



THE CHILDREN'S
BOOK COUNCIL
OF AUSTRALIA
NSW BRANCH

KIDS' CORNER



NOTES ABOUT
NOTABLES

THE BOOK
TEAM

NEWS ABOUT NEW
BOOKS

KIDS COMMENTS
FOR KIDS
CORNER

BITS OF
BOOK WEEK



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COVER BY ILLUSTRATOR
SARAH TABASSUM, ILLUSTRATOR
[HTTPS://WWW.SARAHTABASSUMILLUSTRATION.COM](https://www.sarahtabassumillustration.com)



**WELCOME to
KIDS' CORNER**
for March –
a great time to start
planning **2025** as
the year to
Book an Adventure
with. . .

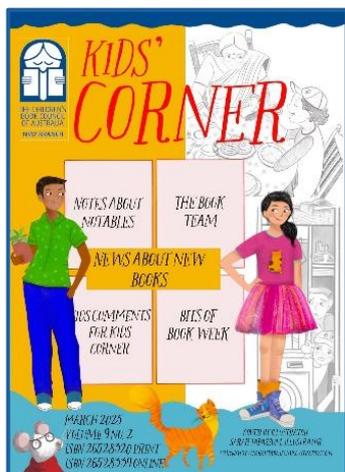


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Happy READING ADVENTURES always ...
CHEERS - Morrie, Magic Morrie and Maryanne Ann O'Mouse

AND NOW...join our guest Illustrator, **SARAH TABASSUM**, whose cover and article for **KC** March show us that books and adventures are best when they are shared with friends, old and new.



Welcome to our GUEST ILLUSTRATOR Sarah TABASSUM

MY JOURNEY AS AN ILLUSTRATOR
by Sarah TABASSUM

[-https://www.sarahtabassumillustration.com/](https://www.sarahtabassumillustration.com/)



[-https://www.simonandschuster.com.au/books/Parrot-Palace/Susanne-Gervay/9781923300088](https://www.simonandschuster.com.au/books/Parrot-Palace/Susanne-Gervay/9781923300088)



Art has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. As a child, I had a deep fascination with drawing, a passion I shared with my mother. Though she never had formal training, she loves to draw, and together we would fill the margins of our school homework with doodles and sketches. Recognizing my enthusiasm, she enrolled me with a local art teacher, our neighbour who nurtured my early artistic curiosity. However, my lessons were short-lived as we moved to a different home. Despite that, my love for drawing remained strong.

As I grew older, art gradually faded from my life. After high school, I completely drifted away from it. My university years were lacking all sorts of creative pursuits, and it wasn't until much later that illustration re-entered my world.



My Love for Art

It was during the pandemic that I rediscovered my passion for drawing. Amidst uncertainty, daily sketching became my safe place, a source of hope and joy.

That was when I truly became aware of illustration as a field. I enrolled in online art programs, though I had little direction at the time. I was simply showing up, often intimidated by other artists' work but determined to persist. Showing up became my motto, and with time, I found my rhythm. Balancing art with a full-time job was a challenge, but I came to terms with my own pace of progress. I realized that I couldn't compare myself to others who dedicated all their time to illustration. Instead, I made time for my art, working on it even after long workdays. This commitment helped me recognise that drawing wasn't just a passing hobby, it was something I was genuinely invested in. That realization pushed me to approach it more methodically, carefully managing my time and maintaining a balance between my career and my creative pursuits.

What I Love About Illustration

Illustration gives meaning to my art. It allows me to tell stories, to capture emotions, and to create visual narratives even in the simplest of sketches. Even a spontaneous doodle can carry feelings, whether joy, boredom, or curiosity. I find this aspect of illustration fascinating, the ability to evoke emotions through images alone is amazing.

Artistic Influences and Style

I consider myself still on the journey of discovering my artistic style. One thing I know for certain is, that colour plays a huge role in my inspiration. I am drawn to vibrant, colourful illustrations, and I am constantly exploring how to use colours in a meaningful way. While some colour combinations feel instinctively pleasant or joyful, I am diving deeper into the theories and rules that make them work.



Beyond colour, movement, line work, and texture also inspire me. I find myself captivated by artwork that integrates all these elements harmoniously, bringing illustrations to life in a dynamic way.



Blending Illustration Ideas with Storytelling

As a new illustrator in the publishing world, I have begun navigating the exciting process of bringing stories to life through visuals. My first book illustration project "Parrot Palace" was a chapter book for young readers. While my primary interest lies in illustrating children's picture books, this experience helped me understand the intricacies of working from a manuscript. I learned how to translate text into visual storytelling while remaining true to the characters and the heart of the story. I learned how to think about all the little things before illustrating, every small detail matters.

Upcoming Projects

I am now working on two upcoming children's book projects, both of which I am incredibly excited about. One of the books celebrates diversity, featuring children from different ethnic backgrounds and carrying messages of unity, compassion, and kindness. The other book tells a visual story about the boundless nature of children's imagination. It explores how ordinary scenes can transform into extraordinary adventures through the



lens of a child's creativity. This project particularly excites me as it captures the whimsy and wonder of childhood, illustrating how young minds can turn the simplest moments into magical experiences. Being able to visually represent these themes makes the process even more rewarding.

