an author. I love the joy of learning. . . and competitions.

Do something  
kind for the  
environment.



Say 'thank you'  
and explain  
why you said it.







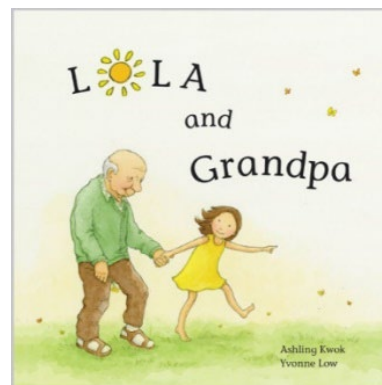
**YVONNE LOW** - Author, Illustrator, Poet and Artist

Website: [www.yvonnelow.com](http://www.yvonnelow.com)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/YLcreate>

**LOLA AND GRANDPA** Little Pink Dog Books

**SUMMARY:** Lola shares a tender, loving relationship with her Grandpa, who she visits every Sunday. When he passes away, she struggles to cope. But as time goes by, Lola realises that her Grandpa will always be with her - in her heart and in the memories they made together. A beautiful and gently reassuring story.



**QUOTE:**

*I try to write or draw and create something every day. It might be the start of a poem, taking a photo of a flower bursting with colour, or a quick sketch of a bird busy in the garden. Being creative brings joy and encouragement. ~ YVONNE LOW*

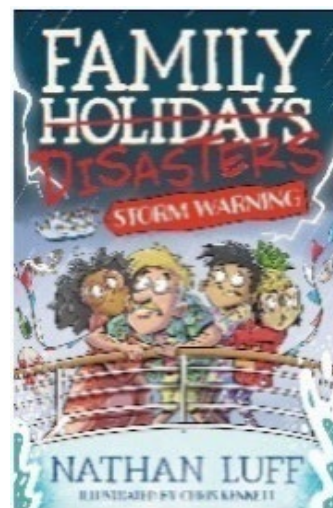
**NATHAN LUFF** [www.nathanluff.com.au](http://www.nathanluff.com.au) @nathanluffauthor Facebook/Instagram



**Family Disasters: Storm Warning** Scholastic Australia

**SUMMARY:** There's a reason that families usually live together- to contain the horror and not inflict it on others. A family holiday is a really, really bad idea!

After getting stranded on a deserted island and then escaping an erupting volcano, Jakob thought his holiday troubles were over. They're not!



**QUOTE:** *We didn't travel much because my parents had too many kids and our farm required a lot of attention. So, I travelled through books, and boy, did I go places! Now I travel through my writing as well and this new series lets me experience the family holidays I never had! ~ NATHAN LUFF*

Smile at people.

Do a favour  
for someone.

Ring, text, email  
someone and  
check in.



Tidy up without  
being asked to.

Compliment as  
many people as  
possible.

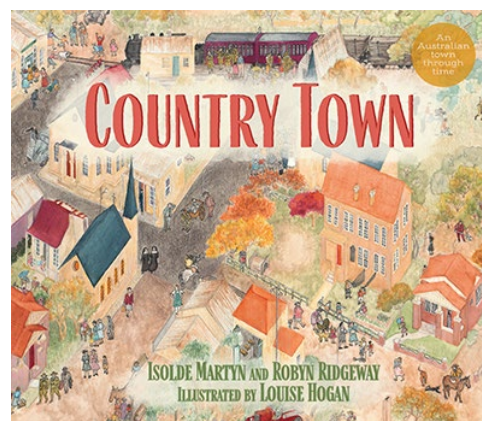


Surprise  
someone  
by doing  
something kind.



**ISOLDE MARTIN**  
**Robyn RIDGEWAY**  
**Louise HOGAN**

Author  
Author/ Poet  
Illustrator



**WEBSITE:** <https://fordstreetpublishing.com/book/country-town/>

**Country Town** Ford Street Publishing

**SUMMARY:** The story of an imaginary Australian inland town from a First Nations People's camp to the present day, with many themes of Australian history woven in.