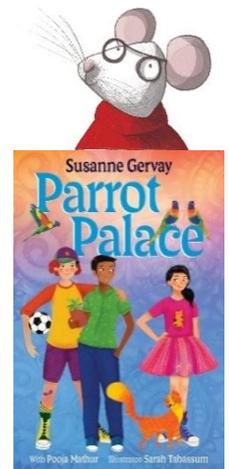


A Love for Reading

Reading has always been a source of inspiration for me. I enjoy biographies and fiction, but I am particularly drawn to books about art history and famous artists. Learning about their creative choices and the thought processes behind their work fascinates me and influences my own artistic journey. As I continue my path as an illustrator, I look forward to further honing my craft, telling meaningful stories through art, and sharing my love for illustration with the world.

And the characters stay with you long after the story ends ...

Sarah's latest book, **Parrot Palace** (Big Sky Publishing), was created by: Susanne GERVAY, OAM and Author; Sarah TABASSUM, Illustrator; Pooja Mathur, Teacher Librarian and Reader, AND Sharon Evans, Publisher. Each one made unique contributions to the story. Read more about their *Book Team* in this issue of **KC**.



Book Teams - Growing A Book ...

Villages and Children and Readers and Books and More by Morrie and Jackie - Readers

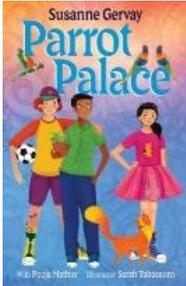
Lots of people can be involved in helping a book grow from being just the start of an idea to becoming a proper book with an active "life" on the top of your *TBR=to be read*" stack.

The phrase, "it takes a village to raise a child," promotes the idea that many different people, experiences, interactions and interests influence how a child grows up and becomes an adult. Each person in a village or neighbourhood would have a different way of doing or thinking. Each person we meet may influence our thinking, skills, talents, or opinions. And, who we are, may, in fact, influence others. Share your best.

Stories in pages and personal stories that are part of everyday life often shape who we are.

Perhaps, tracing the influences that take a thought and grow it into a finished book or piece of story or information is similar. Ideas grow...sometimes into books.

Most books acknowledge in some way the different people who help the original ideas develop, change, refine and grow. Each reader takes something special away from each book they read or write. It takes a team to grow a book . . . A BOOK TEAM...



Parrot Palace: A Summary ...

with Sharon Evans, Publisher - Little Big Sky.

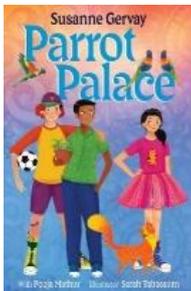
<https://www.bigskypublishing.com.au/books/the-parrot-palace/>

Three inventive and daring kids, along with their families, live in a three-story apartment block called 'Parrot Palace'.

Hari, Lily-Rosa, and Mikey come from different cultures, but their differences unite them as they form a close-knit team. They share their secrets as they navigate their dreams and challenges.

Will Mikey become a joker or follow in his dad's footsteps as a builder? Can Lily-Rosa balance her dreams of becoming a firefighter, and a ballerina? And will Hari fix the disaster he created for his Nani and mother.

They join together and confront their arch enemy, the neighbour Mr Crabtree. It is here, that they eventually find the real answers to friendship.



Parrot Palace: And the Characters Became My Close Friends...

**by Pooja Mathur,
Reader and Teacher- Librarian**



As a teacher librarian, I have admired Susanne Gervay's novels and picture books for many years. Her passion for highlighting social issues, promoting literature and reading, as well as her personal stories about her parents and upbringing are profoundly inspiring and extremely motivating.

I have met her on various occasions, and we share various commonalities.

During the Australian School Library Association's (ASLA) biennial conference in 2023, Susanne and I were chatting about my multi-generational family structure. My in-laws, myself and my husband, and our two teenage children all live together as a cohesive family unit. My children also share a close relationship with my mother-in-law and my parents who visit us often from India.

When Susanne shared the outline of a gorgeous story she had written about an apartment building called ***Parrot Palace*** and its young dwellers, I immediately fell in love with Hari, Lily-Rosa, and Mikey.

Susanne generously invited me to be a cultural consultant on ***Parrot Palace***. Considering we learn a lot about Hari and his Indian heritage in this story it was my pleasure to accept Susanne's invitation to be a cultural consultant on Parrot Palace.

Over the next year, the story evolved and blossomed. Mikey, Hari, and Lily-Rosa, and all their family members became my close friends. The Indian heritage of Hari, one of the key characters in the story, helps shape the story and replicates my kids' close connection with their grandmothers.

We were overjoyed when Sarah Tabassum joined the team as the illustrator, bringing these friendly and intelligent characters to life. The final product is an exceptionally relatable, enjoyable, and wholesome chapter book for young readers. I cannot wait to get this book in the hands of all Australian children, and on the shelves of public and school libraries.



Although my beautiful mother-in-law, Sushma, passed away in May 2023 after a three-year battle with multiple cancers, her spirit is well and truly alive in her grandchildren, and in Hari's Nani in ***Parrot Palace***.

Parrot Palace: The Team Grows...

<https://www.bigskypublishing.com.au/books/the-parrot-palace/>

By Susanne Gervay - OAM - Author

[-https://www.bigskypublishing.com.au/books/the-parrot-palace/](https://www.bigskypublishing.com.au/books/the-parrot-palace/)

[-Susanne Gervay https://sgervay.com/](https://sgervay.com/)

There is so much fun and tension in ***'Parrot Palace'***, but I wanted to share more.

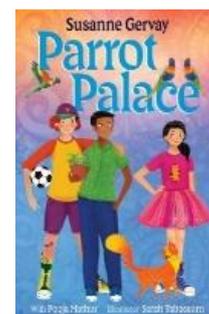
I love the traditions of Southeastern Asia and the subcontinent of India. I love the small shrines in my friends' homes. Asia and India are part of Australian culture, and we embrace many backgrounds. Of course, Lily-Rosa is Hungarian and Chinese, because my family came from Hungary and my nephew married a Chinese Australian girl. Mikey, the dinky-di Aussie boy is funny, welcoming, and up to mischief, and you want him to be your best mate. Their families are as mixed up, like mine. Hari's lives with his mother and grandma. Lily-Rosa's Hungarian stay-at-home dad looks after Lily-Rosa and her little brother. Her mother is Chinese-Australian and Director of a pre-school. Mikey has a great dad who tells terrible jokes and, while it has been a long time, his mother is carrying a much looked-forward to IVF baby.

The journey to find a talented new illustrator was hard. I wanted her to come from the subcontinent of India but be an Australian. I discovered Sarah Tabassum through a wonderful illustrator Nina Rycroft. Sarah was enthusiastic and prepared to work on the journey of creating ***'Parrot Palace'***. I was so excited when we met and discussed the project. Sarah was just right.

The third person on this journey was Pooja Mathur. I met her at a library conference and immediately engaged with her. Her passion for school libraries was inspiring. Then she told me the story of her much-loved mother-in-law. She lived with Pooja and her husband and children. She was just like Nani in ***'Parrot Palace'***. I really wanted Pooja on this journey. She was excited to accept.

So, the team was set, but I wanted to doubly, triply unlock the truth of inclusion and celebration of ***'Parrot Palace'***. So, I asked special literary creators I respected for their opinions. When I received them, I was overwhelmed.

The whole project has been a joy and in the end. ***'Parrot Palace'*** gets under the skin of discrimination and works out ways to play, relate and celebrate inclusion.



KC4KC= KIDS' Comments for KIDS' CORNER...

Authors and Illustrators generously share and grow many of the ideas about reading, writing, thinking and creating that feature in **KIDS' CORNER**.

And now, with SPECIAL THANKS, this issue of **KC** also shares the

KC4KC READING TEAM comments from:

The Entrance PS AND St Thomas Aquinas P S – Springwood



The Entrance Public School, <https://thenentrance-p.schools.nsw.gov.au/>,

nestled on the beautiful Darkinjung land on the Central Coast of NSW, is just an hour and a half north of Sydney. We're a vibrant community with 418 students in mainstream classes, a special support class for 9 amazing kids with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities (IO/IS), and a lively preschool with up to 40 little learners. Our preschoolers come in two groups, each with 20 students attending five days every fortnight, making it an exciting place to grow and learn!

At The Entrance Public School, we believe in setting big goals and fostering a safe, respectful, and engaged community. We have high hopes for each and every student, focusing on academic growth, well-being, and building social and cultural skills. With the combined effort of our fantastic teachers, dedicated parents, students, and the community, we create an environment where every child is known, valued, and cared for.

At the heart of our school is our magical library, where our Teacher Librarian, Mrs. Evans, inspires a love of books, creativity, and teamwork. Every week, students dive into exciting library lessons and can visit during playtime for fun activities like drawing, reading, and chess games. Our school is buzzing with excitement during events like ALIA's National Simultaneous Storytime, CBCA Book Week celebrations, and the NSW Premier's Reading Challenge. And when special opportunities arise, we take our students on incredible adventures like the Sydney Writer's Festival for Stage 3 and the Words on the Waves Festival for Stage 2.

We absolutely LOVE reading here at The Entrance Public School, and we hope you enjoy reading about our wonderful school in your magazine! Happy reading!

Sharlene Evans - Teacher Librarian , The Entrance Public School



The sounds of reading and more from the Blue Mountains.

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School – Springwood

<https://www.staspringwood.catholic.edu.au/about>

The reading team found time to share some extra Ideas about reading on their sports afternoon.

They not only celebrate reading, but are also involved in a range of enriched music, sport, and a variety of extra-curricular activities. Our school works closely with our Parish community, bringing *Faith In Action*.

BITS OF BOOK WEEK...STORIES AND STICKERS



– Who gets the stickers on the BOOK WEEK BOYA books?



Blue, Bronze, Silver and Gold logo stickers from CBCA can be found on the top corner of books that are part of the awards system that recognises and celebrates the best Australian books for children each year during **CBCA Children's Book Week**.

There are usually around 500 books published in Australia each year for kids. These books may be submitted by publishers and others for judging in the **CBCA BOYA = Children's Book Council Book of the Year Awards**. <https://cbca.org.au/about-the-awards/> This award recognises the best Australian books published for children aged 0-18 years of age during the year.

Books are nominated in 6 categories: **Older Readers, Younger Readers, Picture Books, Early Childhood, Eve Pownall Information books, and New Illustrators**. Each category has distinct judging criteria that includes a guide to suitability for age groups.

The “levels” of the awards are: **NOTABLES** > **SHORT LIST** > **HONOUR** > **WINNERS**.

Initially, books are read by adult judges and may be awarded a **NOTABLE** ranking = the **Blue** sticker. There are usually about 20 books awarded in each category in this division. If titles make it through the **NOTABLES** division, they are judged further and may qualify as a **SHORTLISTED** book - the **Bronze** sticker. There are 6 books awarded in each category at this level.

The next stage of judging results in the **WINNERS** = the **Gold** sticker which recognises the best book in each category. **HONOUR** books are awarded a **SILVER** sticker. An **HONORABLE MENTION** is like coming second or third.

The final results are announced during CBCA Children's Book Week.

For 2025, Children's Book Week is celebrated throughout Australia, August 16-23.

So, to earn a CBCA BOYA sticker, all you have to do, is create the best book of the 500 or so that are published each year!