**QUOTE:** *We have tried to make history fun for Aussie kids and trigger their curiosity about past events.* ~ ISOLDE MARTIN

**What do you like about KC?** It's great to have the information about so many lovely books for children.

**What would make KC better?** It's fine already. . . doing a great job.



Write a poem for  
someone.

Sing a song with  
someone.



### MARION MCGUINNESS

*I love to use words in all sorts of ways and forms. You don't always have to write a book. You can create short stories, poems, and plays like I write for The School Magazine. I love to make things funny and sometimes I use animals as my heroes, like mountain goats and dung beetles. So, what story will you write and who will be your hero? When I'm imagining a story to write, I always think to myself: Write the magic that is in your heart.* ~ **Marian McGuinness**





**JODIE McLEOD - *The Black Cockatoo With One Feather Blue***  
 Wollemi Press

With [Eloise Short](#), Illustrator.

W: [jodiemcleod.com](http://jodiemcleod.com)  
 F: [@JodieMcLeodWriter](#)  
 I: [@jodiemcleodwriter](#)

***Leonard The Lyrebird* ~ WINNER ~**

**2019 Whitley Award**

**Best Young Children's Book ~ Royal Zoological Society of NSW**

Watch the [Lilah the Lyrebird](#) book trailer [here](#).

**SUMMARY:** Black cockatoos don't have blue feathers, but when the rhyme of the title came to me, I just couldn't get it out of my head. The result is a tale filled with adventure, musicality and mystery as the black cockatoo tries to find her missing feather, but ultimately discovers something unexpected...who is the feather thief?

**QUOTE:** *Regularly seek awe, and good ideas will find you.* ~ **JODIE McLEOD.**



**BELINDA MURRELL**

[www.belindamurrell.com.au](http://www.belindamurrell.com.au)



***The Silver Sea* (Puffin)**

**SUMMARY:** *The Silver Sea*

is the second book in **BELINDA MURRELL'S** Tuscan series, set in an Italian Renaissance inspired world filled with magic, mystery, mischievous creatures, and danger at every turn! 'You don't understand how dangerous this is. Anyone you see could be a spy. You cannot trust anyone.'



**QUOTE:** *We all know that reading books makes you smarter. So what better Christmas present to give someone you love than a beautiful book filled with magic, wonder, delight and escape?* ~ Belinda Murrell

**WRITING QUOTE** - *What is an author's secret superpower? You might think it's an amazing ability to paint pictures with words. But I think great authors, have another superpower - one shared by spies and detectives solving mysteries. It is to be endlessly curious! Practice looking around you asking seeking answers. - Belinda Murrell*

Note: This links with the 2024 Book Week theme "Reading is Magic."



### BELINDA : Special Projects:

At 10.30am on Saturday December 9, Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of New South Wales unveiled the bronze statue of Charlotte Waring Atkinson, Australia's first children's author, in historic Berrima Park. Charlotte was also an accomplished artist, teacher, a pioneer in the fight for women's legal rights, and is the great x 4 grandmother of Australian authors, **BELINDA MURRELL** and **KATE FORSYTH**.

Together, the sisters wrote the book *Searching For Charlotte*, which inspired the Wingecarribee

Women Writers to raise funds to honour Charlotte's memory with a bronze statue. [(left to right) Authors Kate Forsyth and Belinda Murrell, with their book, *Searching for Charlotte*], which inspired locals to raise money to erect a statue of Charlotte Waring Atkinson in Berrima Park.

**BELINDA** has just returned from five months living and working in the UK.

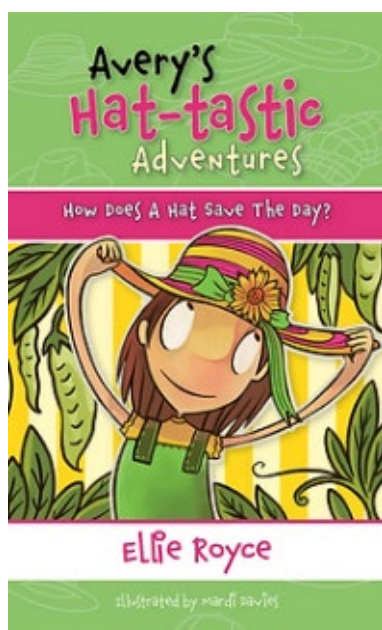
Belinda was the winner of the 2023 Australian Society of Women Writers Di Yerbury Award, a writing residency in North Devon.

### ELLIE ROYCE

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

### *Avery's Hat-Tastic Adventures series*

**ELLIE REECE** and **MAARDI DAVIES**, Illustrator.



### SUMMARY:

When Sam the Scarecrow is in danger of being pulled apart and recycled, Avery and Olivia stage a 'sit in', just like Gandhi. One of Avery's hats might save the day... but will it be her favourite, and can she bear to part with it, even to save Sam?

Find out in **Avery's Hat-Tastic Adventures Book 1- How Does a Hat Save The Day?**

**QUOTE:** *Reading is some of the best fun you can have, and it can be even better when you share it with someone. ~ ELLIE ROYCE*

See also Ellie's comments about "story" on her website home page.



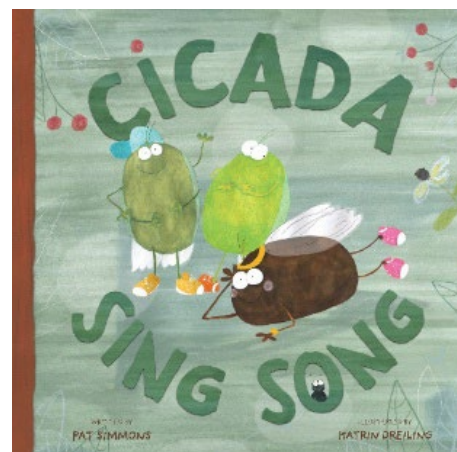
## PAT SIMMONS



<https://www.patsimmonswriter.com.au>

***Cicada Sing Song*** Little Steps Publishing

**PAT SIMMONS** with  
**KATRIN DREILING**, Illustrator.



**SUMMARY:** The cicadas are above ground at last. This is going to be the loudest sing song ever. Who knew that cicadas could rap? Join them for the Festival of Sound. No ticket needed.

Free Teacher Notes can be downloaded from my website.

**QUOTE:** *Writing about and engaging with the natural world and the creatures within it gives me great joy and I love to share that joy with the children who read my books. ~ PAT SIMMONS*

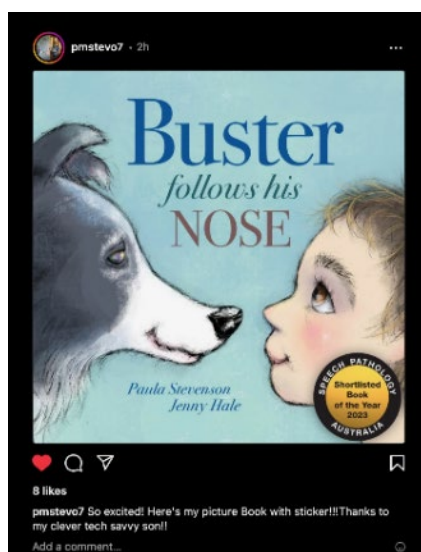
## PAULA STEVENSON

[www.paulastevensonwriter.com.au](http://www.paulastevensonwriter.com.au)

Instagram: pmstevo7

***Buster Follows His Nose***  
(Little Pink Dog Books)

**SUMMARY:** This is an archetypal Australian story with a distinctive rural setting. Young Tilly loves to visit Pop's farm and explore the creeks and paddocks.