Reading, writing and sharing lots of stories provide good starting points for all.

It is worth remembering that EVERY book will be loved by someone for their own particular reason, with or without a sticker.

Students can become involved in judging through the **Shadow Judging project** <https://shadowjudging.cbca.org.au/>. And, that is another exciting project to talk about.



And NOW, back to the NOTABLES . . .

CBCA Book of the Year Award Older Readers – Notables



CBCA BOOK OF THE YEAR: OLDER READERS

Entries in this category are books for young people aged between 13 and 18 years (secondary school level). Readers require a degree of maturity to appreciate the themes and scope of emotional involvement. Books in this category may be fiction, drama, illustrated text, poetry or graphic novels.

KC4KC = KIDS' COMMENTS FOR KIDS' CORNER



KC4KC = "I could imagine just about anything" – Douglass

KC4KC - "Clear writing and just entertaining parts make a good book." - Jeff

KC4KC – A GOOD BOOK

"...makes you feel something."

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School -
Springwood

KC4KC – A GOOD BOOK

"...makes you want to keep reading."

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School –
Springwood

CBCA Book of the Year Award Younger Readers – Notables



CBCA BOOK OF THE YEAR: YOUNGER READERS

Entries in this category are books published for children in the age range from 7 to 12 years (lower to upper primary school level). Books in the category may be fiction, drama, graphic novels, illustrated text or poetry.

KC4KC = KIDS' COMMENTS FOR KIDS' CORNER = KC4KC

KC4KC –“ Reading helps you be smarter and have a better brain.” Sophie

KC4KC –“A good book is fun to read, and you want to read it again and again.”- Julius

KC4KC “I think kids need to grow their ideas by going out in nature and making cool stuff”. – Sahibjot

KC4KC –“People can find the books they love.” Benji



CBCA Book of the Year Award Early Childhood – Notables



CBCA BOOK OF THE YEAR: EARLY CHILDHOOD

Entries in this category are books suitable in content and style for pre and beginning readers for children in the age range 0 to 6 years (pre-school and infant level). Books aim to introduce new concepts and vocabulary with particular attention on literacy development. This includes works of fiction, poetry, wordless, board and concept books. The illustrations reflect all the text on the page and might not add extra meaning to the storyline.

KC4KC = KIDS' COMMENTS FOR KIDS' CORNER = KC4KC



KC4KC - SCREENS VS BOOKS?

*"Books, because you can feel
the pages."*

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School -
Springwood

KC4KC - GROWING IDEAS

*"Let us draw our ideas to grow
more ideas."*

-St Thomas of Aquinas Primary School –
Springwood.

CBCA Book of the Year Award Picture Book – Notables



CBCA PICTURE BOOK OF THE YEAR

Entries in this category are books of the genre in which the text and illustrations achieve artistic and literary unity, and the story, theme or concept is enhanced and unified through the illustrations. A picture book can be written and illustrated by a sole creator or a collaborative effort between two or more creators. The text and illustrations work cohesively. The illustrations are an integral part of or extend the meaning on the page. The age range for this category is 0 to 18 years.

KC4KC = KIDS' COMMENTS FOR KIDS' CORNER = KC4KC

KC4KC – *“I am a reader so I can read all of the Manga in the world” -Tyrone*



KC4KC – *“Picture books show exactly what is happening instead of an author trying to explain the scenery” - Milakhi*

KC4KC – PICTURE BOOKS

“...are fun to look at even if I can't read all the words.”

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School -

CBCA Book of the Year Award Eve Pownall – Notables



EVE POWNALL AWARD

Entries in this category are books which introduce or extend awareness and knowledge on a given topic. Consideration should be given to imaginative presentation and variation of style. This includes works of non-fiction, autobiographies, biographies and books described as information picture books or fictionalised nonfiction picture books. This category does not include activity books, textbooks or procedural texts. The age range for this category is 0 to 18 years.

KC4KC = KIDS' COMMENTS FOR KIDS' CORNER = KC4KC

KC4KC

"I would write non-fiction about animals in the rainforest, because they're interesting."

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School – Springwood

KC4KC - SCREENS VS BOOKS?

"Screens, because I can search for stuff really fast."

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School Springwood

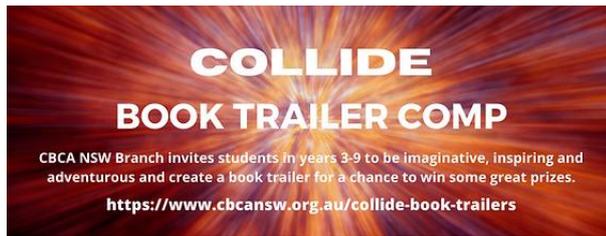


KC4KC - WRITING

FICTION – I'd write a story about a robot that goes to school, because that would be weird."

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School – Springwood

COLLIDE ... with BITS OF BOOK WEEK



<https://www.cbcanw.org.au/collide-book-trailers>

COLLIDE! is a competition challenging students to create a unique and original book trailer featuring a book from the 2025 CBCA Notables list.

COLLIDE with the 2025 NOTABLES <https://cbca.org.au/2025-notables/>

READ any of the books in any of the categories on the CBCA 2025 NOTABLES LISTS.

BRING the books to life with a book trailer.

WATCH the COLLIDE winners from 2024 for ideas on how to adapt books into mini-movies.

SEARCH author and illustrator websites to discover hints from the experts about how they

TRANSFORM stories and info from page to screen

WATCH for further updates and info -coming soon! <https://www.cbcanw.org.au/collide-book-trailers>

More BITS OF BOOK WEEK ... with the NOTABLES and beyond ...