The old dog Buster stays close to her as they wander. But one day Tilly wanders too far from the homestead and it's getting dark. Buster knows the way home but Tilly will not follow him, so he stays by her side all through the long night and keeps her safe. This story is made more delightful by the wonderful illustrations and end papers created by **JENNY HALE**.

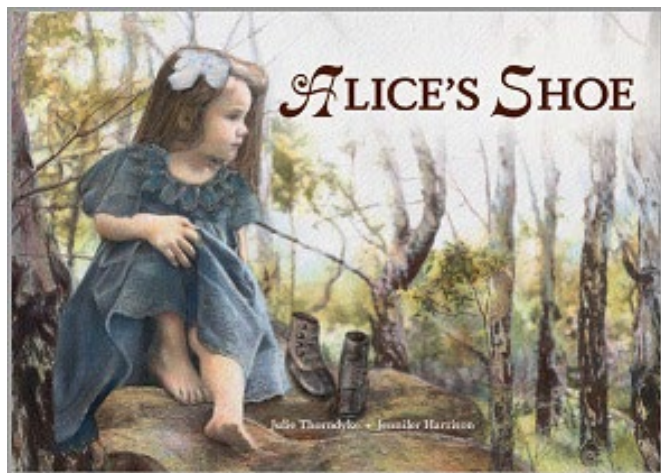
**QUOTE:**  
*I love playing with words and creating the dance that is a picture book. ~ PAULA STEVENSON.*

## JULIE THORNDYKE

<https://juliethorndyke.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/julie.a.thorndyke>

[Julie Anne Thorndyke \(@j.thorndyke\) | Instagram profile](#)



***Alice's Shoe*** (Midnight Sun Publishing)

### SUMMARY:

***Alice's Shoe*** tells the childhood story of Alice Betteridge, deaf and blind after an illness aged two years. A country child, Alice hated shoes—but shoe was her first breakthrough word in tactile sign

language. She became known as “Australia’s Helen Keller”

### QUOTE:

*Reading opens a window of possibility to other ways of living, learning, and imagining.*

~ **Julie Thorndyke**



## DEBRA TIDBALL

[www.debratidball.com](http://www.debratidball.com)

***Anchored*** EK Books

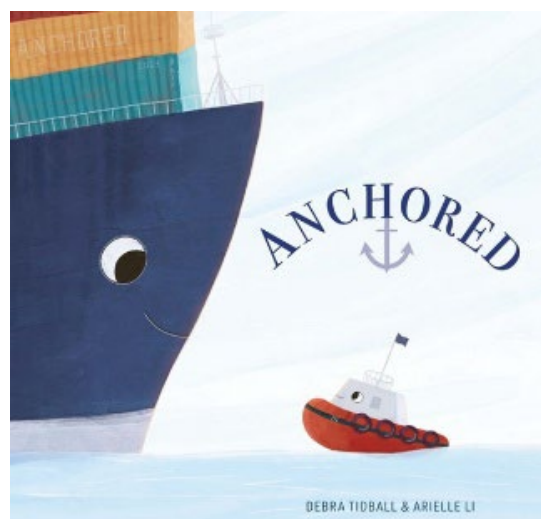
**SUMMARY:** One big Ship... one little Tug... how can they remain close, with oceans in between?

### QUOTE:

*Christmas is my favourite time to laze around with a book: Sunhat + Sunscreen + Sunglasses + Book = Bliss! ~ **Debra TIDBALL***

### Additional Information

Since writing ***Anchored***, I have become obsessed with the working watercraft around Sydney Harbour! And the tug boats are so cute – a bit like my French Bulldog, Archie: Compact and front-heavy.





Smile at people.



Do someone's  
chores for them.

Ring, text, email  
someone and  
check in.