And the next round of great books includes the SHORT LIST – It just keeps getting better.

Watch for the **CBCA SHORTLIST ANNOUNCEMENT** on **Tuesday, March 25, 2025.**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4VxJvAXRWvw&ab_channel=Children%27sBookCouncilofAustralia

Read on and on. With even more BITS OF BOOK WEEK



- YOU are the READER. Now, how about becoming a judge?
- Is there any such thing as a book better than the last one you read? **YOU BE THE JUDGE.**
- Become a SHADOW JUDGE and help decide...
- BE- part of the BEST!

READ the SHORTLIST.

DISCUSS the CRITERIA.

CHOOSE from the BEST.

CREATE a RESPONSE.

SEE Shadow judges' responses to the short-listed books for 2024

<https://shadowjudging.cbca.org.au/all-creative-responses/>

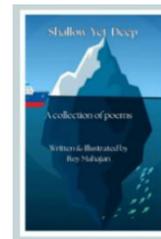
... And now for the NEWS ... about the 'NEWS'-

NEW BOOKS, NEW AUTHORS, NEW BOOK TEAMS AND MORE...

... and then, his story took on the unexpected journey of becoming a full book. . .



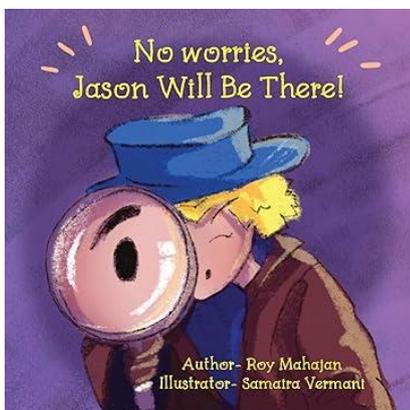
From Reader to Writer . . . NEW AUTHOR and NEW BOOKS by Shweta Mahajan and Roy Mahajan



Roy Mahajan is an eleven-year-old **reader** who became a **writer** at the age of 10 with the launch of his first fiction book, *No Worries, Jason Will Be There*.

Roy has recently written and published his second book, a collection of poems, *Shallow, Yet Deep*. Not only is he the author of this collection, but Roy has illustrated each poem using the design platform, Canva.

The most interesting part about these books is that the illustrations for Roy's first book were designed



by his 12-year-old cousin from India, Samaira. Roy has written and designed illustrations (even the cover page) for his second book. So, this has been a big learning curve for him. Both books are available through <https://www.amazon.com.au/> on Kindle.

Roy is passionate about giving back to the community. He decided to donate profits from both the books to his favourite charity, *Tangaroa Blue* which focuses on ocean conservation. The highlight of this launch was receiving a *Certificate of Achievement and Community Recognition* by the State Member of Castlehill, Mark Hodge, in February 2025.

Roy hosted a Chess Camp in his home as a community initiative to spread awareness about the services of the Tangaroa Blue Foundation and raised funds for this charity by teaching foundations of chess to 6–8-year-old kids. This was widely appreciated and supported by the community. Roy was interviewed by the **2GB** host, **Ben Fordham** regarding his first book as the youngest author in Australia which was published last year.

He is a doting brother who is passionate about chess, public speaking, cricket, creating mathematical problems and designing Lego working models.

Summary of Roy's books -

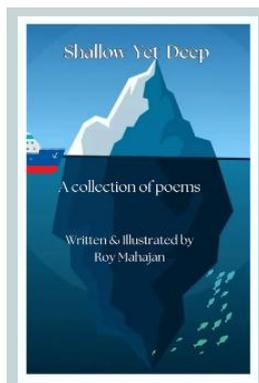
NO WORRIES, JASON WILL BE THERE

by Roy Mahajan, with Samaira Vermani – Illustrator

*Just around the street, you'll find a remarkably interesting boy whose name is **Jason**. Now you may ask, 'What is so interesting about him?' Well, you're about to find out, because it's Jason's 9th birthday and he is about to take the detective world by storm! Join Jason on his adventure to chase his dream through this action-packed book that will make you hungry for more. Available through*

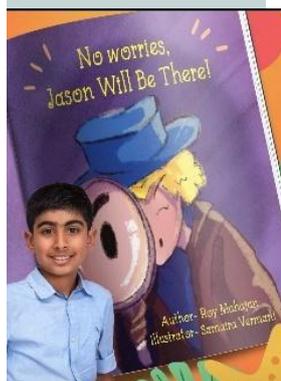
<https://www.amazon.com.au/>

SHALLOW YET DEEP - Written and Illustrated by Roy Mahajan



What started as a simple school project turned into this unique and different poetry book. Like the icy depths of an iceberg, in this book, you will find emotions that are shallow and sometimes deep in the poems. You will find a connection with these poems as a fragrance that evokes nostalgic memories. This poetry book is quite different from the others, and it just so happens to be the perfect book for you.

Available through <https://www.amazon.com.au/>



Q & A with ROY

Q-1 What are you interested in? How do your interests influence your writing?

I love playing chess, solving riddles, and reading and watching detective movies, all these hobbies have influenced my first book to be a detective book.

Q-2 You have just published two books – What do you like best about each one?

My first book includes a meaningful quote in each of its chapters which I believe creates a different emotion and a learning for the young readers. In my second book, at the beginning of each poem I added why and where I got the thoughts for each poem. This adds an insight to my real thoughts for that poem.

Q -3 What do you like to read? Why are you a reader?

I love to read - *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, *Harry Potter*, detective books, Roal Dahl and David Walliams' books. I love reading because it is so enjoyable to get lost in a world of unknown characters. It sharpens my vocabulary while giving me ideas for my next book.

Q - 4 Lots of people write or create. How and why did you decide to formalise your ideas and publish?

I loved creating short stories from a young age. My parents have always been supportive and encouraged me to write longer stories, which has helped me improve my skills. They loved one of them and told me to expand on it. From there on, it took the unexpected journey of becoming a full book. Publishing my first book was a 10th birthday gift by my parents. I believe this journey really encouraged me to develop this passion. And so, I created the poetry book. I am loving experimenting with different genres.

Q -5 What surprises you about imagination?

I've always loved writing stories since I was little - it was like creating my world where I could do whatever I wanted with my imagination. Imagination is like an untamed wild beast. It is a place for me to escape from the real world. Writing short stories releases my stress and calms me down. It makes writing an enjoyable task.

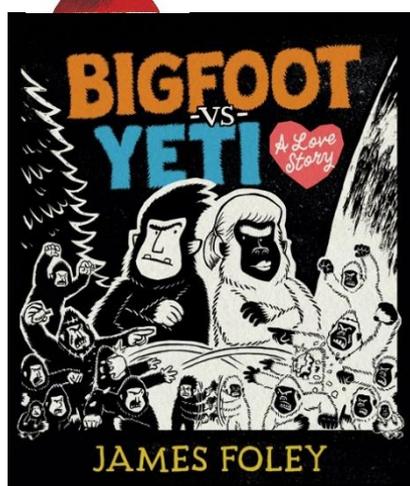
Q- 6 What has been the most interesting part of being an Author so far?

I have loved being an author at a young age. It makes me feel like a mini-celebrity. The most exciting part of being a young author is seeing my books published and knowing people are reading them. It's a great feeling to see something I worked hard on being enjoyed by others.

MORE NEWS ABOUT the “NEWS”



What's not to love about family feuds, fierce monsters, witty wordplay, stark animations and subtle blends of artworks, and rifts and bridges?



BIG FOOT VS YETI: A LOVE STORY (Freemantle Press)

<https://fremantlepress.com.au/books/bigfoot-vs-yeti/>



By James Foley

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

book trailer:

<https://jamesfoley.com.au/books/bigfoot-vs-yeti-a-love-story/>

After my picture book, **Stellarphant**, came out in 2021, booksellers were constantly asking me, 'When's the sequel coming out?'

I felt bad telling them that there wasn't a sequel. Stella's story was done. And there wasn't anything else to say.

'Well, what's next?' they'd ask.

At first I wasn't sure ... but the answer turned out to be a fantastical fable starring big hairy humanoids, told in stark black and white. You know, the usual.

Here's the official blurb:

The Bigfoots say it started when a Yeti threw a snowball across the rift. The Yetis say it started when a Bigfoot threw some fruit across the rift. Who could say for sure? One night, a young Bigfoot and a young Yeti decide to find the end of the rift so they can finish the feud – once and for all. Things are about to get hairy ...

I wanted to use linocut for the illustrations – it's a printmaking process where you use small cutting tools to carve into a piece of lino, then you add ink and press a piece of paper on top. For a story where

the two main clans are black and white (and they see the world the same way), linocut was the perfect medium; it also has a lovely handmade, antique feel which works well for fables and fairy tales.

The problem is linocut. It takes a long time and requires a lot of equipment and experience to do well - so to make things more efficient, I did a digital version of Linocut instead. I still had to 'carve' out each image using digital linocut brushes, but it meant I could work on an iPad anywhere, I could correct mistakes easily, and I could get the final artwork done more quickly – while still retaining the handmade feel of traditional linocut.

The introduction of colour and dimension towards the end of the book reflects the growth of the characters as they learn to see beyond the binary.

When it comes to writing a story, I don't start typing until I know all the main beats (especially the ending). Then when I start to type, I often read aloud as I go, testing for the natural rhythms and musicality of the phrases. My aim is that after the book is bought and taken home- it's going to be pleasing to read aloud and pleasing to listen to.

What's next after this? I'm working on four books this year – a sequel to **Happy Barry Capybara**, a funny picture book about onomatopoeia, a junior fiction novel written by Nathan Luff, and *[drum roll]* a non-fiction follow-up to **Stellarphant**.

Stella's story may be done, but she's coming back to tell the stories of the real animals who've been to space. I can't wait to share these books with everyone! The **Capybara** sequel should be out later this year and the others will be 2026-ish. Also out this year are the colour editions of my graphic novels **Dungzilla** (April) and **Chickensaurus** (June). Exciting times!

KC4KC = KIDS' COMMENTS FOR KIDS' CORNER = KC4KC

KC4KC – PICTURE BOOKS

"I like the funny characters in the pictures."

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School -
Springwood

KC4KC – TO READ MORE...

"Let us choose any book we want to read."

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School -
Springwood

KC4KC – IMAGINATION

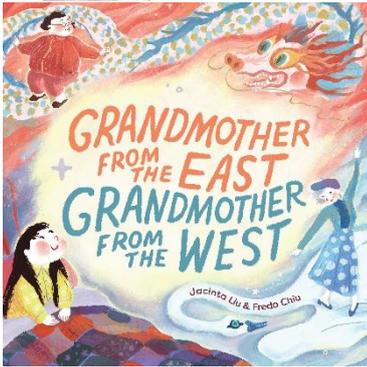
*"imagination is like playing pretend,
But it's in your head."*

St Thomas Aquinas PS - Springwood





– Families blend and grow the best of who we become.