## ROBERT VESCIO

**Website:** [www.robertvescio.com](http://www.robertvescio.com)

**Facebook:** Robert Vescio – Children's Author

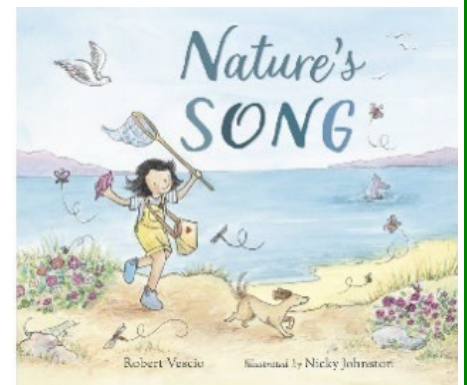
**Instagram:** robertvescio\_author

**Nature's Song** New  
Frontier Publishing

**SUMMARY:** A little girl sets off on a quest to find an irresistible gift to help bring the outside in for her homebound brother.

Nature's Song is an invitation to

discover the wonders of nature in all its mysterious glory...and how nature creates and touches our lives for the better.



**Patience** IP Kidz

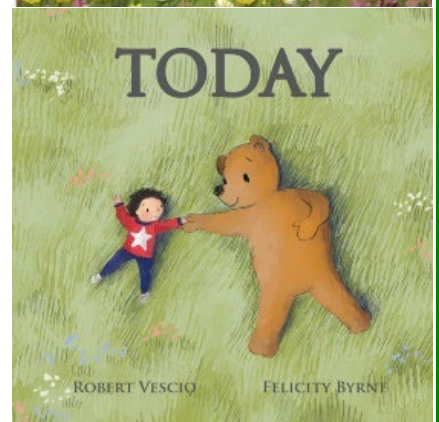
**SUMMARY:** Patience is the key to a happy life. Patience can make the difference between worry and tranquillity. Patience is love, joy, good and surprising. But is Patience more than just an emotion and a skill? A fun and reassuring story about exploring Patience as a child's best friend.



**Today** Little Pink Dog Books - Release date April 2024

### SUMMARY:

The world is a treasure waiting to be explored. Join a little boy and a bear as they spend a memorable, adventurous day of shared wonders, discovering and learning new things together. A fun magical tale about unexpected pals who find the extraordinary in the ordinary through playful exploration.



**QUOTE:** *Adventure is a doorway and the journey waits for no one.*  
**Robert Vescio**

**Additional Information:** I'm an Australia Reads ambassador and a Books in Homes role model. My aim is to enthuse and inspire children to read and write and leave them bursting with imaginative ideas.

**What do you like about KC?** It is bursting with content and is a great source of information, creativity and entertainment.

**What would make KC better?** Nothing. It excels just the way it is. ~ RV

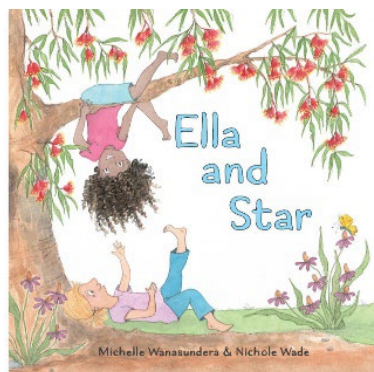
## MICHELLE WANASUNDERA

### WEBSITE/ social media contacts:

FB @michellewanasunderaauthor

INSTAGRAM @michellewanasunderaauthor

BLOG <https://michellewanasundera.wordpress.com/>



### **Ella And Star** Little Pink Dog Books

#### **SUMMARY:**

**Ella And Star** is about bringing some awareness and understanding around kids who find the world a little loud and who may have some sensory issues or just simply prefer to be a little quieter.

**QUOTE:** *I love that books give us a chance to go into a new world; escapism at it's best, but also how books give a chance to learn little about someone else's perspective of the world, their hopes and dreams, feelings, struggles and insights and also, especially in the case of children's books, how readers can be given a voice - they can see themselves in stories and feel heard and seen.*

#### **~ MICHELLE WANASUNDERA**

- **What do you like about KC?** I love learning about the latest great picture books and hearing from the authors about their writing journey.

- **What would make KC better?** Maybe feature some more middle-grade books?