GRANDMOTHER FROM THE EAST, GRANDMOTHER FROM THE WEST

(Lothian/ Hachette)

<https://www.hachette.com.au/jacinta-liu-freda-chiu/grandmother-from-the-east-grandmother-from-the-west>

by **Jacinta Lui** <https://www.jacintaliu.com/>

and **Freda Chiu**, Illustrator <https://fredachiu.com/>

Grandmother from the East, Grandmother from the West is a heartfelt tribute to heritage, family, and the powerful women who shape us. Inspired by Jacinta's upbringing, this unique picture book will resonate with diverse, multicultural, and bicultural families, offering a touching message of unity and belonging.



Jacinta: *Growing up between cultures has helped me become more open to embracing and respecting differences, and it's now shaping the multicultural family I'm raising with my children. My grandmothers also showed me that while love may be shared in different ways, love is love, no matter where it comes from.*



Freda: *Picture books are a big collaborative effort. After reading Jacinta's words, I was guided by memories of my PorPor and Jacinta's relationship with her grandmothers when sketching ideas. I also thought about how the story moved me, and developed a loose painterly look to give the drawings warmth and tenderness.*

KC4KC = KIDS' COMMENTS FOR KIDS' CORNER = KC4KC



KC4KC – PICTURE BOOKS

*"...are fun to look at even if I can't
Read all the words."*

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School
Springwood

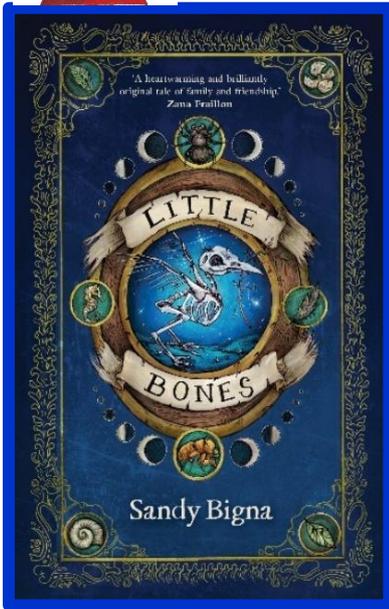
KC4KC – IMAGINATION

"You can make anything happen!"

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School
Springwood



The story hovers between Life and Death, past and present, friendships and isolation, and flight and falling...



LITTLE BONES

(UQP) <https://www.uqp.com.au/books/little-bones>



by SANDY BIGNA

When 11-year-old Bones accidentally resurrects the skeleton of a small bird, she needs to find a way to reverse the curse, and summon the courage to say goodbye.

Little Bones is a verse novel about acceptance, friendship, healing and the joy of collecting. It was

so much fun to write. I love that the characters you create can take you on a journey that even you as the author never expected.

When Bones started telling her story, I hadn't initially anticipated that she was going to accidentally resurrect a bird skeleton! The voice of Bones came to me first, along with a strong visual image of a lonely girl who collected animal bones. I'm fascinated by animal bones – the way they can tell a story of life, rather than death.

Reading and writing are my two great passions – both have the power to transport you to another world, open your eyes to new experiences, and – often – help you feel less alone. I've long adored reading verse novels and knew instinctively that Bones' story needed to be told in the spare and lyrical style that a verse novel allows.

I feel connected to all the characters in Little Bones– but would love to draw out more of Nonna Frankie's story – what was her early life like? There are hints throughout the story, but I'd be keen to sit down and have a kitchen-table chat with her.

I'd love readers of *Little Bones* to ask me about what I liked to collect as a child, and I want to hear about what my readers like to collect too. I love to relive the joy of childhood collecting.

KC4KC = KIDS' COMMENTS FOR KIDS' CORNER = KC4KC



KC4KC “ “I'm a reader because I like to read for info or to imagine I'm in the story.” - Aubrey

KC4KC – “I'm a READER because books are easy to pick up and can link to real life.” - Archer



Visit the *REAL* magic of witches, dragons, secrets, and imagination everywhere for everyone...



MISCHIEF AND MAGIC

(IP Kidz) <https://ipoz.biz/product/mischief-and-magic/>



ROBERT VESCIO

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

Three magical stories with fantasy dragons, witches, and danger at every turn. In 'Ruby, Wicked', a mischievous young witch transforms her Burmese cat into a supermodel. In 'The Dragon's Lair', young Eric clanks up a mountain to steal a dragon's tail to lift his family from poverty. In 'The Golden Telescope', timid Garth and bold Sally portal into a dimension of fairies, trolls and a stolen sceptre via an old telescope to uncover secrets in their great-grandfather's spider-infested house.

One character I developed who stands out is an apprentice witch named Ruby. When creating her, I wanted to explore themes of growth, self-doubt, and the journey from curiosity to mastery. This balance of personal growth and magical development was key to creating a character I found interesting to explore!

My writing is influenced by the world around me, and a love for various forms of storytelling. Usually, my own experiences, struggles, and emotions often make their way into my writing. I tend to write characters who are grappling with self-doubt, growth, or finding their place in the world.

I chose to write about **magic and fantasy** because a) Fantasy opens up a world of possibilities. You can explore completely new worlds and delve into questions about life. b) Magic provides a way to stretch the imagination, giving characters the ability to transform, and face challenges in ways that real life doesn't always allow. It's a way to let creativity flow. Who doesn't like a bit of magic in their lives?

Writing for **younger readers**, is a great exercise to convey complex ideas and emotions with a playful tone. It's about capturing universal emotions, like friendship, courage, and discovery, in a way that feels accessible but still meaningful.

But when writing for **young adults**, there's more room for depth and description using a more sophisticated tone with a bit more edge. You can explore more complicated themes and characters while still keeping it engaging and emotionally stimulating. It also gives you more freedom.

As a writer, I think it's important to challenge ourselves and try **different writing styles**. It helps us to know ourselves better, build curiosity and spark our creativity. That's a great question! I'd love for people to ask what would happen to the characters if I wrote a sequel. This opens doors to how the characters might evolve further. It's a great way to explore the 'what ifs' and imagine how the story could continue.

On a family day out to Washpool, the local swimming spot, two very different sisters are drawn into a world of magical creatures whose influences on water, fire and earth test their abilities. The quest for the missing dragon's egg is just the beginning.



WASHPOOL (Lothian Children's Books/ Hachette)

by **LISA FULLER** <https://www.lisafuller.com.au/washpool>

Image by Katie Hayne, University of Canberra



A portal pulls sisters, Bella and Cienna, into a land of strange beings. The girls become separated and end up working with warring factions. Both sides must find a way to get along to save a stolen dragon's egg. And they haven't even asked how to get home yet.

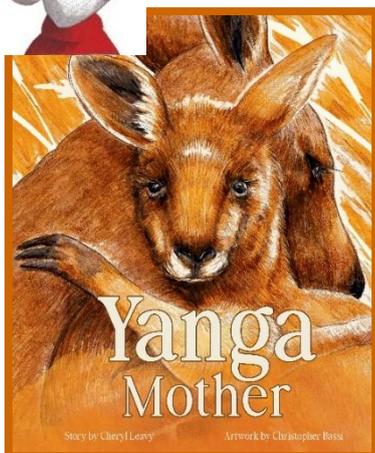
I don't plan my works, so a lot comes as a surprise. The biggest in *Washpool* was when two of my characters went from being close friends to a couple. I panicked for a while about appropriating stories. Fortunately, I was able to get help from some amazingly generous people.

For me, *Washpool* is about making space for others to be who they are, and that bravery comes in various forms. We don't have to be the same to find commonalities or even friendship. And we don't have to share the same beliefs to be respectful of one another.

I don't write to educate; I don't feel didactic narratives help change hearts and minds. I write for those I love. I want to tell them a good story and for them to see themselves in literature in a way I didn't as a child or teen. If others connect with that, or learn things, that's amazing.



Beautiful portrait-style art links the mother and joey together. Simple words hint at a story



YANGA MOTHER

(UQP) <https://www.uqp.com.au/books/yanga-mother>

<https://www.uqp.com.au/books/yanga-mother>

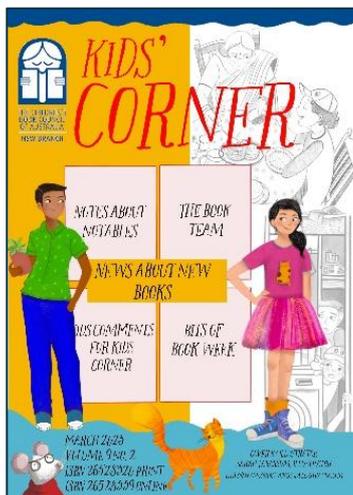
by **Cheryl LEAVY**

with **Christopher BASSI, Illustrator**

Beautiful artwork and simple language concepts in English and in Kooma language relay the story of a grey Kangaroo and her joey "and the unbreakable bonds of family. The story "honours the Stolen Generations, First Nations Matriarchs and never-ending Motherly love".

This link <https://www.uqp.com.au/books/yanga-mother> gives

The Yanga Mother: Kooma Language Pronunciations. Voiced by Cheryl Leavy



THANKS TO ALL for being part of the

KIDS' CORNER "BOOK" TEAM

as **KC** for March 2025 begins the journey to **BOOK an AVENTURE** with:

-NOTABLES becoming **SHORTLISTED**...

-BOOK TEAMS growing new books,

-**KC4KC = KIDS COMMENTS FOR KIDS'S CORNER** - kids' comments giving **KC** a

-new perspective... and

-**BITS OF CHILDREN'S BOOK WEEK** hinting at unique stories and ideas to come...

SPECIAL THANKS to the March **KC "BOOK TEAM"** including – Sarah as our guest

illustrator, Sharon, Pooja, Susanne, Shweta, Roy, James, Jacinta,

Freda, Sandy, Robert, Lisa, Cheryl and Christopher and their **TEAMS!**



PLUS, a BIG THANK YOU to the Reading teams of **THE ENTRANCE PS AND T THOMAS ACQUINAS PS-SPRINGWOOD.**

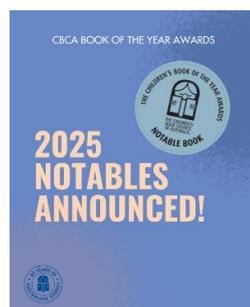
KEEP READING some of the best with the ...

2025 CBCA Book Week theme announcement

2025 CBCA NOTABLES

and

Night of the NOTABLES (announcement)



and the

CBCA SHORTLIST for 2025

and **Announcing the Shortlist**



Happy READING ADVENTURES always ...

CHEERS - Morrie, Magic Morrie and Maryanne

Ann O'Mouse and introducing SMILIE MORRIE!



This issue of **KC** was compiled by Jackie Hawkes with the help of a very big **KC BOOK TEAM** with LOTS of people who love to READ, WRITE, THINK and CREATE.

To share your ideas with **KC**, please contact jackie.hawkes7@gmail.com