Tell someone a  
joke to make  
them laugh.

Write a poem for  
someone.

Ask someone  
RUOK?



### **WHETHER or WEATHER**

No matter what the *weather* is, it makes a difference *whether* you read or not.

So, read and imagine

Animated Link

[https://www.canva.com/design/DAF2V\\_P3XTM/joQDKXqRoQidNYa3nHRIw/view?utm\\_content=DAF2V\\_P3XTM&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link&utm\\_source=editor](https://www.canva.com/design/DAF2V_P3XTM/joQDKXqRoQidNYa3nHRIw/view?utm_content=DAF2V_P3XTM&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=editor)





## SUE WHITING

Website and blog: <https://suewhiting.com>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/suewhiting4>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/suewhiting4/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/suewhiting4>

**SUMMARY:** *Pearly and Pig and the Lost City of Mu Savan* Walker Books Australia

Pearly, Pig and the entire Woe family are destined for the kingdom of Anachak, where they plan to search for the lost city of Mu Savan.

A jungle adventure! What could go wrong? Everything. Of course!

**SUMMARY:** *The Wheelbarrow Express*, illus by Cate James Walker Books Australia

It's Tommy's last day at Pa's farm and it's time to say goodbye. Tommy doesn't want to go. Not yet.

He loves the farm and its playful pigs, clucking chickens, galloping goats and the dam that is deep and blue and perfect for skimming stones.

And he loves Pa. But Pa has a plan: there's time for one last run on the Wheelbarrow Express.

Toot! Toot! All aboard!

**SUMMARY:** *Pearly and Pig and the Island of Secrets* Walker Books Australia release March 2024

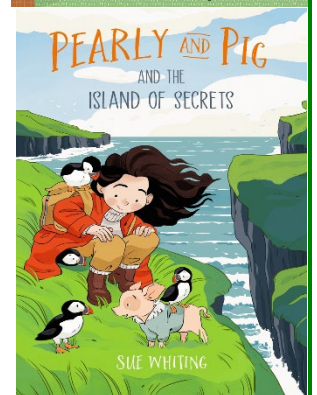
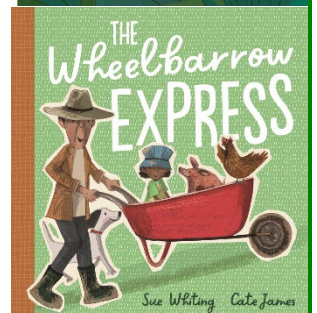
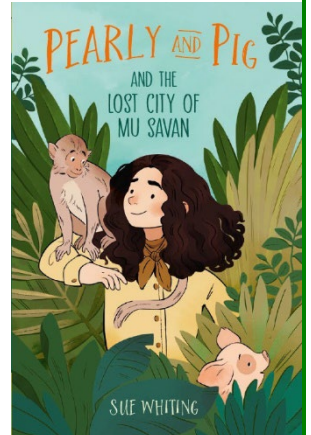
Pearly Woe is a worrier.

On remote Mammút Island off the coast of Iceland, Pearly's worrying is put to the ultimate test when she and Pig are winched from a helicopter onto the island to complete a five-day survival challenge – alone. But they are not alone. And that is not the only surprise in store for Pearly and Pig as Mammút Island reveals its many secrets.

### QUOTE:

*There is some powerful magic within the pages of a book. Stories have the ability to transport us to different worlds, to help us understand what it means to be human, to walk in another's shoes, and to see ourselves reflected. There are few things I enjoy more than being lost in a good book.*

~ Sue Whiting



**Ways With Words :** **Weather** and **Whethe** are **HOMOPHONES**, meaning they sound the same, but have different meanings

**Weather** is primarily used as a noun. It is the state of the atmosphere in a particular place e.g., rain, sunshine, snow and so on.

**Whether** is a conjunction, mostly used to introduce a clause and express a doubt or choice between alternatives.



## Ways with words : ACRONYMS

with thanks to <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/acronym/>

We use abbreviations every day—in writing, texting, note-taking, and talking. There are a few different categories of abbreviations, and acronyms is one of them. When you shorten a phrase by using just the first letter of each word and then pronounce it as a new word, you're using an acronym.

An acronym is a word created by combining the first letter or syllable of each word in a phrase to create a new, single word. Here are a few examples of popular acronyms:

- **FOMO**: fear of missing out
- **GIF**: graphics interchange format
- **PIN**: personal identification number

Some acronyms are a bit of both: They contain first letters *and* first syllables from the words in a phrase to create a new word. **Radar** is an example of this; it's derived from the phrase "radio detection and ranging."

This issue of **KIDS' CORNER** made up and used several ACRONYMS:

- **KC** = KIDS' CORNER
- **BAGs** = Books As Gifts
- **AIM** = Author and Illustrator Members
- **KC4KC** = Kids' Comments for Kids' Corner

## KINDNESS BOXES

Read a  
story to  
your pet.

Write a poem  
for an  
imaginary  
friend.

Ask  
someone  
RUOK?



Sometimes the best gift you can give is just letting people know that you care about them. Find a nice idea that someone special would enjoy and share it with them. There's a good chance of finding unique ideas in stories and books.

The ideas in the "kindness boxes" in this issue of **KC** were discovered on the *Head and Heart Mindfulness* website

<https://www.headandheartmindfulness.com.au/>





## Revisiting KC

The holidays are a good excuse to revisit ideas in **KIDS' CORNER** that have been contributed throughout the year by authors, illustrators, learners, readers and others.

The chart below reminds us of some of the great ideas that people have shared. Each issue has a surprisingly large number of people involved.

Thanks to our GUEST ILLUSTRATORS who get us started with extra thinking and talents each month. Many thanks to all.

**KC** is found on the CBCA NSW Branch website.

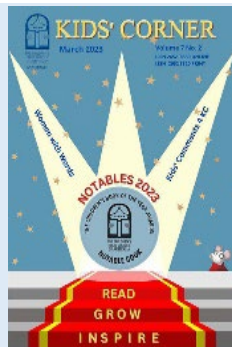
<https://www.cbcanw.org.au/kids-corner>

Just click the yellow button on the site to link in for extra ideas and each monthly issue of **KIDS' CORNER**. You are always welcome to send through your ideas for **KC**.  
[Jackie.hawkes7@gmail.com](mailto:Jackie.hawkes7@gmail.com)

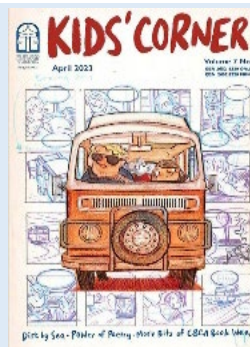
What would you like to contribute to **KC** in 2024?



**JANUARY/  
FEBRUARY**



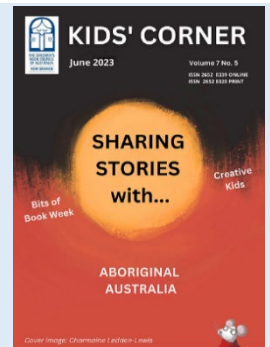
**MARCH**



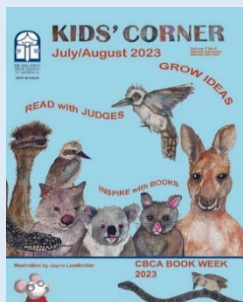
**APRIL**



**MAY**



**JUNE**



**JULY/  
AUGUST**



**SEPTEMBER**



**OCTOBER**



**NOVEMBER/  
DECEMBER**



**BAGS**

This issue of **KC** was compiled by Jackie Hawkes with the help of **LOTS** of people who love reading, writing, thinking, and creating. Your ideas about any aspect of **KC** are always welcome.



**HAPPY HOLS and HAPPY READING ALWAYS**



*Morrie and Jackie*